

Introduction

Most of the units that follow have been planned and used by teachers in Infant and Primary classes in Catholic Schools in the Armidale and Lismore Dioceses. In recent years these teachers participated in a series of in-service courses conducted by Bailey and Knight (Armidale) and Roger Smee and Jan Campbell (Lismore) to provide for talented children in a mixed ability class.

Part of the process built into those in-service courses was the production and trialling of units of work based upon Bloom's taxonomy and Gardner's multiple intelligences model. After teaching and evaluating the units, the teachers shared their findings and discussed possible improvements, before making further revisions. The revised units, with some additional refinements made by the editors, are now being shared via this book, the second in this series, for we are aware of the limited amount of support material for teachers of children in the early and mid-years of schooling.

Bloom's six-level taxonomy is an attempt to categorise knowledge into different levels of complexity. Teachers have found it a useful way of organising learning tasks so that children within a mixed ability class may be given questions or activities that are appropriate to their present level of thinking. All children in the class work on the same theme but not necessarily on the same activities relating to that theme, the idea being that each child will be challenged by his/her particular set of tasks (whether chosen by the teacher or selected by the child, under the teacher's guidance) but also that the child will be likely to be able to succeed at the tasks, with reasonable effort.

Basically the six levels of Bloom's taxonomy can be divided into two areas: the first three levels involving remembering and application (Knowledge, Comprehension, and Application); the three upper levels involving higher-order thinking (Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation). Obviously the higher-order levels cannot be achieved unless the child has the necessary knowledge and comprehension, but these are often better acquired through the more challenging tasks at the upper three levels.

All children will benefit from attempting tasks at the higher levels of the taxonomy, and should be encouraged to do so, but it is very important that children known to be talented be given many opportunities to work at the top three levels.

Bloom's Taxonomy

The following summary, from Bailey, Knight & Riley (1995: pp.66-67), outlines the six levels.

In describing the levels of thinking, we will suggest examples of activities that are representative of that level. These activities come as a result of reading *The Hobbit* by JRR Tolkien.

1. Knowledge

This level requires that information be recalled to show what has been learned. Example: Can you name the thirteen dwarfs, in alphabetical order?

2. Comprehension

Understanding and interpreting the information presented. Often these first two levels (of knowledge and comprehension) are combined, as activities that relate to these levels require both sets of skills. Example: Create a wanted poster for one of the evil characters.

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