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Introduction

How to use this book

While travelling around Australia, New Zealand and the United States doing workshops with teachers, I have noticed a number of new theories, ideas and buzz words. *Learning styles, multiple intelligences, learning modalities, key competency performance levels, national curriculum, parent/teacher collaboration, differentiated curriculum, inclusive classrooms, integrated units, site based management, mission statements, alternative assessments and multi-age classrooms* are some of the words I've heard. When I started to study some of these ideas and concepts, I realised how powerful many of them are in the potential they hold to change the whole face of education. At the same time I realised that most teachers are feeling overwhelmed with the number of theories and changes they are expected to absorb. I knew they needed some tools to assist them and make their enormous task easier.

A tool can be defined as any instrument or device that is used to make the work of one's profession or occupation easier, more effective or more efficient. Teachers have always used a variety of tools, from the slate and blackboard to the laptop computer and digital camera. Teaching tools also include planning books, curriculum designs and visual organisers. I felt it was important to create instructional tools to assist teachers in incorporating some of the new educational theories and ideas and using them in their classrooms. These tools should help teachers facilitate the learning of their students in the 21st century.

Many teaching tools are presented in this book. As you read, you will be introduced to them and will be shown examples of how to use each. You will find flexible strategies and techniques for incorporating **learning styles, learning modalities, multiple intelligences** and **Bloom's taxonomy**. You will find suggestions on types of assessments and how to work with parents effectively. You will find numerous sample **lesson plans** and **learning encounters** based on a variety of themes and topics of particular interest to New Zealanders. Each of these is a practical tool that you can use immediately!

Tools for reflective learning

Because of the amount and variety of information presented in this book, it is best to read a small section or chapter and then reflect on what you have read. I have included two types of tools which will help you in this reflection process.

One type is the **teacher reflection page** which can be found in the chapters on teaching creatively, learning styles, learning modalities, Bloom's taxonomy, multiple intelligences and assessment. The teacher reflection pages are based on specific topics and offer questions for reflection and discussion. While these pages may be used individually or as part of a teacher self-assessment portfolio, they are best used in small groups. They can guide reflective thinking about a particular topic in:

- Coaching/collegial support teams
- Site-based management teams
- Beginning teacher programs
- Staff meetings

- Collaborative groups and teams
- Professional development sessions
- Planning meetings
- University classes
- Year level or subject area groups

The other tool to use in reflective thinking is the **Coil 4-I planning model**. A reproducible form to use with this model is found on the next page. This is a generic planning model which can be used individually or in any group planning session. I often use it in my workshops to help participants structure their thinking and planning in implementing workshop ideas.

Use the **4-I planning model** any time you are introduced to new concepts, thoughts or theories. This can be when you listen to a speaker, when you are in conversation with a colleague, when you are part of a decision-making team or when you are reading or studying on your own. This model will help you to understand what is being taught or discussed and gives you a way to apply new concepts to your own situation. This model has four parts (4-I's): *Imagination, Ideas, Information and Implementation*.

1. *Imagination* This part of the model is used to capture any of the thoughts that may go through your head while you are reading or hearing about a new idea or concept. Included are visions and dreams which may or may not become solid ideas. Our brains constantly have *imaginings* running through them! Capture them on paper as you read and listen, for they are generally the best source of new ideas.
2. *Ideas* Ideas are more solid than imaginings. When you get an idea, you usually think: 'This is how I could do it.' or 'It could work like this!'. Your ideas should be written in the second section of the 4-I planning model.
3. *Information* When we have an idea, most of the time we need to gather more information to see how it might be useful in our particular situation. Write down the type of information you need and where it might be acquired. The information gathering phase is important, but it is also the step in the 4-I planning model where groups or individuals can get bogged down. Beware of always needing to gather more and more information before any action can be taken. Sometimes we spend so much time gathering information about a new idea that the idea itself gets lost and is never implemented!
4. *Implementation* This is the most important part of the model for it is the action step where change takes place. For a new idea to have any long-term worth, it must be implemented. In the 4-I planning model, an implementation plan with target dates should be written and agreed upon. As information is gathered the implementation plan can be modified.

The needs of 21st century students

Linking school to the world of work

The world is changing rapidly! The one thing that seems certain is that we will continue to experience rapid change throughout the 21st century. Like other areas of living, the world of work is changing. Automated and advanced technologies are replacing many of our traditional unskilled and semi-skilled workers. Jobs now require more advanced technical skills and higher level thinking, but often our students do not have the relevant skills they need to work effectively in the 21st century.

Unskilled labour is no longer a valuable economic commodity and it will become even less so in the years ahead. In fact, it is widely believed that within a few years the unskilled person will become virtually unemployable in most of the post-industrial world.

New Zealand faces significant changes in the 21st century. Those who continue to work in agriculture, for instance need advanced technological, financial and organisational skills. Manufacturing no longer requires workers who do routine tasks over and over again. Instead, we have shifted to a more flexible and automated manufacturing system. The result is that industrial workers need technological skills and the ability to process information symbolically, mostly via computers and other technologies. Often they also need advanced reading and language skills and the ability to think critically.

Workers in the 21st century are dealing more and more with services and information. To do this, they need to understand advanced technological applications involving the use of maths, language and thinking skills. Knowledge of statistics, logic, probability and measurement systems and applied physics are becoming necessities. Because they need to communicate with customers and other workers on a regular basis, all workers need to know how to express themselves well, organise information and activities and do a great deal of technical reading and writing.

Furthermore, students and workers in the 21st century need to work well in task-oriented groups or teams and be able to solve problems critically and creatively. However, for the most part, schools teach students to work *independently*, while the world of work needs workers who know how to work *interdependently* with one another. Because today's students will be part of a global economy and multicultural workplace, this interdependence also involves the ability to understand people from a variety of cultures and who may have different cultural values and norms. Current world problems reflect this need. New Zealand and Australia are no longer isolated entities but are very much part of the workings of the modern world.

One of the roles of education is to prepare students for this world of work. We need to prepare our students to do the type of jobs that will be available throughout the 21st



century. However, much concern has been expressed in the business world about the transfer of school-based skills into the workplace setting.

Assessing students performance levels in the essential learning areas, making certain all students develop the essential skills and making sure that all of these transfer into the workplace is necessary for New Zealand to compete in the 21st century's global economy. Teachers must strive to learn what skills are required by business and industry worldwide and seek to help students meet these requirements in their classrooms.

The HEART of teaching

As important as they are, future jobs and the world of work should not be our only considerations as we think of the needs of 21st century students. Job preparation is only one of many needs our students have. We also must be concerned about their abilities to be good citizens, contributing family members, life-long learners sensitive to a variety of cultures, appreciators of the arts, history and culture, and caring, compassionate people. The teacher holds the key to developing these more intangible educational outcomes.

As teachers, we can become proficient in all the new educational theories and we can learn to teach and assess our students in every key competency. We can be technically excellent,

***Students don't care how
much you know until they
know how much you care.***

—Abraham Lincoln
(paraphrased)

effective and efficient in our teaching, yet never make any difference in the lives of our students and how they are developing as people. Something more is needed, that undefinable emotional element that makes teaching an art, not a science. I call this the *HEART* of teaching.

In my workshops I often ask participants which of them had 'THE TEACHER' in their lives, that one very special teacher who inspired and motivated them above all others. I find that in an audience of teachers, nearly 90% have had

that one special teacher touch their lives in a very profound way. For many, this one special teacher is 'THE REASON' they decided to become teachers themselves.

Each teacher has the potential to be 'THE TEACHER' for at least one student. When you touch a student's soul and inspire him to reach for the stars, you have done what being a teacher is really all about!

The greatest need of all students is to know they are valued and loved. Students need to recognise that teachers care about them as individuals. Successful, high-achieving students usually feel this way, but other students often do not. What can we do about that? We can take a genuine interest in all of our students, really caring about each one of them. Each of us can be a teacher with *heart*!

When I was in Year 8, I had a very special teacher named Mrs Mary C. Walker. She encouraged, motivated and inspired me and pointed me to the path I am still travelling today. For me, she was that one very special teacher, the teacher who spoke to my heart.

Throughout Year 8, inspired by what I saw in Mrs Walker, I considered again and again what the art of teaching was really all about. At the end of the school year I wrote down my thoughts and gave them to her. She kept what I had written for nearly forty years! A few months ago she sent it back to me.

I find that what I wrote about teaching at age 13 still describes my basic philosophy of education today.

Teaching

A good teacher likes to teach, likes what she teaches and loves those she teaches.

A good teacher sees each child as an important person, not as a 'thing' for psychiatric analysis or a 'thing' that must be taught.

A good teacher sees herself as an instrument of God – one who is learning through her children rather than the one who knows everything and must teach it to someone who doesn't know as much as she does.

A good teacher finds enjoyment in merely being with her children, sharing their joys and woes and sharing with them a relationship in which learning goes not only from her to them, but from them to her, too.

–Carolyn Coil
Age 13
