THE NATIONAL SYLLABUS

1. INTRODUCTION

The Government of Belize, through the Ministry of Education and Sports is committed, by policy, to ensuring the provision of appropriate programming to meet the schooling needs of all students. The ultimate goal is to have all students successfully complete their primary school education, perceive themselves as successful learners, and demonstrate a desire to obtain further education. The reality is that there are many students who do not complete their primary school education.

As early as Infant I and II, some students are not successful in school. Others experience a number of learning difficulties throughout their years of schooling: poor reading and writing competency, low self-esteem, few social skills, and a poor attitude towards school. Such difficulties are contributing to a significant lag in achievement, a sense of alienation, and truancy, which in turn eventually place these students at risk of not completing their primary education.

For a number of decades, educators have analyzed and debated the influence of the family school, community, and students themselves on achieving success in school. Home and family background, child neglect, substance abuse, unwanted pregnancies, and related factors have all been alleged to decrease student success. The importance of these influences is acknowledged, but there is growing evidence in the research, and acknowledgement by educators, that school management need to critically examine how some of the characteristics of the learning environment may unintentionally contribute to a lack of success for some students. Similarly, there is evidence that developing school cultures, in which success for all students is the primary belief of all individuals within the school, can enhance a number of conditions of schooling.

Staffs in schools and classes in which students achieve success demonstrate a conviction that their students are capable; barriers, which inhibit success, are identified and removed. The focus is on development of young people, and not on remediation. These staffs make opportunities for cooperative planning, and decision-making, which is responsive to the needs of all students. The focus is on whole school planning and programming, rather than on individuals acting by themselves. Practices, which do not contribute to school priorities, should be discontinued.

To be successful schools need to focus on curriculum. They need to identify from prescribed curriculum, the critical knowledge, skills, and attitudes which all students should demonstrate. They need to identify and select a broad range of assessment measures which are related to the curriculum, and which allow students a variety of ways

in which to demonstrate what they know, can do, and are like. Consistent with this is the setting of standards for student performance and growth.

In keeping with the issues reviewed above schools are provided with this ***National Syllabus*** which translates the ***National Curriculum*** into strategies for accomplishing the National goals. Essentially, it indicates the "*how*", and how we must proceed with the "*what*". It also outlines the outcomes for the three Divisions of primary school (Division I - Infant I, II and Standard I; Division II - Standards II, III, and IV, and Division III - Standards V and VI).

The National ***Syllabus,*** therefore, provides the basis for the improvement of student learning and growth by specifying the minimum standard of achievement expected of each student within the specified division in relation to the four broad A***reas of Study***. It includes:

- a set of ***outcomes*** in the various areas of study from which schools can develop their School's Curriculum (***Annual Schemes of Work.)***

- the basis for the development of ***classroom assessment*** strategies which will help schools to monitor their performance against national educational standards.

- the basis for the development of ***national assessment systems*** which will serve to monitor the attainment of national educational standards.

Definition of Terms

- ***Areas of Study***

  These specify the content, concepts and skills within specific disciplines. Given the emphasis on integration and establishing cross-curricular links, the following Areas of study are being recommended. Where there is a natural link among disciplines, these have been grouped for efficiency in detailing outcomes:

  Area 1: Language (English and Spanish)
  Area 2: Mathematics, Science, Work & Technology. (aspect of technology relating to production)
  Area 3: Social Studies and Personal Development (aspect of personal development relating to social/cultural, spiritual, economics).
  Area 4: The Expressive Arts, Physical Education, Health, (including the physical aspect of personal development)

- ***Primary Specifications***

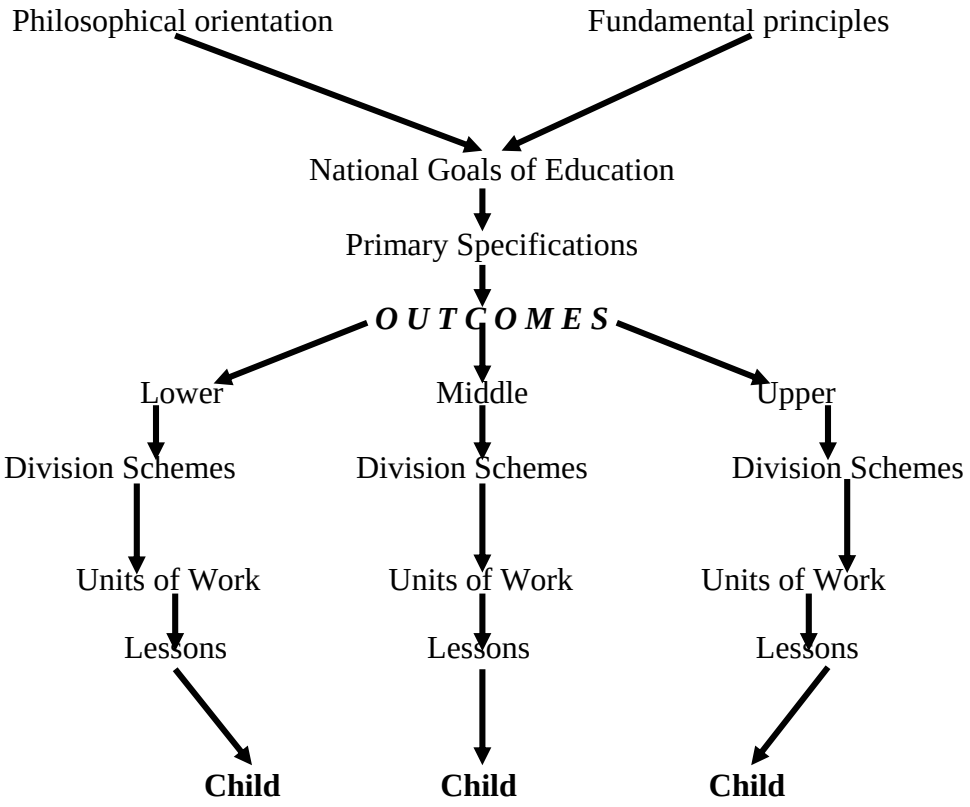
These specify the capacity of the student at the end of primary school in relation to knowledge, skills and attitudes.

- ***Outcomes***

  These are specific statements of what students should be able to do or know and the attitudes they should possess at the end of each division.

One of the fundamental processes in the development of the National Curriculum Framework is that of a ***Logical Contingency*** approach. This approach suggests that there is a sequential, and rational top-down and bottom-up progression. This network of ***Logical Contingency*** carries through from the Curriculum Framework to the National Curriculum and through to the National Syllabus with the child as the ultimate benefactor in the process. This can be exemplified as follows.

A NETWORK OF LOGICAL CONTINGENCY



National Goal

G5 A knowledge and practice of healthy lifestyles

Primary Specification

G5.1 know how and why it is important to keep themselves clean

G5.2 know why it is important to keep their environment clean

G5.5 recognize the importance of avoiding unhealthy habits and lifestyle

G5.4 participate in physical activity for sport, leisure and health

Outcomes
Pupils should:

understand the need to keep their surroundings clean

understand how and why to apply the basic elements of personal hygiene

GOALS OF EDUCATION

G1 A knowledge of Belize and a commitment to and involvement in its nationhood and development

G2 An appreciation of and respect for different people and cultures and a commitment to justice and equity for all

G3 Spiritually, social skills and personal qualities

G4 Intellectual skills and qualities

G5 A knowledge and practice of healthy lifestyles

G6 An understanding of the economics of Belize and of the world, the appreciation of work, the capacity to participate in economic activities, skills in design and the ability to use a range of technologies.

G7 A knowledge of the universe and an understanding of our solar system with special attention to the earth (third rock from the sun)

G8 An understanding of systems and sub systems in the physical world, including the natural environment and the need to preserve it.

G9 An understanding of number, quantity and space and the application of relevant concepts

G10 An appreciation of, and participation in, artistic ventures, particularly within the Belizean culture

G11 The ability to communicate proficiently in English

G12 The ability to communicate effectively in Spanish

GOALS AND SPECIFICATIONS

G1 A knowledge of Belize and a commitment to its nationhood and development

Knowledge

G1.1 know the history and status of Belize as a nation, including its social, political, and economic development

G1.2 know the physical environment of Belize, including its topography, natural resources, and climate

G1.3 know the structure and machinery of the government of Belize

G1.4 know of world geography and of regional and global communities

Attitudes/Values

G1.5 have a commitment to civic obligations

G1.6 have a commitment to and involvement in the preservation and development of the nation of Belize

G1.7 appreciate and encourage and participate in activities that strengthen the bonds of unity and understand the common destiny they share as a people

G2 Appreciation of and respect for different people and cultures and a commitment to justice and equity for all

Knowledge

G2.1 know about the different cultural groups in Belize, their lifestyle and languages

G2.2 know about cultures of the world and how Belizean culture relates to these

Attitudes/Values

G2.3 have tolerance for others

G2.4 have a commitment to justice and equity for all

G3 Spirituality, social skills and positive personal qualities

Social skills

G3.1 be familiar with and show commitment to moral principles which guide choices

G3.2 demonstrate teamwork, leadership, service to others, empathy and sympathy
G3.3 have a commitment to excellence, including self motivation, self discipline, and self-evaluation

Personal Qualities
G3.4 recognize their spirituality and demonstrate a sense of purpose
G3.5 adapt to change and cope with emotion
G3.6 respect for the laws and the legal institutions of Belize
G3.7 value and uphold truth and honesty
G3.8 have a positive self-image

G4 Intellectual skills and qualities

Skills
G4.1 demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving skills
G4.2 find, interpret and use information from a variety of sources

Qualities
G4.3 demonstrate ingenuity

G5 Knowledge and practice of healthy lifestyles

Knowledge
G5.1 know how and why it is important to keep themselves clean and safe
G5.2 know how and why it is important to keep their environment clean
G5.3 know how some common diseases are spread, including STDs and HIV/AIDS, and how to prevent them

Skills
G5.4 participate in physical activity for sport, leisure and health

Attitudes/Values
G5.5 recognize the importance of avoiding unhealthy habits and lifestyles

G6 Understanding of the economics of Belize and of the world, the appreciation of work, the capacity to participate in economic activities, skills in design and the ability to use a range of technologies

Knowledge
G6.1 understand and use different forms of modern technology including communication technology

G6.2 understand the ingredients and dynamics of production and productivity
G6.3 understand local, regional and global economies and their relationships including their impact on Belize

Skills
G6.4 demonstrate and engage in entrepreneurial activities
G6.5 demonstrate skills in design and use of technology relevant to local, regional and global needs
G6.6 promote healthy, competitive skills in design and technology

Attitudes
G6.7 value work and employment/values
G6.8 recognize the value and importance of good management of natural resources
G6.9 value and appreciate appropriate technology

G7 A knowledge of the universe and an understanding of our solar system with special attention to the earth (third rock from the sun)

Knowledge
G7.1 know about natural history
G7.2 know that the earth is part of the solar system, which in turn is part of the universe
G7.3 be aware of major theories of the origin of the universe
G7.4 know about the structure of the earth and its atmosphere

Attitudes/Values
G7.5 appreciate their position in the universe and that man has only been in the universe for a relatively short time

G8 An understanding of systems and sub systems in the physical world, including the natural environment and the need to preserve it

Knowledge
G8.1 know about matter and energy
G8.2 know about time and motion, forces and simple machines
G8.3 know about living things and understand their relationship to the environment
G8.4 understand interdependence and balance and appreciate the importance of protecting the environment and conserving resources for future generations

G9 Understanding of number, quantity and space and the application of relevant concepts

Knowledge
G9.1 know the number system and the importance of accuracy
G9.2 know about spatial relationships and shapes

Skills

G9.3 measure, quantify and calculate
G9.4 estimate and make predictions
G9.5 collect, present and interpret numerical data

G10 Appreciate, and participate in, artistic ventures, particularly within the Belizean culture

Skills
G10.1 create music, draw and paint, dance, make crafts

Attitudes/Values/Qualities
G10.2 express oneself creatively
G10.3 appreciate watching and listening to the performing arts and visual arts
G10.4 enjoy taking part in activities which involve creativity

G11 Communicate proficiently in English

Skills

G11.1 read for information, understanding and enjoyment
G11.2 listen and view for information, understanding and enjoyment
G11.3 write clearly, accurately and appropriately
G11.4 speak clearly, accurately and appropriately

G12 The ability to communicate effectively in Spanish

Skills
G12.1 listen to and understand simple instructions, statements and questions in Spanish
G12.2 complete forms and questionnaires and write short messages in Spanish
G12.3 read simple forms, notes and passages in Spanish
G12.4 respond appropriately in Spanish to simple instructions, statements and questions

Attitudes
G12.5 appreciate the value of being multilingual

The achievement of the goals and end-product specifications are dependent on certain conditions and practices. These include a good teacher, and a positive and caring teaching-learning environment, as well as sound pedagogical practices including classroom assessment which contributes to the development of concepts skills and attitudes for the various areas of study. The kinds of conditions and practices being advocated are outlined in the pages that follow, to provide guidance and understanding.

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

The paradigm shift in the role of the teacher is one which views the teacher as a facilitator/guide to learning, a view which sees students as participating and generating understanding rather than the teacher being the sole source of knowledge.

This new paradigm shift is one which can be very disconcerting for many teachers since this could be seen as diminishing the "figure" or status of the teacher. Within this paradigm shift, however, the role of the teacher can be perceived more in terms of the qualities, attributes and skills which the teacher possesses, than merely in terms of what the teacher does, even though this is an important element of the role.

The qualities of the teacher and the practices, or what the teacher does can be viewed as a symbiotic relationship. In this relationship the role/qualities of the teacher will be manifested in behaviours which state that children love learning and are extremely good at it.

WHAT IS THE ROLE

Given the philosophic orientation, which advocates **learning to learn** and learning as a life-long process, it is expected, that in order to advance the goals of the curriculum the teacher would need to be a professional. Such individuals are intelligent, creative, sensitive and committed to their own continued learning and growth as well as that of their students.

This role also emphasizes taking responsibility for their job - that of providing quality education for their students - particularly within the framework of this new curriculum where the teacher is given a great degree of autonomy. The teacher is expected to make decisions about both curriculum and instructional quality i.e. in terms of <u>what</u> is to be taught, how it should be taught and effective ways of assessing student's learning.

Fundamental also to the role of the teacher is to bring beliefs about effective teaching and learning which will promote the various aspects of growth and development.

Teaching as a profession is the vision of the teacher as one who:

- has a sound academic background and, therefore, demonstrates knowledge of the content area to be taught.

- has an appreciation for children's social, emotional and cognitive development. This appreciation will recognize each student as a unique individual with his/her own talents and dispositions and will endeavour to prepare instructions to meet the uniqueness.

- is willing to make decisions on changes, particularly those for the benefit of students and the larger society.

- has concern for both the planned and hidden curriculum. Such a teacher will utilize resources wisely in planning quality curriculum and instructional materials, will model positive behaviours as well as inculcate sound, societal values and attitudes. He/she will select goals and set standards that are challenging but achievable.

- has a repertoire of instructional techniques and classroom management skills. These are essential to enabling the teacher to deal effectively with the various learning styles and behaviour patterns of students.

- has an awareness of one's own strengths and weaknesses, and the needs of each particular class. This allows for much forward planning such as guest speakers, field trips etc. to ensure that students get maximum benefit from each and every teaching/learning experience.

- reflects on and analyses practices as a means of improving teaching, who holds oneself accountable for the progress of the student they teach. In summary, the role of the teacher is to design coherent instruction to promote good teaching. This can be described as a coordinated approach that considers the various elements outlined above into an effective programme to meet the needs of the individual students and that of the wider curriculum.

- believes that each student is capable of achieving. Teacher expectations of students have proven to have tremendous effect on students' achievement in the classroom. It is important therefore that teachers make positive inferences about students potential for achievement.

WHAT SHOULD THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT BE ?

In order to achieve the goals represented by the four pillars of **- "learning to live together, learning to be, learning to know and learning to do**" - the Ministry of Education requires that teachers create an atmosphere of excitement about the importance of learning. An atmosphere in which the teacher, students and wider community together participate in generating a learning community in which everyone's contributions are valued. Such a relationship will foster a comfortable and respectable classroom environment which promotes a positive culture for learning, for self expression, and for

experimenting. In other words, it should be a safe place for risk-taking. This element of risk-taking is essential if students are to be able to create, invent and design. All this, however, should be done within an atmosphere which is businesslike, in which the physical environment is supportive of the stated instructional goals.

The vision of the teacher as a professional is one in which a multiplicity of roles must be played. One of these essential roles is that of creating a warm and caring atmosphere. Many of our students come from broken, and dysfunctional homes. Homes in which they experience physical and emotional abuse and neglect. The school and the classroom should, therefore be seen as safe havens providing, love and understanding if only for a few hours each day.

As mentioned earlier, it is imperative that the teacher creates an environment which promotes high expectations for achievement. This, however, will be based on each student's unique potential and ability. Whatever the challenge may be the student should be encouraged to always strive for excellence within the constraints of the challenge. The pervasive atmosphere will then be one in which students are seen as real people with individual interests, concerns and intellectual potential.

This intellectual potential which must be developed to the fullest suggests that the teaching/learning environment must be one which provides equal opportunity for stimulating academic achievements regardless of gender, ethnicity, or traditional practices. It further suggests that careful attention must be given not only to the selection of resource materials, which should be free of all forms of bias, but also to the selection of resource personnel.

The environment will be one of respect and support, where the contribution of each child is valued. Where a culture for learning is established, where procedures and student behaviours are managed.

In brief, the school/classroom environment should be one in which the teacher as facilitator is indisputably in charge but students can still regard them as a special sort of friend, a protector, a challenger, someone who will permit no harm. The teacher, in carrying out his/her role within such an environment, will find the teaching profession to be an enriching and rewarding experience.

CROSS CURRICULAR SKILLS AND QUALITIES

These skills and qualities underlie the curriculum. The specifications and outcomes related to them should be achieved through the other areas of study. Cross-curricular skills and qualities are: **problem solving and research skills.**

PROBLEM SOLVING AND RESEARCH SKILLS

SPECIFICATION

Skills

CP1 apply critical thinking and problem solving skills

CP2 find, interpret and use information from a variety of sources

CRITICAL THINKING

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

CP1a recognise an issue or a problem

CP1b examine information related to the problem/issue

CP1c suggest ways of dealing with the problem/issue

RESEARCH SKILLS

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

CP2a use pictures and diagrams

CP2b use all parts of the textbook and other reference materials

CP2c handle real objects

CP2d observe with all senses

CP2e engage in direct experiences

CP2f compare ideas and information

CP2g sort and classify information

CP2h ask questions

CP2I use visuals, including pictures, sketch maps and graphs

CP2j give oral and written reports

CP2k use creative arts/language/music

LANGUAGE ARTS

RATIONALE AND PHILOSOPHY

Learning English will enable students to develop the knowledge skills and attitudes they need to communicate in English in a variety of school, community, travel, leisure and job-related contexts. Being able to use the English Language is an important aspect of Belizean life. As well, English is the language of daily communication in many countries.

Developing thinking skills and learning strategies is an important part of lifelong learning. Students who learn English will enhance their language skills in general and develop an understanding of the nature and role of language in their lives.

Certain fundamental principles relating to the nature of language, to children's development of language learning, have underscored the outcomes developed for the Area of Language Arts.

In programming for the teaching of language, teachers must understand what these principles are, what they mean, and use them in guiding the language arts process in school. The following are the principles and the resulting implications which should provide the major thrusts for the language arts curriculum.

- A language arts curriculum should emphasize lifelong applications of language arts skills.
- Development of language arts skills is integrally related to success in one's further education, career and social life.
- Discriminating enjoyment of literature, films, television programmes and other mass media can lead to an enriched use of leisure time.
- Language use reflects the inter-relatedness of the processes of listening, speaking, reading, writing and viewing.
- A language arts programme that provides for a balanced approach must be based on the integrative nature of all aspects of receptive and expressive language skills.
- Language instruction should involve students in activities that focus on the unique contribution of the language skills when used separately and together.
- Classroom activities should incorporate experiences that reflect meaningful uses of language and provide for relating skills and content.
- A balanced programme promotes the affective and psychomotor skills of the students as well as the cognitive dimension of growth.

- Language is used to communicate understandings, ideas and feelings, to assist social and personal development and to mediate thought processes. Language arts activities provided in the classroom should be organized for a balance in these areas.
- Students need opportunities to gain competencies in using language in a range of functions and in a variety of contexts.
- Students should use language to explore their own feelings and their relations with others.
- Language functions throughout the curriculum and the application of these skills are necessary for successful achievement in all subject areas.
- In the early years, the child's thinking and language ability develop in his/her own dialect. Initial learning experiences fostered by the school must be based on the acceptance and use of the oral language that young children bring to school.
- Teachers must accept and recognize the unique language of each student, and provide for language growth in a classroom characterized by mutual respect, acceptance and trust.
- The acquisition of receptive and productive control of Standard English is preceded by the goal of facilitating initial learning in children's own dialects.
- Students should communicate with increasing maturity, logic and clarity.
- Language variation is an integral part of language use.
- The acquisition of Standard English should occur within a framework that provides opportunities for students to hear and practice appropriate language forms in a variety of language situations.

Students will learn English best by interacting with their own environment and using their already-acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes; that is, their personal experiences or "fields of experiences", first lived in their "home" language. These fields of experiences which systematically reflect the different dimensions of a child's relationship with the environment, are:

- the *physical* dimension - this consists of fields of experience such as nutrition (food and drink) - these are related to their survival and to their personal well-being.
- the *social* dimension - includes fields of experience related to family, friends, holidays and celebrations and social activities
- the *recreation* dimension - includes experiences that relate to activities of children during their playtime
- the *civic* dimension - includes fields of experience related to life in society, particularly from the point of view of privileges and responsibilities
- the *intellectual* dimension - includes the fields of experience associated with activities of the mind, including the ability to discuss issues or share information relating to areas such as the arts and sciences.

These fields are also a reflection of the Goals of education which embody the four pillars on which this curriculum is built - "learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together." For the child coming to school for the first time these fields

are often relatively limited but, nevertheless, crucial in helping the child make the transition from home to school. Language plays an important role in this transition. Using these fields of experience, which are common for all children, as integrating factors, can have a powerful effect in facilitating the learning of English.

BEST PRACTICES

Effective planning for and delivery of the Language Arts curriculum, using the outcomes which identify competencies for the end of each of the three divisions of Primary education, can be achieved if the fields of experience identified are kept in mind. They provide the contexts for developing meaningful themes, workshops and projects that can be translated into teaching units and lessons. The environment created in this way facilitates meaningful communication and promotes Belizean cultures. Using this approach to language highlights its relevance in the life of the students, as well as in all curriculum areas, as they develop skill in the processes of *comprehension* - deriving meaning from oral and written text, *production* - expressing meaning by creating oral and written texts to suit different purposes, and *negotiation* - adjusting to the needs and intentions of others. Integral to these three processes are the functions of *communication.*

Students acquire this multidimensional set of skills and attitudes along a progression or continuum. Language learning is a gradual, developmental process. During this learning process, skills and attitudes are growing concurrently, at different rates and degrees of development. The continuum in the language arts syllabus are the three divisions of Primary education with outcomes - broad statements of what students are expected to do - identified for the end of each division. To facilitate students achievement of these outcomes, schools must plan so that students receive expanding access to English through eight sub-levels - three in division one, three in division two and two in division three.

Experience and language are closely interwoven in all learning situations. On the one hand, experiences expand students' language by providing them with new meanings and by modifying and enlarging previously acquired ones. On the other hand, as students gain in their ability to understand and use language, they can enter into, comprehend and react to a variety of experiences. Students must be given opportunities to enlarge their experiences, including direct experiences and those obtained vicariously through listening, reading and viewing. Students must be given help in finding and using language to clarify and organize their thinking and feeling about their experiences. As students develop concepts and understandings, there should be a continuous building from concrete experiences and discovery towards more abstract study and learning.

Language expansion occurs primarily through active involvement in language situations. School experiences must maintain the link between the learner and what is to be learned through activities that encourage participation. Students should be given opportunities to participate in experiences which require the use of language in increasingly differentiated

contexts. The language arts outcomes are grouped under the four subsets of *Speaking, Writing, Reading, Listening and Viewing.* In developing the curriculum these subsets should be combined, and through integration with other subjects provide a wealth of opportunities for students to use language in a variety of contexts. Language is best learned by proceeding from wholes to parts, not the other way around. Growth in spelling, grammar, vocabulary and punctuation is nurtured when strategies for improvement are addressed in the contexts of real reading and writing tasks rather than in isolation.

Through talk the students learn to organize their environment, interpret their experiences and communicate with others. As they mature they continue to use talk for these purposes as well as to check their understandings against those of others and to build up an objective view of reality. At all levels of schooling, classes should be organized so that there are opportunities for teachers and students to interact through the medium of talk. The recognition of talk as a significant vehicle for learning must consider the processes involved in understanding meaning conveyed by others as well as the students' own expression of meaning. Experiences are enriched when they are shared through conversation and discussion.

Through writing the student can learn to clarify thought, emotion and experience, and to share ideas, emotions and experiences with others. Writing affords an opportunity for careful organization of one's picture of reality. Through writing students can be encouraged to develop the precision, clarity and imagination demanded for effective communication. Through writing students can become sensitive to different purposes and audiences in communication.

Literature is an integral part of language learning. Students should be given many opportunities to experience and respond to literature at all stages of their development. Access to a wide variety of materials is essential to a balanced, comprehensive literature programme.

Various mass media have their own characteristic ways of presenting ideas. To discern the nature and value of ideas presented through mass media requires knowledge of the language proper to a particular medium. The school must help students develop a mass media literacy through an intelligent exploration of how ideas are conveyed through discriminative reaction and personal use of media.

Finally, and crucial to the delivery of the language arts curriculum (as well as to the delivery of all other areas of study) are the outcomes in the cross-curricular areas of Problem Solving and Research Skills and Social and Personal Qualities. The associated skills and qualities apply to lifelong learning, they enable students to function effectively within the learning environment of the school as they grow and mature; they will generalize to their lives within their communities, the nation and the world, and support them in becoming productive and responsible citizens.

SPECIFICATIONS

Skills

EL1 read for information, understanding and enjoyment

EL2 listen and view for information, understanding and enjoyment

EL3 write clearly, accurately and appropriately

EL4 speak clearly, accurately and appropriately

LOWER DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Reading

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

EL1.a use context clues to decode the meaning of words

EL1.b use phonics to assist word recognition

EL1.c use pictures in books as a clue to meaning

EL1.d identify a sequence of events

EL1.e identify cause and effect relationships

EL1.f predict what will happen in a sequence of events

EL1.g read aloud from a familiar text in order to convey meaning

EL1.h identify main ideas and supporting details

EL1.i discriminate between fact and fiction

EL1.j make inferences and draw conclusions

EL1.k interpret and follow instructions/directions

Listening and Viewing

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

EL2.a discriminate between and identify basic sounds in the English Language

EL2.b discriminate between and identify sounds in the environment

EL2.c identify main ideas and supporting details

EL2.d identify a sequence of events

EL2.e follow instructions/directions

EL2.f predict what will happen in a sequence of events

EL2.g interpret body language and gestures

Writing

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

EL3.a spell common words correctly

EL3.b punctuate and capitalise written work

EL3.c use simple grammatical structures correctly

EL3.d form letters correctly and write words and sentences legibly

EL3.e use different forms of writing to communicate ideas and feelings and to convey information

EL3.f use descriptive language to portray images, events and feelings

EL3.g use appropriate words and phrases to express thoughts and feelings and convey information

Speaking

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

EL4.a use recognisable pronunciation and appropriate stress and intonation patterns

EL4.b use simple grammatical structures correctly and appropriately

EL4.c ask questions and give information

EL4.d describe thoughts, feelings and events

EL4.e express opinions

EL4.f use words and phrases appropriate to audience

EL4.g use body language and gestures appropriate to speech

MIDDLE DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Reading

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should be able to:

EL1.a use context clues to read a selection

EL1.b apply phonetic clues and word identification strategies to distinguish between words

EL1.c read fluently with appropriate intonation and expression for information and pleasure

EL1.d use context clues to interpret a selection

EL1.e identify main ideas and supporting details

EL1.f discriminate between fact and fiction

EL1.g predict what will happen in a sequence of events

EL1.h identify cause and effect relationships

EL1.i identify a sequence of events

EL1.j make inferences and draw conclusions

EL1.k interpret and follow instructions/directions

EL1.l select material for recreational reading based on personal preference

Listening and Viewing

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should be able to:

EL2.a identify main ideas and supporting details

EL2.b identify a sequence of events

EL2.c predict what will happen in a sequence of events

EL2.d follow instructions/directions

EL2.e interpret and respond appropriately to messages conveyed through visual images

and tone of voice

Writing

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should be able to:

EL3.a demonstrate their ability to write grammatically correct sentences

EL3.b apply common rules of spelling to their work

EL3.c demonstrate the ability to punctuate and capatalise written work

EL3.d produce work that is legible and acceptable

EL3.e demonstrate the ability to use a variety of styles and forms

EL3.f demonstrate the ability to use a variety of words and phrases to express thoughts and feelings

EL3.g demonstrate unity and coherence in their writing

EL3.h apply the "writing Process" to their work

Speaking

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should be able to:

EL4.a express ideas and opinions

EL4.b use the correct pronunciation and appropriate intonation and stress

EL4.c use appropriate language to share ideas, to convince and to express feelings

EL4.d use correct grammatical structures

EL4.e ask questions and give information

EL4.f express ideas and opinions

EL4.g use body language and gestures appropriate to speech

UPPER DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Reading

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should be able to:

EL1.a use context clues and cues effectively to communicate when reading orally

EL1.b demonstrate fluency through appropriately applying word identification strategies

EL1.c select material for recreational reading based on personal preference

EL1.d apply functional reading skills (including comprehension skills) in the selection, reading and interpretation of texts

Listening and Viewing

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should be able to:

EL2.a respond sensitively and appropriately to auditory and visual stimuli

Writing

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should be able to:

EL3.a produce written work that demonstrates proper mechanics and proficiency in the conventions of writing

EL3.b produce written work that demonstrates effective English usage and grammar

EL3.c demonstrate the ability to produce work for a full range of purposes

EL3.d produce written work for self-fulfillment and aesthetic satisfaction

Speaking

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should be able to:

EL4.a use speech (English) effectively and appropriately in a variety of situations *(for a variety of functional tasks)

EL4.b use speech for self-fulfillment and aesthetic satisfaction

EL4.c use body language to compliment speech

SPANISH

RATIONALE AND PHILOSOPHY

As we approach the year 2000 it is becoming increasingly important to communicate in Spanish in Belize. Our cultural demographics, geographical location and ever increasing interaction with our neighbours in the areas of commerce, culture and education, make facility in using Spanish not only necessary, but crucial.

Functional skills in Spanish will give Belizean citizens the unique advantage of being the only bilingual country in the region. It will allow citizens to be able to more readily tap into and maximize opportunities available in neighbouring countries, and it will aid in promoting respect for and understanding of diversity among people both at home and abroad.

The inclusion of Spanish in the Primary curriculum highlights its importance and reinforces indisputable evidence that children learn a language best when it is introduced at an early age.

Students need to learn to recognize and respect cultural diversity in our society. Teaching Spanish will help to foster this respect and generalize to other "home" languages that children bring to Belizean classrooms.

In the process of learning about, and how to use Spanish they will learn the sound-symbol system, vocabulary, grammar and discourse elements that are needed to convey ideas and enhance communication in an oral or written context.

In the early years, non-analytical learning is an important foundation for developing communication skills in Spanish - the focus is on experience. The "fields of experiences" discussed in the Area of Language Arts also apply to Spanish and should be borne in mind when planning.

BEST PRACTICES

Many of the approaches identified for delivery of the Language Arts programme has relevance for the teaching of Spanish, the converse of this is equally true. Research has shown that children are successful in learning a second language through the Total Physical Response approach, and can rapidly internalize the structure of the language and vocabulary when language is synchronized with actual movements of the student's body. Through such approach Ascher (1984) affirms that students acquire second languages and that they:

- do so at an accelerated rate
- remember what they learn for a long time
- don't find learning another language to be stressful

Additionally, it is essential for teachers to consider the natural approach suggested by Krashen and Terrel (1983) which advocates the following:

- goals should emphasize communication
- comprehension should precede production whereby teachers should model the language
- students should be allowed to produce the language in stages (words, build words into phrases, building of sentences)
- teachers should emphasize acquisition rather than learning activities, thus students will focus on meaning instead of form
- teachers should develop a classroom setting conducive to the exposure of the language

The outcomes in this Area identify skills that students should acquire by the end of each division. The underlying assumption is that students begin the programme completely unfamiliar with Spanish. It presupposes that emphasis will be on "functionality" (language use) and "notions" (language concepts). Functions include such things asking questions, reporting happenings and making corrections. "Notions" are linguistic concepts such as time, location, directions and other "themes" that will be common to the "fields of experience" of students. These should form the basis of the content planned for the delivery of the curriculum.

Teachers should provide a climate of support and safety where students will feel free to take risks, and where cultural diversity is understood and appreciated. In working towards achievement of the outcomes teacher flexibility is crucial. There should be less focus on predetermined time periods to teach the language. Instead, teacher creativity in conjunction with approaches recommended in the Total Physical Response, the Natural Approach and the "fields of experience" should serve as great enhancing strategies. These will allow for an integrated approach to Spanish using techniques such as drills, games, poems and songs. The effectiveness of these methods will be determined largely by the teacher's competence in working with and sensitivity to students and the learning environment.

SPECIFICATIONS

Skills

SL1 listen to and understand simple instructions, statements and questions in Spanish

SL2 respond appropriately in Spanish to simple instructions, statements and questions

SL3 read simple forms, notes and passages in Spanish

SL4 complete forms and questionnaires and write short messages in Spanish

Attitudes

SL5 appreciate the value of being multilingual

LOWER DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Listening and Viewing

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

SL1.a discriminate and identify sounds

SL1.b identify main ideas

SL1.c interpret gestures/body language

Speaking

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

SL2.a use simple structures and vocabulary correctly and appropriately

SL2.b ask simple factual questions

SL2.c make simple factual statements

SL2.d pronounce common words and phrases comprehensibly

Writing

Deferred for LOWER Division
SL3.a

Reading

Deferred for LOWER Division
SL4.a

MIDDLE DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Listening and Viewing

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should be able to:

SL1.a identify correct pronunciation, intonation and stress

SL1.b identify main ideas and supporting details

Speaking

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should be able to:

SL2.a express thoughts and feelings using simple structures and vocabulary appropriate to
speech

SL2.b ask questions for information and understanding

SL2.c use correct pronunciation, appropriate intonation and stress

Writing

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should be able to:

SL3.a fill out forms and questionnaires

Reading

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should be able to:

SL4.a interpret simple forms, notes, messages, and follow instructions and directions

SL4.b demonstrate the ability to read using correct pronunciation, intonation and stress

UPPER DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Listening and Viewing

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should be able to:

SL1.a interpret and respond appropriately to messages conveyed through visual images and tone of voice

SL1.b interpret body language and gestures

Speaking

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should be able to:

SL2.a use speech effectively and appropriately in a variety of situations

Writing

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should be able to:

SL3.a demonstrate the ability to punctuate and capitalise written work

SL3.b demonstrate unity and coherence in their writing

Reading

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should be able to:

SL4.a interpret simple forms, notes, messages, and follow instructions and directions

SL4.b demonstrate the ability to read using correct pronunciation, intonation and stress

SL4.c identify main ideas and supporting details

SL4.d discriminate between fact and fiction

MATHEMATICS

RATIONALE AND PHILOSOPHY

Mathematics can be defined simply as the study of numbers and relations. It promotes a certain way of viewing situations, processing information and making judgements that we refer to as 'mathematical thinking and reasoning'. Numbers are used everyday for counting, measuring and computing. Understanding how things differ and how they relate to each other is essential in making most of life's decisions.

Mathematics supports the Sciences and Technology in the discovery of new ideas and in predicting events and making useful inventions. They in turn have driven mathematics to expand to keep up with their demands (Newton invented Calculus, a branch of Mathematics, to support his work in Physics). In the last fifty years, Science and Technology have rapidly developed and Mathematics has had to keep up the pace. This technological shift has impacted on the economy.

Mathematics is a useful, exciting and creative area of study. The main purpose of learning mathematics in primary schools is to help children to understand and interpret their world and solve problems that occur in it.

A knowledge of mathematics can help to develop desirable personal traits such as independence and discipline; it promotes logical thinking and can help to free one from dependence on remembered procedures; can be used in the pursuit of other subject areas and as a tool to solve problems in everyday situations.

Students' performance in mathematics has been a growing concern not only of Belizean educators but also of educators worldwide. Mathematics teaching and learning has been a challenge for teachers and students over the years. Many young children proudly name mathematics as their favorite subject when they first enter school. However, within a year or two that subject quickly becomes the least liked. An investigation of the attitude of teachers towards mathematics would certainly show a similar trend. It is for this reason that we now seek new directions to make the teaching and learning of mathematics current, relevant and exciting.

The national goals of education outline four main pillars on which the new curriculum is built. These are described as "learning to know, learning to be, learning to do, and learning to live together". These main themes highlight an important shift in education in our country. Significant importance is now being placed on 'learning' with increased emphasis on 'learning to learn'. Past emphasis on simply 'knowing' will have to shift to 'learning to know', and greater emphasis will have to be given to 'learning to do' and 'learning to be'

If we are to achieve the national goals of education, we will have to change the way we educate our children. One significant shift will have to come in the way children learn

mathematics. Students today require stronger mathematical knowledge and skills if they are to survive in the rapidly changing world around them and this will continue to be so. The needs of our society are continuously changing. As a result, we see changes in mathematics and how it is used and changes in the role of technology. As a small developing nation in a "global village", Belize needs to provide its citizens with knowledge and skills necessary to cope with international competition.

All these changes will require a shift in the teaching and learning of mathematics. For students to be informed citizens of the next century, schools will have to ensure that students have an opportunity to be competitive in this technological oriented workforce. This will affect what needs to be taught and the concepts and procedures children must master. Teachers will, therefore, need to align the teaching and learning of mathematics to meet these needs.

If we are to respond to these changing times, and prepare our children to cope, that is, to become mathematically literate, there are certain fundamental principles that should guide teaching and learning.

The learning outcomes outlined in this document are, therefore, based on some of the current thinking on the teaching and learning of mathematics. It proposes the content, instructional and assessment strategies which teachers should employ if we are to achieve our goals. The mathematics curriculum, therefore, should:

- be concept oriented
- actively involve students in doing mathematics
- emphasize the development of mathematical thinking and reasoning
- emphasize the usefulness of mathematics (application)
- extend the range of mathematics to cover more branches
- make use of appropriate technology.

The curriculum should emphasize the meaningful development of concepts, the interrelationships and connections among topics, and the application of mathematics to the solution of real life problems. The development of topics should progress from the building of a foundation for understanding concepts at an early stage. A strong conceptual framework provides the anchor for the acquisition and development of problem-solving skills. This means that more time will be devoted to the development of student understanding and there will be decreased emphasis on rote and memorization of rules and procedures and on teaching by telling.

The learning of mathematics must be an active process. Teachers will have to create an environment that gets children actively involved. They need to listen to pupils and to guide them in their development of ideas.

The mathematics curriculum should help to develop mathematical thinking and reasoning skills. Pupils will use the language of mathematics to describe mathematical

ideas. They will use their reasoning skills to make, test, and evaluate statements and to justify steps in mathematical procedures. They should, therefore, be exposed to a variety of problems from real life situations for which they will need to develop a repertoire of skills and strategies for solving a variety of problem types. These should not be treated merely as topics to be taught in isolation. Rather, the curriculum must provide a means by which these can be integrated across all topics.

If pupils are to see the relevance of mathematics, they must view it as a practical subject that can be applied to the solution of everyday problems.

For students to become mathematically literate the curriculum should include a broad range of content. These should include such important branches as measurement, geometry, statistics, probability and algebra. These have significant and growing applications to various occupations.

The curriculum should help students to develop confidence in mathematics. Teachers should help pupils to see mathematics as everyday activities. To a certain extent, everyone does mathematics unconsciously. We buy at shops, at the market, we measure when we want to build, to paint, to decorate. If pupils are given numerous experiences in solving problems, they will soon learn to trust their own thinking.

The development of students' power in mathematics involves learning to communicate mathematically. This requires the learning of signs, symbols and mathematical terms. The opportunity to discuss listen, read, and write will help them to clarify their thinking and deepen their understanding of what is being studied.

BEST PRACTICES

Teachers need to create an environment that encourages children to explore, develop, test, discuss, and apply ideas. They need to listen carefully to children and to guide them in the development of ideas. They need to make extensive and thoughtful use of physical materials to foster the learning of abstract ideas. Classrooms, especially those in the infant division, need to have a variety of physical materials: stoppers, counters, geometric shapes -regular and irregular; measuring tools; fraction pieces etc. to motivate students in meaningful learning and to construct relationships.
Emphasis should be on varied pedagogical approaches: thematic, cooperative learning groups; discussion and inquiry; interdisciplinary approach- field trips, integrated projects, environmental studies

Emphasis should be on the development of problem-solving and decision-making skills.

There should be increased attention to oral interaction. Many times in their haste to get to an answer teachers' overlook important misconceptions that pupils develop. Probing,

questioning, talking through an idea, can help pupils to develop confidence in seeking solutions to problems.

Teachers should make instructional decisions based on pupils' progress. This is determined through information from formal and informal assessment of each child's growth. Assessment should, therefore, be continuous and should include more than paper and pencil tests. Teachers should use a variety of strategies to obtain the information. These include observations, interviews and portfolios which can also help to provide evidence of pupils' growth.

SPECIFICATIONS

Knowledge

M1 know the number system and the importance of accuracy

M2 know about spatial relationships and shapes

Skills

M3 measure, quantify and calculate

M4 estimate and make predictions

M5 collect, present and interpret numerical data

LOWER DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Number

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should understand:

M1.a place value in one, two and three digit whole numbers

M1.b consecutive sequence and position of whole numbers 1 – 999

M1.c quantity in whole numbers (0-999)

M1.d properties of odd and even numbers

M1.c quantity of fractions

Spatial Relationships and Shapes

By the end of Lower Division, pupils should understand:

M2.a basic properties of some three dimensional shapes

M2.b basic properties of some two dimensional shapes

Measure, Quantify and Calculate

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

M3.a use measuring devices to measure distance, capacity, weight and time

M3.b use coins and bills up to $5.00

M3.c add whole numbers up to a sum of three digits (with regrouping in units column) to solve relevant problems

M3.d subtract whole numbers up to three digits (with borrowing in units column) to solve relevant problems

M3.e multiply and divide whole numbers (with and without remainders) within the confines of the two, three, four, five and ten times tables to solve relevant problems

M3.f add and subtract simple fractions to solve relevant problems

Estimate and Make Predictions

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

M4.a make reasonable judgements of quantity, distance and size

M4.b use data to assess the likely occurrence of an event or to forecast a trend

Data Handling

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

M5.a gather, record and organise data

M5.b use diagrams, pictographs and charts to present data

MIDDLE DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Number

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should understand:

M1.a place value in numbers up to five digits

M1.b the consecutive sequence and position of whole numbers 1 – 9999

M1.c quantity in whole numbers (0-9999)

M1.d properties of odd and even numbers

M1.e the properties of prime and composite numbers

M1.f the concept of other rational numbers including percent, fractions, ratio and integers

M1.g understand other systems of writing numbers

Spatial Relationships and Shapes

By the end of Middle Division, pupils should understand:

M2.a the geometric properties of some common two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes

M2.b how the position of two-dimensional shapes is affected by movement

M2.c degrees as a measure of turn

Measure, Quantify and Calculate

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should be able to:

M3.a measure capacity, distance, weight and time using standard and non-standard measuring devices

M3.b use and convert coins and bills up to $100.00

M3.c add and subtract whole numbers and decimals to solve problems

M3.d multiply and divide whole numbers to solve problems

M3.e add, subtract, multiply and divide fractions to solve problems

Estimate and Make Predictions

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should be able to:

M4.a make reasonable approximations based on relevant life experiences

M4.b use logical reasoning, based on meaningful data to draw conclusions about the likely occurrence of an event

Data Handling

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should be able to:

M5.a collect, analyse and present data using charts, graphs, tables and diagrams

UPPER DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Number

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should understand:

M1.a place value in numbers up to ten digits

M1.b the consecutive sequence and position of whole numbers 1 – 999999

M1.c quantity in whole numbers (0-999999)

M1.d properties of prime and composite numbers

M1.e the of other number systems

Spatial Relationships and Shapes

By the end of Upper Division, pupils should understand:

M2.a how to draw and construct three-dimensional objects

M2.b how to plot the position and movement of two-dimensional shapes

M2.c how shapes fit together to form patterns

M2.d the relationship between angles in different two-dimensional shapes

Measure, Quantify and Calculate

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should be able to:

M3.a measure, estimate, express and compute distance, weight, time, capacity and temperature and apply to practical situations

M3.b use and convert money based on its relative value and its use in financial transactions

M3.c apply algebraic expressions to solve problems

Estimate and Make Predictions

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should be able to:

M4.a make and apply reasonable approximations by observing and/or using factual data based on meaningful references

M4.b predict the likely occurrence of an event, through logical reasoning, based on trends

Data Handling

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should be able to:

M5.a collect, analyse and interpret data and predict probable outcomes

M5.b apply the concept of “sets” to practical solutions

SCIENCE

PHILOSOPHY AND RATIONALE

Science has assisted humanity in moving from subsistence hunter-gatherers at the mercy of their environment to architectural builder-molders of their environment. Scientists have and will continue to wield great power in the development of humankind and its relationship to whichever portion of the universe in which humankind may find itself. There are those who believe that the survival of our earth, "the third rock from the sun", depends on the judicious practice of science. In this context, the time may be here when science must cease to be the 'realm' or 'pit' of a minority. Science must become the tool of all those who inhabit the universe and influence its processes.

Primary schooling in Belize is seen as a preparation of "…(a) student for living in a society and environment in which he is functional and productive" in order to promote the common good and welfare of his society and environment. The skills and attitudes promulgated through the practice of science admirably equip students to be life long partners in the development of their multifaceted, ever-changing physical and personal worlds.

Science has, over the centuries, been one of humanities most used and abused, tool for acquiring knowledge. It has been the realm of the elite philosophers and the pit of the feared sorcerers; it has been confused with magic, spiritualism and more recently with the creator. Throughout humans' permutations of it, however, science has been constant in itself. Science is a body of knowledge concerned with establishing and systematizing facts, principles, and methods. This body of knowledge shifts, grows and changes as scientists – the practitioners of science- through a systematic and deliberate use of trial and error, coupled with imaginative thought (the 'scientific method'), apply themselves to the task of discovering and understanding the universe – its parts and its processes.

BEST PRACTICES

Current theories urge educators to use the inborn talents and abilities of learners to facilitate the learning/teaching experiences and to use familiar situations to demonstrate concepts in relation to students' own experiences and interests. Children's innate curiosity compels them to continuously ask questions about their worlds (**Question**). They intuitively seek answers (**Knowledge**) through trial and error (**Investigate**). They share (**Compare/Communicate**) their answers with each other (**Discuss**). They 'check each other out' point by point (**Analyze**) and explain the why's and why-nots of their doings (**Interpret**). They may accept one or the other's answer or they may combine their answers (**Conclude**). On the other hand, they may challenge each other to obtain more proof (*ask another question, investigate, compare, discuss*…). In effect, they seek and find knowledge using the **scientific method**. Children are naturally scientists.

Science teachers, then, need only assist in the development of and refinement of the skills of children. Through **exploration** of scientific content, the **skills** of *questioning, comparing, classifying, sequencing, investigating, organizing, interpreting, evaluating and measuring* are developed. *Logical reasoning* to devise solutions to problems/questions and arrive at conclusions is practiced. Since the practice of science is communal, **team building** is a natural outcome. Embedded in the development of these skills are many others – the *ability to read, to communicate in various forms, to manipulate numbers, to make use of technology*. Concurrent with skill development, the practice of science fosters **development of attitudes** without which science looses much of its usefulness and meaning to the individual and his worlds: *objectivity, integrity, initiative and inquiry, inventiveness, respect for and recognition of the limits of all things*. The skills and attitudes refined through the exploration of scientific content become the **tools** of the critical thinker, to be used in evaluating and compensating for the shifts and changes in his worlds.

Over time, the practice of science builds communities of persons with the abilities to live in their worlds – physical, personal, societal, and of work –as meaningful and productive members. The joy of self-fulfillment of ones first step is repeated with each contribution made, each solution found, each insight gained. Children nurtured in an environment of encouragement develop into confident adults. Science, practiced not taught, will continue to be one of humanities finest tools in forming individuals empowered to meet the challenges of their ever-changing worlds throughout their lives.

SPECIFICATIONS

Knowledge

ST1 know about natural history

ST2 know that the earth is part of the solar system, which in turn is part of the universe

ST3 be aware of major theories of the origin of the universe

ST4 know about the structure of the earth and its atmosphere

ST5 know about matter and energy

ST6 know about time and motion, forces and simple machines

ST7 know about living things and understand their relationship to the environment

ST8 understand interdependence and balance and appreciate the importance of protecting the environment and conserving resources for future generations

Attitudes and Values

ST9 appreciate their position in the universe and that man has only been in the universe for a relatively short time

ST10 recognise the importance of good management of natural resources

LOWER DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Natural History

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should understand:

ST1.a some similarities and differences between animals now and animals in prehistoric times

The Universe

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should understand:

ST2.a the relationship in space between the earth and other planets in the solar system

ST2.b the relationship in space between the earth and the moon

Theories of the Origin of the Universe (Deferred at LOWER)
ST3.a

Structure of the Earth's Atmosphere (Deferred at LOWER)
ST4.a

Matter and Energy

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should understand:

ST5.a the physical characteristics and uses of a variety of everyday materials/substances

ST5.b some sources and uses of light, heat and power

Time and Motion, Forces and Simple Machines

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should understand:

ST6.a how force affects the speed, the position, and the shape of a variety of objects

ST6.b how the amount of force required to make an object slide is affected by the surface materials

ST6.c how simple machines influence the amount of force needed to affect the speed, the

position, and the shape of a variety of objects

Living Things

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should understand:

ST7.a how plants and animals grow and reproduce in their environment

ST7.b some ways in which to organise living things into groups

ST7.c how their own growth and development differs from that of animals

The Environment

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should understand:

ST8.a how different life forms affect other life forms and their environment

ST8.b how changes in their environment affect various life forms

ST8.c how their own actions affect the environment

MIDDLE DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Natural History

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should understand:

ST1.a some of the changes in living things and their environment from prehistoric times (life before human kind) to the present

The Universe

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should understand:

ST2.a some similarities and differences between the earth, the planets, and other celestial bodies in our solar system

Theories of the Origin of the Universe (Deferred at MIDDLE)
ST3.a

Structure of the Earth's Atmosphere (Deferred at MIDDLE)
ST4.a

Matter and Energy

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should understand:

ST5.a some basic changes which different materials can undergo

ST5.b some sources and uses of various forms of energy

Time and Motion, Forces and Simple Machines

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should:

ST6.a understand time in relation to earth's rotation and orbit around the sun, and the moon's orbit around the earth

ST6.b know the basic components and functions of simple machines in changing the speed or force of objects

Living Things

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should understand:

ST7.a the characteristics of living things, the main categories into which they can be grouped, and how these interrelate with the environment

The Environment

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should understand:

ST8.a the natural processes which support and maintain the environment

ST8.b the need for protection, care and responsible use of the environment

UPPER DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Natural History

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should understand:

ST1.a some of the explanations for changes in life forms since prehistoric times (life before human kind)

The Universe

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should:

ST2.a achieve a deeper understanding of the revolution of the earth and moon and other celestial bodies in the universe

[**Theories of Origin of the Universe (Deferred at UPPER)**
ST3.a]

Structure of the Earth and its Atmosphere

By the end of Upper Division, pupils should understand:

ST4.a the organisation and characteristics of the earth's spheres

Matter and Energy

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should understand:

ST5.a how particle theory relates to changes in different materials and substances

ST5.b the properties and transformation of some forms of energy

Time and Motion, Forces and Simple Machines

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should understand:

ST6.a the effects of forces on matter in relation to mass, speed, and direction

ST6.b how the force created by combining simple machines can accomplish a common task

Living Things

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should understand:

ST7.a the structure and function of living things in relation to the categories into which they are grouped

ST7.b how living things develop different characteristics to adapt to and survive in the environment

The Environment

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should understand:

ST8.a the interrelationships and dependence that exist within the environment

ST8.b the effects of society on the environment and the need to conserve and protect it

WORK AND TECHNOLOGY

RATIONALE

The Technology Area of Study in the primary school curriculum is designed to help prepare students for life in a rapidly changing world – a world of expanding knowledge and technological development in which new challenges and opportunities continually arise.

Technology constitutes a universal element within all cultures and is critical for cultural survival. Primary school students encounter technology in their daily lives and have a natural curiosity about the communication, construction, manufacturing and transportation systems used in their homes and communities. However, these students may have little information or understanding of these systems, which are critical to their survival and prosperity; – e.g. How the food, clothing, shelter and other goods and services that sustain life are produced. How technology contributes to the transportation and communication needs of society; and proper safety practices related to the products of technology that they encounter.

Today, we are living in a changing environment in which increasingly complex questions and issues are being encountered. The decisions made and actions taken by our citizens need to be based on an understanding of their world and on their ability to ask relevant questions, seek answers, define problems and find solutions.

PHILOSOPHY

The National Goals of the National Comprehensive Curriculum of Belize, and therefore, the Primary education system, are rooted in the philosophic orientation that sees education as a lifelong acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes. This is required for full personal development and for active participation in society. Pragmatism, which encompasses experientialism and progressivism, best represents technology education. These philosophic orientations advocate the scientific method of teaching and learning, they allow for initiative and stress projects and activities that focuses on teaching students “how” rather than “what” to think.

Flexibility is important in the design of the program for Technology, emphasis is placed on experimentation, life experiences, collaboration, adaptability, innovation and creativity. The learner is seen as an active, experiencing, thinking, exploring individual; the role of the school as actively preparing students to adapt to and promote change, to become makers of meaning and facilitators

of the democratic process. The assertion is that interest in an intellectual activity will generate the practice needed for learning.

BEST PRACTICES

Approaches to the teaching of Technology are guided by principles inherent in its Rationale and Philosophy.

- **Children's curiosity provides a natural starting point for learning.**

Young children are natural inquirers and problem solvers. They have a keen interest in the materials around them and move naturally into activities that involve manipulation of materials, exploration and discovery. In teaching Technology during the primary school years' teachers should nurture and extend this curiosity, so that students continue to question, explore and investigate, with increasing levels of insight and skill.

- **Children's learning builds on what they currently know and can do.**

Children's initial concepts of the world influence what they observe and how they interpret the events they experience. They enter school having learned a great deal about their world through play and exploration. They show extensive practical knowledge about materials in their environment, as well as the ability to observe, question, test, construct and create. Technology experiences provided by teachers, during the elementary years should be designed to build on the knowledge that students already have and to extend and sharpen their investigative skills. As they add to their knowledge and modify their ideas and ways of viewing the world, they become aware of order and continuity in the world extending beyond their personal experience. They discover new patterns in things – patterns of structure, patterns in the way that materials interact. In teaching technology teachers should assist students in discovering and interpreting these patterns and help them connect new ideas with their existing knowledge.

- **Communication is essential for developing skills in technology.**

Language provides a means for students to develop and explore their ideas and to express what they have learned. By communicating their questions, observations, discoveries, predictions and conclusions, they can refine and consolidate their learning and identify new connections and avenues to explore.

Language also plays a role in developing the skills of inquiry and problem solving. The actions of identifying problems, asking questions and proposing ideas require the use of a particular kind of language. The ability to define problems and ask clear questions is a keystone to growth in this area.

- **Students learn best when they are challenged and actively involved.**

Students learn best when they become personally involved in their learning. By its very nature Technology requires active inquiry and problem solving. It requires that students be engaged in developing or adapting a plan of action and evaluating results. By ensuring that students participate in activities and reflecting on the meaning of what they do, teachers can help students develop the skills of "learning how to learn", one of the cornerstones of the National Comprehensive Curriculum. In the process students achieve depth in their understanding.

- **Confidence and self-reliance are important outcomes of learning**

Children develop confidence when their ideas and contributions are valued and when there is a supportive climate for learning. By providing opportunities for students to explore ideas and materials, engage in open-ended activities and evaluate their own progress, they can be encouraged to take initiative in learning. When teachers refer questions and problems back to students and when students' ideas and decisions are supported, they learn to become more self-reliant. Confidence is achieved as students recognize that the knowledge and skills that they have gained enable a measure of independent action.

Technology provides students with a practical focus – finding ways of making and doing things to meet a given need using available materials. The outcome is a product or process that a person can use.

Activities/projects in the schools' curriculum are geared to facilitate students in developing skills that enable them to solve problems – identify what is needed, proposing ways of solving the problem, trying out ideas and evaluating how things work.

The process is usually not a linear one. Often, processes that will be needed to solve a problem are not foreseen in advance; and there may be repeated cycles of reflection, developing new ideas and trying new approaches, all within the larger pattern of the activity. Teachers need to be there to provide students with the support that will motivate them to persevere.

Challenging problems require persistence. An idea may not work at first; but with careful observation, adjustment, reflection and refinement, a solution that is close to the original idea may be found. Student success is enhanced when teachers

provide opportunities for them to explore materials in an unstructured way, before starting formal investigations. By providing a supportive climate for trying new ideas teachers can help students to develop confidence and competence in technology.

SPECIFICATIONS

Skills

WT1 demonstrate skills in design and technology

Knowledge

WT2 understand different forms of modern communication technology

WT3 understand the ingredients and dynamics of production and productivity

WT4 understand the elements and dynamics of Belize's economy and its relationship to the regional and global economy

Attitudes/Values

WT5 value work and employment

WT6 value the importance of good management of natural resources

WT7 value appropriate technology

LOWER DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Technology

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

WT1.a investigate ways to solve a simple problem to meet a need

WT1.b design a device to meet a need/solve a problem

WT1.c construct a simple device to meet a need/solve a problem

WT1.d test a simple device to see if it meets a need/solves a problem

Communication Technology

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should understand:

WT2.a the role of different forms of communication device in their everyday lives

Production and Productivity

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should understand:

WT3.a how family members depend on each other to satisfy their needs and wants

WT3.b the importance of the services provided by people in the community

WT3.c how people in the community process resources and sell the products to satisfy their needs and wants

Entrepreneurship – Deferred at LOWER WT4.a

Belize's Economy Regionally and Globally – Deferred at LOWER WT5.a

MIDDLE DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Technology

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should be able to:

WT1.a identify a simple problem/need

WT1.b design a device to meet a need/solve a problem

WT1.c construct a simple device to meet a need/solve a problem

WT1.d test a simple device to see if it meets a need/solves a problem

Communication Technology

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should understand:

WT2.a the role of different forms of communication device in industry and commerce

Production and Productivity

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should understand:

WT3.a the elements which contribute to the effectiveness of the work people do

WT3.b some of the processes within Belize's industrial sectors

Entrepreneurship

By the end of Middle Division pupils should be able to:

WT4.a identify an area of need

WT4.b prepare a business plan

WT4.c identify sources of financing

WT4.d activate the plan

Entrepreneurship

WT4.e evaluate the business

WT4.f modify the plan or orientation of the business

Belize's Economy Regionally and Globally

By the end of the Middle Division pupils should understand:

WT5.a how industrial sectors contribute to the wealth of the nation

WT5.b understand how regional and global trading links affect the capacity of Belize to create wealth

UPPER DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Technology

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should be able to:

WT1.a identify a simple problem/need

WT1.b design a device to meet a need/solve a problem

WT1.c construct a simple device to meet a need/solve a problem

WT1.d test a simple device to see if it meets a need/solves a problem

Communication Technology

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should understand:

WT2.a the role of different forms of communication device in industry and commerce

Production and Productivity

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should understand:

WT3.a the elements which contribute to the effectiveness of the work people do

WT3.b some of the processes within Belize's industrial sectors

Entrepreneurship

By the end of Upper Division pupils should be able to:

WT4.a identify an area of need

WT4.b prepare a business plan

WT4.c identify sources of financing

WT4.d activate the plan

WT4.e evaluate the business

WT4.f modify the plan or orientation of the business

Belize's Economy Regionally and Globally

By the end of the Upper Division pupils should understand:

WT5.a how industrial sectors contribute to the wealth of the nation

WT5.b understand how regional and global trading links affect the capacity of Belize to create wealth

SOCIAL STUDIES

RATIONALE AND PHILOSOPHY

The National Comprehensive Curriculum for Primary Education is embedded in the philosophy "which sees education as the lifelong acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes required for full personal development and for active participation in society." The principal foci of education are, therefore, the person and the social milieu in which he/she operates. However, the two are inseparably linked in a dynamic process of interactions, interrelationships and interdependence. The purpose of education is to facilitate and foster the full development of the person and his social functionality. That is, education should ensure that the person acquires the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes and the capacity for lifelong learning as well as empowerment to actively participate as a productive unit in the development for his/her society.

The organisation of the curriculum in terms of content and structure has been guided by this philosophy and has been informed by the domains of experience – the common life experiences, obligations and needs of the person and society. Rigorous analysis of current and projected common life experiences, obligations and needs reveals that a major domain of experience is that of social interactions and organised society – in actuality, the world of people. To assist the learner to develop to his full potential and to actively participate in society, the learner must be exposed to, and must take part in, teaching and learning situations, experiences and activities derived from and related to the domain of social interactions and organised society.

BEST PRACTICES

The Social Sciences/Social Studies Area of Study are academic disciplines deriving their concepts, principles, approaches and body of knowledge from social interactions and organised society. However, the academic disciplines or area of study cannot be divorced from the realities from which they are derived. In other words, Social Sciences/Social Studies is not merely to be studied in isolation from the 'real' world; the attitudes, values, skills and knowledge that it seeks to develop in the learner are very much part of the learner's everyday life. The social functionality of the learner, that is his/her ability to actively participate in society, is directly related to the learner acquiring and developing the requisite attitudes, values, skills and knowledge of the area of study.

Scholars of the Social Sciences/Social Studies acknowledge that people are multifaceted beings. That is, human behaviour and interactions span a wide range of activities. This wide range of human activities determines the content of the Social Sciences/Social Studies – the concepts, principles, approaches and body of knowledge. The content of this area of study has normally been organised into the specialised disciplines of sociology, political science, economics and psychology. But since human behaviour and

interactions take place in a physical environment and cover a wide span of time, the disciplines of geography and history also form an integral part of this area of study.

However, it is readily acknowledged that human behaviour and interactions cannot be neatly compartmentalised. This is to say that at no time do humans behave only as social, political, economic, emotional, intellectual or physical beings. The separation of the area of study into discrete academic disciplines is, therefore, somewhat artificial – there are no clearly defined boundaries between the various aspects of human behaviour. The holism (or 'wholeness') of the person must always be borne in mind.

The goal of the Social Sciences/Social Studies area of study is to develop and enhance the learner's full potential to actively participate in development of his/her society. The learner is, therefore, the centre of the teaching and learning process.

The approach to planning for the delivery of the Social Sciences/Social Studies programme must be guided by the following:

- Concepts: This involves identifying the key concepts (such as culture, institution, power, change etc) and exploring principles for organising these concepts (such as concept clusters, themes etc).

- Issues and Problems: This involves identifying the major issues and problems related to society and the social functionality of the learner. Such issues and problems include, among others, decision-making, the influences of the media, crime and violence, etc. Clearly, concepts and issues and problems are not mutually exclusive.

- Direct learner involvement: The learner is not only involved in the process of learning but he/she also lives and operates in the society for which education is preparing him/her. The learner must be directly involved not only in his/her own learning but must also practice what he/she has learnt.

- Process, attitudes and values: Learning and living are interdependent processes. These processes cannot be separated from attitudes and values. Effective teaching and learning can best take place in a conducive environment. This environment must as closely as possible approximate the living environment of the learner. Social interactions and interrelations must not only be encouraged but must also be planned for.

Some general strategies for effective teaching and learning in the area of study include

- Direct learner involvement in all aspects of the learning process: This acknowledges that the learner is not a passive object but is an active participant who is at the centre of the teaching and learning experience.

- Inquiry: Involve the learner in activity-based research into meaningful issues and problems. Ensure that the learner can and does make connections between learning and living.

- Interest: Stimulate and build on the natural and inherent curiosity and interests of the learner.

- Skill development: Build on the existing skills of the learner. Cater to the learner's multiple intelligence and provide meaningful opportunities for the use of these skills.

The successful implementation of the Social Sciences/Social Studies programme will ensure that the learner achieves the outcomes of the National Syllabus. The learner will develop to his/her full potential and will be able to actively participate in his/her society.

SPECIFICATIONS

Knowledge

SS1 know the history and status of Belize as a nation, including its social, political, and economic development

SS2 know the physical environment, topography and natural resources of Belize

SS3 know the structure and machinery of the government of Belize

SS4 know of world geography and of regional and global communities

SS5 know about the different cultural groups in Belize, their lifestyle and languages

SS6 know about cultures of the world and how Belizean cultural relates to these

Attitudes and Values

SS7 have a commitment to civic obligations

SS8 have a commitment to and involvement in the preservation and development of the nation of Belize

SS9 appreciate and participate in activities that strengthen the bonds of unity and value the common destiny they share as a people

SS10 have tolerance for others

SS11 have a commitment to justice and equity for all

LOWER DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

History and Status of Belize

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should understand:

SS1.a time periods in relation to their own growth and development

SS1.b why life in their local community now is different from life in the past

Physical Environment of Belize

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should understand:

SS2.a weather and climate patterns and how these affect their lives and the lives of people in their community

SS2.b some ways in which their community adapts to natural landscape features

SS2.c how the land and water are used to provide for the physical needs of people in the community

Government of Belize

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should understand:

SS3.a how their rights as children are protected

SS3.b the need for rules (e.g. at home, at school, and in the community)

World Geography - Deferred at LOWER
SS4.a

Culture

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should understand:

SS5.a the customs and traditions which their family follows

SS5.b the use of their first language as a vehicle for communication

MIDDLE DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

History and Status of Belize

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should understand:

SS1.a some aspects of the social, economic and political conditions affecting the lives of pre-European people in Belize

SS1.b the origins and dynamics of slavery, and the relationship between slavery and colonialism in Belize

SS1.c the main developments that Belize experienced on the way to nationhood and independence

Physical Environment of Belize

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should understand:

SS2.a weather changes and the factors which affect the different parts of Belize

SS2.b how natural landscape features influence the pattern of settlement in Belize

SS2.c how people use the natural resources of Belize

Government of Belize

By the end of Middle Division, pupils should understand:

SS3.a how the government of Belize is organised in order to provide for the needs of the people

World Geography

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should understand:

SS4.a how the movement of the earth causes changes in time and seasons

SS4.b understand the division of the earth's land and water and the physical features of which they are comprised

World Geography

SS4.c some ways in which people in different regions of the world have adapted to their physical environment

Culture

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should understand:

SS5.a the way of life in Belize in relation to Central America, North America and the Caribbean

SS5.b how the different ethnic groups organize themselves

UPPER DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

History and Status of Belize

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should understand:

SS1.a how the social-economic-political conditions existing in pre-European times influenced later developments in Belize

SS1.b the social-political-economic transformation of Belize from a slave society to a "free" society

SS1.c the transformation of Belize from a colony to an independent nation

Physical Environment of Belize

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should understand:

SS2.a the relationship between the location of Belize and its climate and weather conditions

SS2.b how the different natural landscape features and natural resources relate to human activity

SS2.c how natural resources influence the settlement and development of Belize

Government of Belize

By the end of Upper Division, pupils should understand:

SS3.a the major features of central and local government in Belize

SS3.b the process used by the government of Belize in conducting the business of the people

World Geography

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should understand:

SS4.a climatic variation across different regions of the world and how this relates to natural vegetation

SS4.b how major landforms around the world were formed

SS4.c how the distribution of natural resources across the world affects human activity and settlement

Culture

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should understand:

SS5.a how the different ethnic groups interact with one another and the cultural changes that have occurred over time

SS5.b other cultures of the world in relation to the Belizean culture

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

RATIONALE AND PHILOSOPHY

The rationale for physical education as a subject taught in Belizean schools comes directly from the National Goals of Education. The goal relating to this area of study states that education should allow for the development of "A knowledge and practice of healthy lifestyles". Schooling, as part of education, accepts primary and distinctive responsibility for facilitating the achievement of outcomes derived from specifications. The specifications related to the Area of Physical Education state that students should:

- participate in physical activity for sport, leisure and health
- recognize the importance of avoiding unhealthy habits and lifestyles

To achieve these requires a physically educated individual who can develop an interest in physical activity as an essential component of an active, healthy lifestyle. Physical education is an integral part of the total programme. Through movement-centered experiences, physical education provides a basis on which an individual's development can be maximized in the psychomotor, cognitive and affective domains.

Physical education should promote the development of quality and meaningful movement that is attained through carefully selected and sequenced experiences in the classroom instruction of the physical education programme. These experiences should allow students to respond physically at a level of performance related to their level of development. The programme should:

- assist students in developing efficient and effective motor skills and applying these skills in a wide variety of physical activities
- assist students in developing and maintaining physical fitness
- assist students in developing knowledge and understanding of factors involved in attaining competence in and appreciation of physical activity
- assist students in developing and maintaining positive personal attributes and interpersonal relationships, including a positive attitude towards continued participation in physical activity

BEST PRACTICES

It is widely believed that daily physical activity enhances mental and emotional well-being and contribute to physical health. However, in the planning and delivery of a physical education programme provisions must be made for those students whose participation may be affected by physical limitations. Throughout the programme efforts should be made to promote and maintain a spirit of co-operation and sportsmanship. Some activities that are effective in promoting physical fitness include:

- activities that emphasize optimum functioning of the cardio-respiratory and muscular-skeletal systems; through these activities students develop insights into the systems and functions of the body and how these are affected by movement and exercise
- games activities which emphasize sending, receiving and retaining skills, footwork, agility and body co-ordination, and the elements of offence and defense
- gymnastics activities which emphasize body management skills that develop strength, flexibility and fluency of movement
- dance activities which include a variety of dance forms and emphasize the expressive aspect of movement in which the body is used as a means of communicating ideas and feelings
- outdoor pursuits which emphasize physical activities requiring wise and careful use of the environment
- track and field which emphasizes walking, running, jumping and throwing activities and require speed, height, distance and endurance

HEALTH

RATIONALE AND PHILOSOPHY

Good health depends on a combination of factors: the environment in which we live and work; the personal traits we have inherited; the care we receive from doctors and hospitals; and the personal behaviours and habits that we perform daily. All of these factors work together and affect our health.

Every day we are exposed to potential risks to good health. Pollution in the air we breathe is one example. It is a risk that we, as individuals, cannot do much about. Improving the quality of the environment usually requires the effort of concerned citizens working together for a healthier community.

There are, however, risks that we can control: risks stemming from our personal behaviours and habits. Health experts now agree that these personal behaviours and habits make up one of the most important factors in reducing potential risks and enhancing one's overall health.

The school has an important role to play in helping students to acquire knowledge and develop skills and attitudes that will enable them to live healthy lives. The Goals of Education for Belize and the Primary specifications which are derived from them have clear implications for health education. Two of the Goals in particular address issues of health:

- G3 Spirituality, social skills and personal qualities
- G5 Knowledge and practice of healthy lifestyles

The outcomes derived from these goals identify knowledge, skills and attitudes that students are expected to demonstrate.

Good health education will help students to cope with the major health problems of our times. In our society, these include such potentially crippling or fatal conditions as AIDS, heart disease, respiratory disorders, cancer and accidental injuries. They also include problems related to stress management, diet and fitness, as well as disorders having to do with our ability to relate to others and to find meaning in our lives. Good health education will address all of these concerns.

Knowledge of the human body and how it works forms an important part of the health component. However, students must know more than that. To deal effectively with today's health problems, they must, in keeping with one of the four pillars of learning which forms the foundation of this curriculum - "learn to live together". This pillar involves, among other things, the need for the management of conflicts in an intelligent and peaceful way. To do this requires good interpersonal skills. Students must understand the many factors such as peer pressure, advertising, and family and community values, that influence the decisions they make. Moreover, they must be aware of the decision-making process, and learn good decision-making skills. Because

values play such an important role in decision-making they are important in planning for the health curriculum. These values also form the basis for the Area Social Skills and Personal Qualities which is applied across all areas of study. They are attributes which contribute to physical, mental and social well-being.

BEST PRACTICES

Schools need to provide a safe venue for students to deal with situations and issues that, at times, can be extremely sensitive. Within classroom walls they need an environment where they can grow intellectually and emotionally with their peers; where they can try on a variety of moral and emotional "hats" without fear of failure or ridicule. Because of the very sensitive nature of issues addressed in health, it is crucial for teachers to be aware of these and plan a health programme that will:
(a) ensure that students achieve the outcomes identified for the end of each division and
(b) honor the integrity and self-esteem of all students

In dealing with issues of health it must be remembered that:

- many of them are based on values, values which may be deeply held and may have economic, social, historical and even political implications
- interpretations may vary and depend on the "lens" the individual student may use to examine the issue
- in a multicultural-multiethnic society such as ours a class of students will reflect cultural, racial, linguistic and economic diversity. These differences in beliefs, values and circumstances may result in divergent, deeply held and emotionally charged perspectives on some health issues.
- issues may be sensitive for particular students if materials or topics studied are incompatible with the values and practices of the home
- for a variety of reasons, students may have a "personal stake" in the topic or issue. For some it may involve painful events they may have experienced first hand; for others, parents and friends may be personally involved.

One of the tenets on which this new curriculum is built is that learning should be about life and should be relevant to the child in his/her environment. In Health, students will inevitably encounter conflicting viewpoints, values and moral positions as a result of many of the real-life and real-world situations and concerns they will discuss and explore. These may, at times, prove difficult to handle for classroom teachers if they are not prepared.

The following are a few guidelines to consider in planning for the Health programme:

- follow policy recommendations for the selection of materials
- involve parents and the community to provide input where the topic to be taught warrants it

- help students to consider what is being taught from a variety of perspectives so they learn to see things more objectively and not “personally”
- help students to learn strategies for:
    - guiding small-group discussion
    - protecting one another’s privacy
    - responding to one another with respect, understanding and empathy
    - celebrating diversity and difference within their class, school and community
- ensure that students who hold particular points of view or beliefs do not feel threatened or pressured to change
- reassure students that their work will be evaluated on criteria other than the beliefs they hold about a particular issue
- ensure that students understand that they speak only for themselves as individuals, not for others who may belong to the same social, cultural or gender group
- help all students develop and maintain a sense of pride in their language, their lived culture, their experiences, their families, and their communities.

Although these guidelines have relevance for delivering all areas of the curriculum, in planning the Health programme there will be the need and the opportunity for these issues to be addressed more intensely.

SPECIFICATIONS

Knowledge

H1 know how and why it is important to keep themselves clean and safe

H2 know how and why it is important to keep their environment clean

H3 know how some common diseases are spread, including STDs and HIV/AIDS, and how to prevent them

Skills

H4 participate in physical activity for sport, leisure and health

Attitudes and Values

H5 recognise the importance of avoiding unhealthy habits and lifestyles

LOWER DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Healthy Lifestyles

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should understand:

H1.a how and why to apply the basic elements of personal hygiene

H1.b the dangers of some common substances (e.g. medicines, bleach, white out etc.)

H1.c the importance of proper food handling and storage

H1.d the importance of traffic, water, playground, and classroom safety practices

H1.e how to deal with accidents, emergencies, and various kinds of abuse

Healthy Environment

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should understand:

H2.a the need to keep their immediate surroundings clean

Spread of Disease

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should understand:

H3.a the need to keep their immediate environment clean

Physical Exercise

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

H4.a practice loco-motor skills

H4.b practice manipulative skills

H4.c practice non-manipulative skills

MIDDLE DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Healthy Lifestyles

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should understand:

H1.a the relationship between proper hygiene practices and healthy living, and apply these practices to their daily living

H1.b how safety practices contribute to healthy living and how to recognize and respond appropriately to danger situations

H1.c the relationship between food and health and be able to make healthy food choices

Healthy Environment

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should understand:

H2.a how maintaining a clean environment contributes to their personal health

Spread of Disease

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should understand:

H3.a understand how the prevention of common diseases, including STDs and HIV/AIDS contribute to their personal health

Physical Exercise

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should be able to:

H4.a engage in physical activities that promote interpersonal skills and health of mind and body

UPPER DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Healthy Lifestyles

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should understand:

H1.a how healthy living contributes to a positive self-concept

H1.b the effects of diet on health

H1.c and cope responsibly with the physical and emotional changes of puberty

H1.d the consequences of dangerous situations and unsafe practices, and how to respond to those consequences (make responsible choices)

Healthy Environment

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should understand:

H2.a ways to effectively maintain and improve the environment, and how the state of the environment affects human well-being

Spread of Disease

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should:

H3.a recognise measures taken and resources employed to control the spread of common diseases, including STDs and AIDS

Physical Exercise

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should be able to:

H4.a participate in physical activity for sport, leisure and health

M U S I C

RATIONALE AND PHILOSOPHY

Music has been used at times as a vehicle for teaching non-musical ideas, such as patriotism and citizenship, while at other times the goals have been strictly musical, emphasizing the development of so-called musicality in all children. Music has also been made available only to talented and gifted children for them to develop and master performance techniques. This, however, is contrary to the view that music should be made accessible for all children, regardless of talent and musical ability.

Perhaps a synthesis of these views would be a more appropriate approach for teaching music in today's classroom. Teachers will need to recognise that musical goals are to be made the number one priority, and also realise that there should be an increased emphasis on music as one avenue to develop a child's self-understanding. Musical and non musical goals may be used together effectively so long as the teachers realizes which is being used and uses both in proper balance to assist students' musical growth.

Music Education in today's elementary classrooms needs to focus upon the individual child as well as provide a stimulus to improve performance in other areas of children's lives. The role of music in satisfying children's aesthetic and emotional needs and its significance as a force in developing awareness of our cultural heritage, make it an important part of the elementary school curriculum.

An eclectic approach to a music program should include goals that are meaningful and sequentially organised and that provides tangible evidence of children's musical growth, and at the same time, shows an understanding of the arts. Educators need to follow set values of music in the elementary school curriculum. Some of these values are given here.

Individualisation

Because music conveys various meanings, it has something for every child. From the many activities of the music class -- **singing, moving, listening, composing** -- every child can find at least one that can give him/her a feeling of success. In an effective music class, individual reactions are encouraged and valued. The child's self-identification and self-esteem can be fostered through successful experiences in music.

Aesthetics

Music has the power of evoking feelings which are important to the child's knowledge of beauty. Sensitivity to music and the other arts enhances the child's self-awareness and relation to other people. As the child is allowed to express his/her feelings through

musical activities, he/she learns, at the same time, to make decisions and judgements about music.

Socialisation
Children experience music together as they sing, dance, play instruments and compose in groups or ensembles. Sharing the pleasure of making music, learning to accept the roles of both leader and follower, depending upon one another to fit the parts together, are all experiences that belong to the realm of music.

Correlation
The elementary school teacher, working with children in several areas of their studies, has extensive opportunities to correlate music with other curricular areas. The children's understanding of the culture of another country for instance, will be enhanced by listening to that country's music and performing its folk songs and dances. Opportunities for children to use language arts are offered through reading song texts, writing poetry for original compositions, and listing descriptive words and phrases while listening to recordings of musical compositions. Singing songs involving the sequential counting process, noting meter, counting measures in phrases, and counting beats for action songs and dances provide reinforcement for mathematical concepts.

BEST PRACTICES

Teachers are to provide meaningful experiences for all children encompassing the traditional activities -- singing, playing instruments, listening, and moving to music -- but they are to understand that they are means rather than the end result. Children are to be actively involved in the creative aspects of music. Less emphasis is to be placed on learning a body of facts, such as composers' birth and death dates, or on recognising the themes of well-known works. Instead, the child is encouraged to make discoveries about music through the exploration of sound, playing the role of composer, performer, conductor, listener, and critic as he/she develops concepts about the structure of music.

In order to teach musical skills effectively, a study of the characteristics of children is highly recommended. A brief observation of elementary school classes demonstrates immediately that children are highly individualistic, that it is difficult to generalise about their physical and intellectual characteristics. Effective teaching requires sequential, organised, planning. However, planning must never be rigid; it must always include flexibility to change quickly to another approach if the situation calls for a change.

Singing
Singing gives the child the opportunity to use the voice as an expressive instrument and is, therefore, a significant area of the elementary school music program. Since the voice can be a lasting source of pleasure, it is vitally important for every child to find his or her singing voice at an early age, to learn to sing in tune, and to use a light, natural tone.

Playing Instruments

Through playing instruments children become actively involved with the elements of melody, rhythm, harmony, tone colour, and dynamics. An introduction of the instruments should include time for children to explore the way sounds are produced.
Children should be encouraged to discuss the possibilities of pitch changes, the dynamic capabilities, and the effects achieved through different ways of playing the instruments.

Moving to Music

Movement plays a vital role in children's musical growth, providing opportunities for them to become aware of rhythm, form and mood in music. Moving will be considered in three areas: **fundamental movement; action songs, singing games, and dances; and creative movement.**

- Fundamental Movement involves locomotor movement such as walking, running, skipping, while non-locomotor movement includes bending, twisting, rocking and swaying.
- Locomotor movement is useful in developing concepts of rhythm and form, while non-locomotor movement is used mainly as an expressive device.

- Action songs, Singing Games and Dances offer children opportunities to do fundamental movements in set patterns. In performing both singing games and folk dances, children's first experiences should involve very simple steps and sequences so that they have no difficulty in combining patterned movements with the rhythm of the music. To ensure the children's feeling of success in performing, the teacher should consider both their interests and their locomotor skills when selecting singing games and dances.

- Creative Movement gives children the freedom to move as they wish, children can interpret their feelings, dramatise their favourite stories and songs, and act out both real and imagined experiences. The teacher plays an active role in helping children to develop their creative processes. The teacher uses his/her own creative thinking to initiate experiences that stimulate the children's creativity and spark their imagination. The teacher employs strategies such as providing an uninhibited, free climate for their ideas, and promoting feeling of success in their performance.

Listening

The ability to listen attentively is essential to all learning in music. Playing and singing by rote, expressive movement, understanding the musical elements and how they function -- all require the child to listen perceptively. In addition to its importance in the acquisition of other skills, listening is a skill to be focused on and developed for its own sake. From an early age the child should begin to develop the shills of perceptive listening that will enrich his entire life.

Composing

Children's learning is often enhanced by the development of their creative ability. The process of creating, rather than the finished product, is the significant factor. Children learn to articulate ideas through music and they gain new insights about the elements of music. Music can be a lifetime of exploration. As children are encouraged to explore the many paths that lead to the enjoyment of music, they will also discover that each path has some interesting and rewarding branches to follow.

ART

RATIONALE AND PHILOSOPHY

Art education is concerned with the organization of visual material. A primary reliance upon visual experience gives Art an emphasis that sets it apart from Music and Dance which are performing arts. The Goals of Education for Belize is guided by the philosophic orientation which, in part, has as one of its tenets to provide for its citizens an education which will foster their "appreciation of, and participation in, artistic ventures, particularly within the Belizean culture". One of the vehicles for the achievement of this goal is through the development of skills, including "creating music, drawing and painting, and dancing", and attitudes that will enhance their emotional well-being through involvement in pursuits which involve creativity such as watching and listening to the performing and visual arts.

To acquire proficiency in Art requires systematic instruction in how we see, interpret, and make sense of visual stimuli. It requires an understanding of how others interpret the visual messages that are products of this kind of activity. It requires an education in the use of traditional and contemporary tools, materials and media

Art education should be concerned with having students think and behave as "artists". For the purpose of a child's school experiences in art, the term "artist" is equally valid for the child who shows a well developed proficiency, or the virgin efforts of a child making marks on paper for the first time. Art education should help students to open themselves to the world around them through exploration and experimentation. They learn to see form and beauty in nature, in objects and in life around them that were previously unnoticed. Ultimately, art should be accessible to all children. Its practice should result in changing the child as he/she sees and responds to his/her creation, in changing the relationship among children as they share their handiwork, or in changing the social-physical environment as their artworks are displayed around the classroom and throughout the school.

Art education should help children to be able to point out the values that surround the creating and cherishing of various forms of art, in this way the child will not only create but value art. This valuing will help children to appreciate the people who produced them in the past and introduce notions of how values have changed over time. When children learn to "see" art it helps them to view the work of others and relate that to their own work. It, therefore, helps to link the past and the present.

Art education should help students to deal with ways in which people express their feelings in visual forms. They experience emotions such as joy and sadness that they can translate into art forms that are at times personal and at other times may be shared. They learn to externalize not only their own feelings, but the feelings and intuitions of others

around or close to them. As "artists" they share this ability with the writer, the poet, the musician and the dancer. Art can be a powerful communication tool for many children and can provide a measure of fulfillment that extends beyond the confines of the classroom. Eventually, the child gains a sense of "preference", that not all art is the same, and is able to articulate reasons for preferring one work over another. As they learn to appreciate the variety of art forms of the many cultures represented in Belize they will also develop greater appreciation for and understanding of each other.

BEST PRACTICES

In keeping with the philosophy that children need a chance to grow and develop as individuals in all spheres of life, the expressive arts, which go to the soul of who we are as individuals and as a people, need to be accorded importance in the school curriculum. In developing the programme for Art, therefore, teachers should provide opportunity for students to engage in a variety of experiences that will allow them to develop perceptual awareness, to learn visual arts skills and concepts, to interpret and communicate with visual symbols, to create, to value, reflect upon and appreciate the cultural aspects of art, and to relate to and appreciate art in everyday life.

In providing art education teachers should provide opportunity for children to engage in the following experiences:

AN INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE

The individual is at the centre of visual education. Each student is special, with a need to develop self-confidence. Each student may enter the programme at a different stage or level and each may progress at a different rate. Art education is ultimately for the self-realization of the individual, developing the ability to see, understand, react, create, appreciate and reach.

Opportunity should be provided for the student to experience:

- pride in achievement
- valuable group activities
- a sense of worth
- practice in making decisions

Opportunity should be provided for enabling the student to grow in:
independence

- individuality
- self-realization
- self-awareness
- creativity

A VISUAL EXPERIENCE

Seeing is a discipline that can be fostered. Visual education speaks to systematic instruction in perceptual skills: how we see, interpret, discover relationships and make decisions.

Opportunity should be provided for experiences that:

- contribute to the student's development of perceptual awareness in natural and manufactured forms.

A LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Art education involves skill development in the areas of drawing, painting, print-making, sculpture and fabric in order to extend the child's capabilities to express him/her-self - communicate through image making. It is the acquisition of knowledge through the elements and principles of design from functional and fine arts contexts.

Opportunity should be provided for experiences that contribute to:

- a knowledge of the vocabulary of basic art terms and expressions appropriate to the student's level of development skills and techniques necessary for meaningful self-expression by the student
- the student's understanding of art media, materials and processes and their appropriate use
- the student's understanding of the expressive content inherent in visual forms.

A COMMUNICATION EXPERIENCE

Visual images communicate to the individual and the individual can communicate through visual images. In a world heavily populated by visual images, created by humankind, happened by humankind, spewed by machines, dealt by nature, severe communication demands are placed on the individual. Art education is visual reading and expression.

Opportunity should be provided for experiences that contribute to the student's ability to:

- interpret images
- express through images
- reflect about images

A CREATIVE EXPERIENCE

A natural outgrowth of seeing, interpreting and discovering relationships is expressing. The language of art is available to all and can be used to express both thought and feeling. Art education provides the means and opportunity for creative activities of a wide nature; encourages the use of the imagination, inventiveness and a spirit of inquiry, and provides decision-making opportunities.

Opportunity should be provided for students to:

- engage in a wide range of experiences with various media and art materials
- draw from the total curriculum (other Areas of study) for the purpose of creating
- examine and explore a variety of visual communication forms and purposes
- contemplate possibilities and explore the imagination as a source of images and as problem-solving devices
- express feelings and individual messages.

A CULTURAL EXPERIENCE

Art speaks a universal language of culture, spanning history and peoples. Art is part of humankind's heritage. Art education is concerned with valuing, reflecting and appreciating this legacy.

Opportunity should be provided for students to develop:

- awareness of and appreciation for the ethnic and cultural aspects of the visual arts in our society
- an understanding of art as a common or universal means of expression among all peoples
- an appreciation of artistic accomplishments, past and present.

AN ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERIENCE

Environment - natural and human-made - affects the individual. Visual images and decisions happen continually in today's world, from choices of clothing to television programmes, from choices of where to live to what to do with the weeds growing in the yard, to the kind of screens for the windows to keep mosquitoes out. Art education is concerned with informed choices of manufactured items and quality environment.

Opportunity should be provided students to:

- make aesthetic judgements about things in the environment
- note that the visual arts are an integral part of their daily lives.

EXPRESSIVE ARTS

SPECIFICATIONS

Skills

EA1 create music, draw and paint, dance, make crafts

Attitudes/Values

EA2 appreciate watching and listening to the performing and visual arts

EA3 enjoy taking part in activities which involve creativity

EA4 express oneself creatively

LOWER DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Music

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

EA1.a sing in tune

EA1.b identify and produce rhythm and beat

EA1.c discriminate between and imitate sounds

Art

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

EA1.e use various materials (scissors, glue, paints, mosaic) to explore different effects/possibilities

EA1.f use colour, shape, lines, patterns, textures to express ones own ideas

EA1.h arrange imagery in a way that is pleasing to oneself

EA1.i share artistic discoveries with each other

Dance **

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

EA1.j coordinate movements in simple structured dances

EA1.k move in time to a beat

** Incorporated in Physical Education as "**Movement**"

Crafts

By the end of Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

EA1.a explore and experiment to create visual images through the use of a variety of concrete materials in the environment

MIDDLE DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Music

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should be able to:

EA1.a sing rounds

EA1.b identify and produce rhythmic patterns in meters of 2, 3 and 4

EA1.c identify and produce sounds from a variety of instrument types

EA1.d sing at sight notes in a scale-wise fashion

Art

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

EA1.e explore and experiment to create visual images through the use of a variety of artistic tools and media

Dance **

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

EA1.f use rhythmic body movements to express feelings and emotions

** Incorporated in Physical Education as "**Movement**"

Crafts

By the end of Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

EA1.h explore and experiment to create visual images through the use of a variety of concrete materials in the environment

UPPER DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Music

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should be able to:

EA1.a sing simple harmony

EA1.b identify and produce rhythmic patterns, including syncopation

EA1.c identify and produce different styles of music

EA1.d sing a simple tune at sight

Art

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should be able to:

EA1.e explore and experiment with styles, methods and techniques that have been used to create artistic representations

Dance **

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should be able to:

EA1.f demonstrate the ability to choreograph and/or perform movements to the various forms of music

** Incorporated in Physical Education as "**Movement**"

Crafts

By the end of Upper Division, pupils should be able to:

EA1.h explore and experiment with styles, methods and techniques that have been used to create artistic representations

LIFE SKILLS

RATIONALE AND PHILOSOPHY

Our Belizean young people today face a multiplicity of opportunities and challenges in their growth and development. Issues related to deterioration in family structure, interrupted and/or shortened formal education, increase in teenage pregnancy, poverty, the lure of criminal activity, drug abuse, violence and early employment are just some of the more salient factors facing our young people. In order to successfully meet their developmental milestones and arm themselves to face these challenges, Belizean children need to acquire certain knowledge, attitudes and skills, all of which can be acquired through a Life Skills Curriculum. This is of paramount importance in light of interrupted educational careers evident in our statistics. The Right to a Future: A Situation Analysis of Children in Belize, 1997 (NCFC, UNICEF) notes that at the primary school level, 40% of the 91% of children enrolled in Belizean schools never complete primary school, furthermore only 50% of that number goes on to secondary schools. With numbers such as these it is evident that in order to fully impact Belize's children's development, arming them with these survival skills, then life skills need to be introduced at an early level in the primary education system.

Social and other life skills develop over time cumulatively, and are influenced by many conditions and forces. Consequently, intervention, to be most effective needs to be systematic, developmentally appropriate and occur early in the child's life. Life Skills Education as an integral part of the curriculum, creates the balance between the psychological and the academic aspects of the child's development. This balance seems to have been lacking in our Belizean classrooms as even our teachers have not been appropriately trained to deal pro-actively with the life problems of the student.

The emphasis of teaching social skills to children has been heightened because of the implications of socially acceptable behavior. With the mass introduction of television and ready access to increasingly violent and socially inappropriate behaviors, so has the Belizean society succumb to mirroring these behaviors. Belize has had and continues to have its experience with gang violence, drug abuse, drug related crimes, domestic violence, disregard for life and property, increase incidence of HIV/AIDS, and teen age pregnancy. Therefore, to counteract these influences, the Belizean educational system needs to be relevant and, therefore, prepare its students to meet and respond to the changed society.

Community programmes have been launched to provide life skills training having recognized that this is an integral proactive and reactive approach to interrupted education. Alternative schools (e.g. CET, YWCA, YES) that include job skills and some elements of Life Skills training in their curriculum are working at preparing youths to meet society's challenges. However, the success in these programmes would be more profound and occur earlier if these skills were taught and nurtured systematically early in the schools' curriculum.

PRINCIPLES OF LIFESKILLS EDUCATION

The lack of social skills has been linked to a wide range of adjustment problems. The major assumption has been that young people who are involved in programs where basic skills are being emphasized will have a better opportunity to make more informed choices. They will gain knowledge about self as well as explore attitudes and values about growing up, gender roles, risk taking, cultural diversity, friendship, career preparation, sexuality and other pertinent areas. Life Skills Education assumes that "effective Life Skills, especially those related to social interaction and problem solving can facilitate successful adjustment and that personal competence, particularly in social situations can moderate the effects of stressful life events". For positive social interaction to occur, children, have to develop effective social skills, or responses which maximize the probability of producing, maintaining, or enhancing positive effects of the interaction. Research strongly supports the opinion that much of human misery appears to be the result of a lack of control over one's life; lack of effective coping strategies and lowered self esteem (Lewis and Lewis Community Counseling, 1989 p.53) .

Competence building then has emerged as one of the most comprehensive, preventative strategies for dealing with individual and social issues. A number of suggestions have emerged lending credence to the belief that Social Competence, or Competence Building (which can be achieved through an effective Life Skills program) is indeed important. It rests on the following tenets:

- The inability to handle sexuality, in boys and girls is associated with discomfort, anxiety and a general unwillingness to engage in the environment.
- Children master aggressive impulses within the context of peer relations.
- Sexual socialization cannot occur without peer relations.
- Social competence is related to the child's ability for role taking, which in turns relates to social competence.
- Children rejected by peers have higher delinquency rates and are more likely to drop out of school and are at risk for behavioral and emotional difficulties.

Cognitive Coping Skills

In the process of teaching Life Skills it is worthy to note the importance of Cognitive Coping skills. Cognitive Coping Skills are cognition or knowledge that facilitate internal management of social occurrences. These skills include the following:

- The ability to analyze ones own knowledge or cognition
- Label appropriately one's self defeating statements
- Observe and rehearse new and appropriate self statement
- Reinforce oneself covertly .

Effective cognitive coping skills are also critical for correcting anxiety-inducing behavior, and for enhancing social behavior.

BEST PRACTICES

In delivering a successful program, the role of the teacher is crucial, as he/she is the facilitator of the learning process, and will be responsible for modelling and assessing the outcome of the Life Skills training. These skills can be acquired by using different methods, three of which are described below.

- **Structured Learning Model:** This is brief, concrete, operational and competently administered, and requires specific clear examples.
- **Role Taking**: This provides early continuous reinforcements for enactment of seldom used, but adaptable skill behavior.
- **Integrated Method:** Combination of elements of various combined approaches.

Of the three methods described, the Structured Learning Model seems to be more suitable for our needs and resources. It is a holistic teaching method that provides a framework for systematic teaching in a way that is similar to the traditional subject areas. This model is adapted from Ready to Use Social Skills, Lessons and Activities - Grades 4-6 (Ruth Weltmann Begun, Editor) its four basic components have been modified to five listed below.

- Orientation
- Modeling
- Role playing
- Discussion
- Meaningful application

These components can be further broken down into eight teaching steps.

- Establish the need for the skill
- Introduce the Skill
- Identify the skill component
- Model the skill
- Behavioral rehearsal or role play the skill
- Practice
- Use skill independently
- Continue to use and maintain skill

An example using this teaching strategy is included below using one of the goals of education.

G.3.8 Have a Commitment to excellence, including self motivation, self discipline and self-evaluation.

Social Skill Area: Goal Setting
Specific Skill: Setting and achieving Goals
Outcome: Student will be able to set appropriate goals and apply him/herself toward achieving them.

Directed Lesson

- **Establish the Need**: This includes the purpose for teaching this lesson, the benefits the skill will provide, and consequences of not learning the behavior. e.g. for this lesson. **The necessity to set and meet reasonable goals in order to function well in school and in one's life; and the importance of being able to identify how well you are managing your tasks.**

- **Introduction**: This can be any medium that will make the social skills more concrete to children. e.g. poems, stories, timed tests, puppets, dramatizations etc. e.g. for this lesson **Give students timed test on math facts. Point out that memorization of math facts can become a challenge. Students would already have had lessons on "setting goals" so it would be appropriate to review process. Challenge students to meet goal within a certain time.**

Identify Skill: These are the skill steps used to teach the behavior.

- - Set an appropriate goal- neither too hard or easy.
- - Write a plan for how you will achieve that goal.
- - Implement your goal by applying real effort.
- - Evaluate how well you did.

- Model the Skill: Here the appropriate behaviors will be demonstrated in order that children may adapt them. The skill components are referred to during the modeling of the behavior e.g. in this lesson Teacher shows sample of math test which can be done with 65% accuracy in two minutes. With help from students teacher illustrates the setting of a goal for accuracy, in this case a goal that is neither too ambitious nor too simple. Then teacher illustrates the various ways she/he can improve using flash cards, reviewing facts, etc. teacher will set a time limit when tests will be given so that students can prepare for it.

Behavioral Rehearsal:
Children are given an opportunity to perform the behavior which can be evaluated, corrected, and reinforced. There are five steps under this:

- **Selection:** the teacher selects students or asks for volunteers for role-play. This lesson. **Select 5 students**

- **Role-Play:** Participants are assigned their roles or situations they will role-play. This lesson **- Ask students to decide on individual goals and have them set up a plan for reaching goals. Have the five students selected to share goals and plan for achieving them.**

- **Completion:** To determine that the role play is complete and after each role play to reinforce correct behaviors, identify appropriate behaviors, and reenact role play corrections. **If there are no corrections, role play is complete.**

- **Reinforcers:** This is positive reinforcement by the teacher and the class which is used for maintenance of the skill. Different methods can be used e.g. verbal encouragement, tangible rewards, special privileges, and keeping of record of social and academic improvement. For this lesson: **Verbal praise, achievement award, and good feelings of accomplished goals etc.**

- **Discussion:** Students' level of performance is evaluated and inappropriate behaviors corrected. Ask questions about feelings, difficulties, and observations during role-play. For this lesson: **Evaluate whether each student used the skill steps, whether the class feels the goals were reasonable or if the process was adequate.**

- **Practice:** Activities that help children summarize the skill. Practice can be done a variety of ways e.g. work-sheets, art projects, dramatizations, writing stories, keeping diaries, charts etc. for this lesson. Use the same process from this lesson in subsequent Math facts lesson. After students begin to demonstrate skill in setting a goal in math, assign them tasks of setting goals in other areas of academic life e.g. being well-behaved for one day or week or complete the reading of a library book within a given time span.

Independent Use:

- Activities that help facilitate the use of the behaviors outside the school environment. Involve family and friends to take active role in reinforcing these behaviors and the importance of using them in conflicting situations. For this lesson: **Students will set a goal to complete a task outside of school. It must be completed within a certain time period. Students will report to the class on their successes and disappointments.**

Continuation:

- The teacher is expected to remind the class that the application of social skills can benefit them in academic and social relations, and that the benefits are far greater in the end than the problems. One shared benefit can be "more self-confidence in decision making." Teacher must be aware that maintaining social behavior is an ongoing process, therefore,

it requires that they show appropriate behaviors and reinforce them when they are demonstrated. For this lesson: **Point out the importance of setting and meeting appropriate goals in all areas of life.**

LIFE SKILLS

SPECIFICATIONS

Skills

SP1 be familiar with and show commitment to moral principles which guide choices

SP2 demonstrate teamwork, leadership, service to others, empathy and sympathy

SP3 have a commitment to excellence, including self motivation, self discipline, and self evaluation

Qualities

SP4 recognise their spirituality and demonstrate a sense of purpose

SP5 respect for the laws and legal institutions of Belize

SP7 value and uphold truth and honesty

SP8 have a positive self-image

SP9 demonstrate ingenuity

SP10 creativity

LOWER DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Values Clarification

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

SP1.a recognise the values associated with choices presented in a simple situation

SP1.b choose between alternatives in simple situations based on values

Teamwork and Leadership

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

SP2.a take part in group activities

SP2.b express their opinions and feelings in a socially acceptable way

Self Evaluation

By the end of the Lower Division, pupils should be able to:

SP3.a assess their needs/interests

SP3.b assess progress in relation to achievement of goals and adjust goals or strategies as necessary.

MIDDLE DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Values Clarification

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should be able to:

SP1.a recognise the values associated with choices presented in age appropriate situations

SP1.b choose between alternatives based on values in age appropriate situations

Teamwork and Leadership

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should be able to:

SP2.a take part in group activities

SP2.b express their opinions and feelings in a socially acceptable way

Self Evaluation

By the end of the Middle Division, pupils should be able to:

SP3.a assess their needs/interests

SP3.b assess progress in relation to achievement of goals and adjust goals or strategies as necessary.

UPPER DIVISION LEARNING OUTCOMES

Values Clarification

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should be able to:

SP1.a recognise the values associated with choices presented in age appropriate situations

SP1.b choose between alternatives based on values in age appropriate situations

Teamwork and Leadership

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should be able to:

SP2a take part in group activities

SP2b express their opinions and feelings in a socially acceptable way

Self Evaluation

By the end of the Upper Division, pupils should be able to:

SP3.a assess their needs/interests

SP3.b assess progress in relation to achievement of goals and adjust goals or strategies as necessary.

ASSESSMENT

RATIONALE AND PHILOSOPHY

Student assessment is an essential part of the teaching and learning process. In order to determine the extent to which students are gaining knowledge and understanding, as well as acquiring necessary skills, student progress must be monitored, assessed and evaluated on a regular basis. Teachers also need to determine how effective their teaching has been so that necessary adjustments can be made to their instructional program to ensure that all students experience success and are challenged in the process of acquiring an education.

The term assessment is often used in reference to examinations and tests, and restricted to the narrow settings of a paper and pencil application. Whereas such traditional forms may need to be included in assessing student performance, it is important for teachers to recognize that the term assessment takes in a wide range of strategies or methods that can be used to collect evidence of student learning. Assessment methods may range from very informal, unstructured observation techniques to formal tests and examinations conducted under standardized settings. What is important is that the teacher recognizes which method will best yield the desired information about student performance.

The national goals of education emphasize the four pillars on which the new curriculum is built – learning to know, to be, to do and to live together. Students' educational experiences should aid them in recognizing that learning is not restricted to the confines of the classroom, but is a lifelong process. As such, the learning experience should be relevant and meaningful, promoting real world experiences as much as possible.

Traditional paper-and-pencil tests cannot adequately provide opportunity for students to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do. Some students may be able to express themselves better orally, or may work exceptionally well as a part of a team. The forms of assessment used by the teacher should offer opportunity for success to all students, taking into consideration that students learn in different ways. It is also important to each student's learning that evidence of performance be collected in a variety of ways and on as many occasions as possible.

Assessment and timely feedback can encourage students to take learning seriously. The creative teacher will seek to find new ways to make the assessment process interesting and motivational to students. Current assessment practice supports activities where students can be observed while solving problems, interacting with peers, orally demonstrating acquisition of knowledge, and generally displaying levels of competence in a variety of settings and situations. Such practices demand that teachers define clear performance criteria for each assessment and that adequate records be kept on each student's performance.

Communicating with students about their performance is an important part of the assessment process. Students can be encouraged to take responsibility for their own

learning given the opportunity to evaluate their own success or lack of success. Conferencing with students will allow teachers and students to share understandings of what is taught and what is learned. Parents should be drawn into such conferences on a regular basis.

Important to the assessment process are issues of validity and reliability. Regardless of the method used by the teacher to assess performance, content should be valid, i.e. reflecting the material taught, and results should be reliable or repeatable on other occasions. Issues of reliability and validity determine the usefulness of any assessment data, or information, collected by the teacher

Assessment is an ongoing process that is critical to the educational experience of each student. As such the process should be well planned and form a regular aspect of the instructional program. An effective assessment program should therefore:

- assess student abilities at various levels of complexity
- appreciate diversity in learning styles among students
- engage students in applying knowledge and skills in ways that are relevant to the world outside the school
- encourage self-evaluation and reflection based on established criteria
- foster a spirit of collaboration among students

The expectations reflected by the outcomes identified for each area of study in the curriculum requires a school assessment program that is process oriented, relevant and continuous. Where data is collected to represent student performance, such information should represent significant learning outcomes over an extended period of time. Techniques or strategies used by the teacher in collecting information on student educational development should provide information on the full development of the individual, physically, attitudinally, ethically and spiritually.

Creativity and resourcefulness in planning is called for on the part of the teacher in order to employ assessment techniques that will capture significant and enduring educational outcomes.

BEST PRACTICES

In choosing the most effective method of assessment, teachers need to be clear with regards to the purpose of the assessment. Once purpose is clear, choosing the method becomes much easier. A range of assessment forms and testing techniques can be employed by teachers in order to determine which is most suitable for eliciting samples of student's learning. Different methods may demand differing levels of formality and may be suitable for gathering differing information. The following techniques offer a range of possibilities

- Performance assessment
- Student self-assessment

- Traditional teacher-made tests
- Observation

In exploring these possibilities, it is important to emphasize the need to maintain a balanced program for assessing students. Each method offers strengths and limitations. The progressive teacher will seek to ensure that the method used is the most suitable and will yield valid information and reliable results.

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Current assessment practice places emphasis on the importance of examining the processes as well as the products of learning. Assessing students through performance tasks allows the teacher the opportunity to use a range of strategies to determine how well their students have learned. Given an assessment task, students are afforded the opportunity to work on a particular project over an extended period of time, allowing opportunity for revision and correction.

The appropriate task should match the intended student outcomes identified in the planning phase, and allow students to demonstrate their progress and capabilities. The task should be chosen to reflect real-world issues, conflicts and situations. Provision of access to necessary resources for task completion is important to ensure that students use necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to accomplish desired results. A single task can provide measures of several goals and allow students to engage knowledge from a variety of disciplines and perspectives.

In the process of arriving at an end product, students will benefit from the experience of planning and, where group work is required, gain the experience of working as part of a team. Over the period leading to task completion, the teacher can use a variety of techniques to assess performance. Assessment can be done orally, by observation, whether structured or unstructured, or by eliciting writing samples.

STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT

Involving students in self-assessment encourages them to take responsibility for their own learning. Given models of what constitutes excellence, students can be encouraged to reflect on their own performance and understanding of what is taught. Students' reflections and assessment of their own learning, measured against clear performance criteria, can provide the teacher with a wealth of information about what they have learned and their feelings about their progress. Where students recognize that they can improve their performance, generally effort will be made to do so.

Self-assessment can be encouraged through journals or through discussions between teacher and student. Conferencing between teacher and student can lead to greater understanding of the learning process on both sides.

TRADITIONAL TEACHER-MADE TESTS

Traditional forms of teacher-made tests can provide much useful information on the extent to which students have acquired basic facts and concepts. Whereas alternative forms of assessment may offer appealing ways to assess complex thinking and problem - solving skills, traditional methods should not be entirely abandoned in the wave of current interest.

Tests employing multiple-choice items, short answer responses, true/false, matching, fill-in-the-blanks or essay type items still have a place in the assessment program as they can provide fairly accurate information on some aspects of learning. The challenge for the effective teacher is to know which method is most appropriate for collecting particular evidence of learning.

OBSERVATION

The process of observation as a part of assessing student performance draws
on skills that form part of the daily activities of teachers. As an assessment strategy, observation involves more than just looking at students. In order for observation to serve a useful assessment purpose it involves

- looking at the processes of learning pupils engage in when doing their work and not only the product
- listening to pupils and trying to understand the reasoning they employ in drawing conclusions
- engaging in dialogue with students in order to understand their ways of thinking

Observation as a technique for assessing can be concentrated on individuals or a group.
It can be unstructured and non-specific, or focused and systematic. Observation of students' learning can employ a range of strategies from a simple checklist to an observation log. It is the only method of assessment that will allow teachers to collect a range of information on students while the work is going on.

The classroom situation offers rich opportunity for teachers to use a variety of methods to gather information about student performance. There is no one right or best way to do this. Rather, it is important for teachers to use as many opportunities as possible to assess their students, and employ a variety of methods as the task demands. The results of assessment should reflect as accurately as possible what students have learned and are able to do.