

Working in Classrooms

Teaching, Time and Space

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Working in Classrooms

Teaching, Time
and Space

Learning Guide

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SECTION FIVE

Making learning time and space for large classes

How teachers can manage learning time and space in and beyond the classroom

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Making learning time and space for large classes

A schematic story of Section Five

How teachers can manage learning time and space in and beyond the classroom

Teaching and learning in crowded classrooms can be very difficult

Some problems:

- lack of privacy;
- delays;
- frustration;
- interruptions and social distractions.

(SECTION 5.2; PAGES 109 - 113)

There are strategies for managing time and space in crowded classrooms or for large groups

Read Case study 4 and evaluate the strategies that Emma's colleagues suggest to help her deal with a crowded classroom. Then use the ideas from the case to develop an approach that:

- is flexible;
- is learning-centred;
- stimulates learners' interest;
- holds learners' attention.

(SECTION 5.3; PAGES 114 - 127)

Teachers are also responsible for enabling learners to manage learning time beyond the classroom

To enable systematic learning, teachers need to plan learning programmes for the whole year. Some aspects of learning are developed beyond the classroom.

Homework provides opportunities to:

- practise new skills and apply new concepts to a range of examples;
- develop good habits of structuring individual learning time and space;
- explore areas of interest.

When you set guidelines for meaningful homework, think about:

- intended learning outcomes;
- allocated and engaged time;
- external and internal time and space;
- learning-centered activities;
- rules.

(SECTION 5.4; PAGES 128 - 132)

In promoting systematic learning, teachers try to open conceptual space for learners

Teaching should enable learners to develop conceptual frameworks for understanding the world they live in.

Purposeful discussion is important in opening conceptual space for deep understanding.

As discussants, teachers and learners participate actively, listen carefully and accept fair and defensible criticism from their fellow discussants.

(SECTION 5.5; PAGES 133 - 136)

5.1

What can you hope to achieve by working through this section?



Week 14 begins.

Section Five builds on concepts developed throughout the module and on the idea that how teachers solve problems relating to space and time depends on what their teaching purpose is and on who the learners are.

By the end of this section, you should be able to:

- see how crowded space hinders teaching and learning;
- use your judgement in developing an appropriate approach to arranging learning time and space, especially in large, overcrowded classes;
- appreciate how such an approach depends on a notion of teaching as an intentional practice, which is both flexible and learning-centred;
- understand the scope of teachers' responsibility for helping learners to shape learning time and space beyond the classroom and outside of school time;
- use your judgement in thinking about how to enable learners to enter and work within the conceptual space of different subjects or learning areas.

On the previous page you will find a map of the main concepts and key points in Section Five.

Large classes and crowding

5.2

On the basis of our discussion in Section Four, we can say that how you solve the problems relating to space and time in the classroom depends on what the teaching purpose is and who the learners are. In this section, you should realize that the solution to problems of time and space in the classroom needs to look *beyond the classroom*, and even beyond the boundaries of the school and its timetable.

While all teachers have to deal with problems relating to space and time, these problems are especially acute in large classes and crowded classrooms. In South Africa, and most other African countries, large classes are the norm rather than the exception. So let's begin by looking at some of the ways in which large classes and crowding affect teaching and learning.

Teaching and learning in crowded classrooms

Here's a description from a newspaper article about a classroom in Ceres, a rural town in the Western Cape:

Every morning at Nduli Primary School in Ceres, small fights break out among the pupils. Not for sweets, toys or books – but for the few desks and chairs that classrooms offer to the 842 children Every morning after the first bell is rung, the children rush to their classrooms to grab a chair and desk. A visitor to the school would be forgiven for thinking that the pupils were eager to quench their thirst for learning, but sadly it is really a matter of 'first come, first serve', according to principal Siphwiwo Tisana. Those lucky enough to get a chair must share a desk with three or four others; the rest make do with the floor.

However, the spirit of learning prevails. The teachers continue with the syllabus, doing their job as best as they can. Buyiswa Totile currently has the biggest class load, with 78 grade one pupils. The other two grade one classes have 75 children each.

'Sometimes I can't cope because there is a lack of concentration from pupils being packed into one class like this. I can't pay attention to all the children, but I do what I can,' Tofile said. 'It is hardest for the children sitting on the floor because they can't do the writing exercises properly. These children sometimes just sleep during the day. There's nothing we can do. I can't sleep at night with this situation the way it is.'

Nduli grade five pupil Asanda Titi said it was becoming unbearable to sit in an overcrowded classroom of 65 and continue with lessons. 'We cannot even write our tests properly because everyone looks at your work. Also, I don't like fighting with my friends for desks and chairs, but unfortunately that is the way it is,' Titi said.

Tisana challenged top department officials to visit the school and see for themselves the extreme conditions under which they operate, 'just so that they don't think we are making it up'.

The teachers are bracing themselves for the coming winter, when rain and snow will make it impossible for the children to sit on the cold cement floors. 'We need desks and chairs more urgently than teachers, just so that the children don't have to suffer in the winter. My staff have been tremendous with the way they have been coping and continuing with teaching. Let me just say, having a class of 40 grade one children is a handful, but 78... these teachers deserve a medal,' Tisana said.

This article appeared in the Cape Times, 1 March, 1999.

The shortage of desks for the class of 78 is a shortage of physical space to accommodate everyone as well as a shortage of material goods like desks and chairs. Notice how this shortage impacts on the kind of teaching and learning that goes on, or struggles to go on, in that space. Let's pick out the problems of physical space and time first and then we'll have a look at how these affect teaching and learning:

- First, there are problems of *institutionally allocated* space and time;
- Secondly, there are problems related to *pedagogical* (or teaching and learning) space and time.

Problems related to institutionally allocated space and time

Problems of institutionally allocated space and time include:

- There are too few desks for the number of learners (space problem).
- Although it's not stated directly in the article, one supposes that even if the school had 78 desks for the grade one class, the classroom itself is not big enough for all the desks to fit into (space problem).
- Even if learners have a desk, they have to share it with three or four others (space problem).
- Those who aren't quick enough to get a desk have to sit on the floor (time and space problem).
- The cement floor is too cold to sit on in winter (seasonal time and space problem).

Pedagogical problems in crowded classrooms

Because of these institutional problems of space and time, problems in teaching and learning space and time arise. These impact on learning and on the pedagogical relationships in the classroom:

- Because learners have to fight with friends for desks, this discourages a co-operative learning climate in the classroom.
- Because learners have to run for whatever desk they are able to get for that lesson, they don't have a sense of a secure personal space for learning, of being able to say 'this is my desk'.
- Because of crowding, learners lack concentration.
- Because of crowding, teachers can't give everyone attention.
- Because they don't have a proper desk to lean on, learners sitting on the floor can't do the writing exercises properly; this means that they can't properly practise what they are learning.
- Because of the discomfort and frustration of sitting on the floor, some learners escape into sleeping and so miss learning altogether.
- Because of crowding, it is almost impossible to administer tests where learners can't copy from someone else.
- Because of these material conditions, teachers feel frustrated and helpless - 'There's nothing we can do. I can't sleep at night with this situation the way it is.' Frustrated and anxious teachers are less able to teach well.

But, as the principal said, the teachers do cope and are continuing to teach. ('These teachers deserve a medal!') So the question arises: How do they manage to teach under these difficult conditions?



You will need only about 20 minutes for this task.

ACTIVITY 28

Before we consider this question, you should read the section on 'Crowding' in the article by Lewis in the reader. This is a fairly short section, only three and a half pages. Make brief notes in your workbook as you read.

Consequences of classroom crowding

In your reading you will have seen that in the third paragraph Lewis identifies some consequences relating to time in crowded classroom. These are:

- lack of privacy;
- delays;
- frustration;
- interruptions;
- social distractions.

Have a look at how Lewis discusses each of these time problems and relates them to learning and pedagogical relationships. Although Lewis is not writing about South Africa, her discussion of crowding is very helpful for thinking about the issues of crowding in South African schools. Many schools in South Africa have classrooms originally designed for about 25 to 30 pupils, but which now have to accommodate about 60 to 70 pupils.

Now let's look in more detail at each of Lewis' points about the consequences of crowding. As you read the comments below, think about their implications for your responsibilities as a teacher.

Lack of privacy

Lewis notes that 'time and space become public because of crowding'. She quotes Jackson who notes that most of the things learners do is done with others or at least in the presence of others. So their activities take place in shared space and shared time. In a crowded classroom, this has a significant influence on learning and teaching. First of all, what it means is that there is little privacy or sense of ownership of space, for example, a sense of 'this is *my* desk'. Space is shared with others. Let's note some implications of the lack of privacy for teaching and learning:

- It makes it difficult to administer a test when learners can easily look at others' work and answers.
- Where teachers are able to give learners individual comments or marks, it is difficult for learners to keep these comments and marks confidential, without other learners seeing how well or badly they have done.
- Where learning is much more shared and public because of crowding, 'slow' learners are quickly identified by their fellow pupils. This situation can lead to learners feeling very self-conscious about answering in case the whole class will hear if they make a mistake – so rather they don't risk making 'fools' of themselves in front of their classmates.
- Think back to the importance of developing learners' imaginations (we discussed this in Section Four of this module). You may remember that silence or 'quiet times' and restful reflection without interruptions all help to develop learners' imaginations. It is very difficult to create these conditions in crowded classrooms.

Delays as a result of crowding

Think back to Emma's class in Case study 1 and the number of interruptions to teaching and learning they experienced. Think of the learners who needed to wait because Emma didn't have the time to attend to everyone's needs and queries. As Lewis notes, in crowded classrooms individual needs and queries have to take second place to the needs and queries of the class as a whole. The large classes at the Ceres school mentioned on page 109 probably also delay the start of each lesson because teachers have to wait for everyone to either find a desk to share or a space on the floor. Just as crowding causes delays so delays influence the way in which the teaching and learning takes place in crowded classrooms.

Can you imagine what the learners who don't manage to secure a desk for the



Set up the videotape for this module and watch the first lesson. Notice the kinds of delays that occur, their effect on the lesson, and how the teacher handles them.

lesson in the Ceres school must feel like? Perhaps they feel some resentment towards the other children in the class who did manage to get desks, perhaps some anger at school in general, perhaps a large degree of frustration in not getting what is generally regarded as something every learner ought to have? Do you imagine learners who are feeling resentful, angry, and frustrated learn easily or do you think they are more preoccupied with dealing with their emotions rather than listening diligently to the lesson? The kinds of responses crowding creates in learners are exactly the kind of responses that do not encourage learning.

But these frustrations can be overcome, to some extent, by good planning and organization on the part of the teacher. Lewis suggests that learning activities can be planned so that different learners can be using different resources at the same time, thus reducing the amount of frustration that learners may experience as a result of not getting the necessary desk or book or resource. Think back to the Ceres class. Is there any way in which teachers could plan their lessons so that half the learners do not need desks and the other half do? For example, if you were teaching in a classroom with too few desks, is there a way in which you could plan a lesson whereby half the class are set an activity of collecting things from outside the class? Or perhaps you could plan some lessons where half the class do a group presentation and so don't have to sit at desks.

Where there are delays, there is also a sense of 'wasted time'. Some learners have to wait patiently for the teacher to deal with everyone else before she deals with their specific query, and while they are waiting, usually their attention is diverted from the lesson and learners start chatting with others, or daydreaming. Alternatively, they may become more and more frustrated while having to wait for the teacher eventually to get to them. How can you as a teacher deal with this potential problem? Lewis suggests that teachers can set other or additional tasks for those who have to wait – for example, sketching, observing, imagining, thinking. These are all activities and the teacher needs to plan for them. If you know that you have a crowded class, you might want to plan a variety of learning activities and exercises for learners, and draw on these as you see that learners who are waiting are getting frustrated with the wasted time.

Frustration

Lewis notes that learners experience frustration as a result of not having access to the necessary resources or space. But there are even deeper levels of frustration when a learner realizes that her voice is not being heard – an answer is not acknowledged, or a piece of information is not heard because there are too many people and too little time for the teacher to listen or attend to all. The response of the frustrated learner may be to withdraw from the lesson altogether and not pay attention (since the teacher is not paying attention to her) and so little, if any, organized learning takes place.

Interruptions

In large groups where a teacher is working with lots of learners, she might find that when she tries to work with individual learners, other learners constantly interrupt, demanding her attention. When learners do not have the teacher's immediate attention, they may start to become restless, fidgety and distracted from the work so that they are no longer engaged. Other learners are not the only source of interruption. As you may recall from your own school experience, interruptions come from many sources – for example, notices over the intercom, messages delivered to the class from the principal or other teachers, learners being called out of the class to carry desks, or attend choir rehearsal, and so on. In order to establish order in such a situation, it might be an idea for teachers not only to establish agreed regulative rules for the classroom, but also to establish a set of agreed regulative rules with other teachers. Emma might call the sports coach aside and come to an agreement that learners who are in the soccer team will not be called out of the class before the end of the school day.

Social distractions

In a crowded class where the space is cramped and the noise level is often high, learners may find it difficult to concentrate. Cramped, noisy classrooms are also a strain on the teacher, who at the end of a full day of teaching may be utterly exhausted from having to shout above the noise and trying to attend to more queries than anyone could manage in the available time. You might start to recognize the importance of regulative rules for large classes, especially rules that govern when and how it is acceptable to talk and when, where and how it is acceptable to move around.



Compare the two lessons on the videotape. In the second lesson, notice the rules, routines and procedures that the teacher uses to minimize distractions and maximize engaged time.

5.3

Strategies for managing time and space in large classes



Week 15 begins.



Set aside about 30 minutes for this task. Reread and assess what you have written before proceeding.

One of the most frequent difficulties of time and space confronting a beginner teacher is the problem of overcrowding and lack of time to get through the work. Think about the situation in Emma's classroom in Case study 1 on pages 43 to 45. Bearing in mind the concepts we've developed so far, put yourself in Emma's shoes and think about how you could cope with her classroom problems.

ACTIVITY 29

- 1 Reread Case study 1: Emma (on pages 43 to 45). You might also like to reread the notes you wrote in response to the questions immediately following Case study 1.
- 2 Now ask yourself, 'How would I deal with the problem of lack of space and time if I were in Emma's position?' In your workbook, write a paragraph in response to this question.



Now let's see how Emma tries to cope.

Case study 4: Strategies for Emma

Emma is in the staff room having a quick bite to eat before taking the girls' volleyball team for a practice. Mr Speelman comes in to tell her that the practice has been cancelled because three of the girls have to attend the extra choir rehearsal for next week's school choir competition. Emma doesn't know whether to feel frustrated by yet another unscheduled change in arrangements or glad about the unexpected free time. Let's eavesdrop on her conversation with Yasmine and Bulelwa:

EMMA: Nothing in my training prepared me for the constant change in plans that we teachers have to cope with. I find that I'm always having to deviate from my planned schedule. Like this afternoon. And like the lesson I've just had ... continual interruptions. I'm never going to be able to finish the work at this rate.

BULELWA (nods vigorously): You are so right! And we're always having to do things other than teaching. I find myself caught up with administrative work like filling in the register and running the staff tea club, being a secretary and having to do all my own stencilling and type all my own test papers, being a sports coach for the junior girls' athletics team - what do I know about athletics, I ask you? And

being a nursemaid to the kids in my Grade 8 class. I'm even expected to be some sort of unqualified psychologist when kids come to me with home problems or say that they can't cope with the work because of some relationship trauma. When does the Department expect me to teach and finish the full curriculum? What we need are for specific people to be appointed to do all these other things so that we the teachers can get on with the job of teaching.

YASMINE: No, Bulelwa, that's no solution to problems of time. It's not so much a matter of getting other people to do these things. What you need to do is to organize your own schedule more efficiently. I mean, I'm up to date with my work, just because I don't allow these other things to interfere with the work that needs to be done. For every lesson I have divided the time into blocks - five minutes for introducing the topic, ten minutes for explaining the new work, five minutes for questions, fifteen minutes for an exercise and five minutes for feedback or any other queries. Works every time!

EMMA: I don't know, Yasmine ... take this lesson I've just had. My classroom's way down the end of the passage, so by the time the class gets there five minutes have already gone. And then just to get them to settle down, especially when it's the last period of the day, takes more time again. It took another five minutes to get the overhead projector from Wole's room, and then there are the notices that come round, not only do these take time, but they also interrupt the momentum of the lesson and break the little concentration that there is. And Bulelwa you can add boxing referee to your list of extra duties! Mac and Alfred were at each other again today. There's something brewing there but I just don't have the time to try and sort it out, especially not with next week's geography test looming.

JOE (who has been sitting quietly to one side, now joins the discussion): I've been reading about 'open classrooms' and democratic education. Instead of the teacher trying to control the lesson by allocating fixed times to a predetermined curriculum, he allows the learners to determine their own topics of interest and allows them to work at their own pace. If learners are interested in what they are doing then there will be no discipline problems - they'll focus their energy on the work. When I get my own class I'm going to follow a learner-centred approach. let them take charge!

YASMINE (*sighing conspicuously*): Ah, the idealism of youth! If teachers don't take control, there'll be chaos!

EMMA: I don't know ... At times I think that in order to get through the work I need to be more teacher-centred and take more control. And yet I think that Joe has a point about getting learners to be responsible for their own learning. I can't do it for them! Maybe I should try what my friend who works for SABe TV suggested: he says that people in general learn better if they are being entertained - it helps to sustain their attention and interest. Maybe I should try to make my lessons more dramatic and amusing. But how can I dramatize 'The Distribution of Arable land and levels of Economic Income' which is the section of work I need to cover? I just don't know how to cope with the lack of time and the overcrowded classroom anymore.

From the discussion we can identify four different suggested strategies of how Emma can cope with the lack of time and the large groups of students who have to squeeze into a bleak and noisy classroom with too few desks and too little space:

- **Strategy One** (as expressed by Bulelwa) is to shift the solution to the problem onto others – there is not very much teachers can do until the Department appoints more staff, allocates more resources, reduces teacher:pupil ratios.

- **Strategy Two** (as expressed by Yasmine) offers a technical solution - a fixed plan that allocates specific time slots to specific tasks and the teacher doesn't allow any major deviations from this. Here the teacher's control is central.
- **Strategy Three** (as expressed by Joe) shifts the responsibility for the problem onto the learners. Let them decide in their own creative ways on how best to use learning time and space. Joe goes a bit overboard and also suggests that learners should decide what they learn. In other words, he suggests making learners responsible not just for making the regulative rules for their learning activities but also for deciding on the curriculum! The teacher acts merely as one resource among many on which the learners can draw. Here learners take control of their learning.
- **Strategy Four** (as expressed by Emma's friend) tries to solve the problem by making teaching and learning much more entertaining – incorporate much more storytelling, visual stimulation, role-play and games, and rely less on reading and writing assignments. This is based on the idea that learning increases when information is presented in an entertaining and dramatic setting.

Before we examine some points of concern with each of these strategies, you need to do some reading and writing.



Set aside two to three hours in a quiet place where you can concentrate on this activity without distractions. Here's a suggestion for using the time systematically: Spend about 35 minutes reading Kohl's chapter and another 35 minutes completing the related activities in your workbook; then spend about 45 minutes reading Postman's chapter and another 35 minutes completing the related written work. Use the remaining time to reread and assess what you have written.

ACTIVITY 30

- 1 Read Herbert Kohl's chapter from *The Open Classroom* that is in the reader. Here he discusses three different classrooms, each with different spatial arrangements. These different classrooms encourage different forms of behaviour from both teachers and learners. In your *Workbook*, for each of the three classrooms do the following:
 - a Draw a rough map of what each of the classrooms would look like (where the teacher's desk is, how the student desks are placed, where the door, the window, the notice board are, and so on).
 - b Write down the kind of learning activity that Kohl foresees in each of the classrooms.
 - c Now, write down what you think Kohl might see as the different purposes for the different arrangements.
- 2 Now read the extracts from Neil Postman's *Amusing Ourselves to Death*. You will find these in the reader for the module. Postman argues that both TV and schooling follow a curriculum, that is 'a specifically constructed information system whose purpose is to influence, teach, train or cultivate the mind and character of youth'. Yet the way TV organizes the timing of its information is quite different from the timing of developing knowledge in the classroom. Postman argues that entertainment and education are two different activities. Now do the following:
 - a Using two different coloured pens or pencil crayons, first underline in one colour all the words or sentences that express the strategies followed in putting together a TV programme or TV news (the length, the sequencing, the presentation, etc.). Then, in the other colour, underline all the words or sentences that describe what the school learning process or content ought to be.
 - b In your workbook, note the different lengths of time it takes to entertain and to educate, as well as the different places where entertaining and learning take place.
 - c In your workbook, answer the following: do you think education and entertainment have the same teaching purpose? If not, what implications does this have for learning activities?

Bearing these two readings in mind, let's go back to the four different strategies that Emma and her colleagues have been discussing.

Analysis and evaluation of Strategy One

Stop. Think.

What do you think of the first strategy of shifting the responsibility of dealing with the problem onto someone else? Is it a fruitful strategy? Think about what would happen if you as a teacher expected someone else to do the register, to do your typing, and if you refused to take any extramural activities, and about how might this approach affect your relationship with your colleagues or with your learners. What would be your learners' reaction if you said that you couldn't hand out worksheets because there was nobody to do the typing and duplicating for you? And how would your colleagues react if you refused to carry any of the administrative responsibility of the school?

There are always shortages of resources at schools, but expecting the provincial Education Department (or School Management Committee) to employ a secretary for each teacher is just unrealistic. It seems much more likely for the foreseeable future that teachers will have to cope with existing (and even perhaps shrinking) resources. In thinking about how to work with scarce resources, the questions to ask are:

- How can I best use the time and space available, given the various tasks I need to do as a teacher?
- Is this the most fruitful use of scarce resources?
- What are the realistic alternatives?
- Can resources and work be shared?

Apart from the rather unrealistic approach of this first strategy, it has two further causes for concern. By expecting someone else to solve the problem, teachers are robbed of their own agency. What this means is that teachers give up on their responsibility and see themselves more as *helpless victims* rather than *active agents* who try to address their problems in innovative ways. This goes against the thrust in education that seeks to give teachers more say and control over their own situation. The other cause for concern with this strategy is that teaching is much more than mere dissemination of information and development of intellectual skills. Another module in this series, *Being a Teacher*, explores the different dimensions of what it is to teach. Teaching also has to do with fostering sound interpersonal relationships, social virtues, co-operation between learners and teachers, encouraging people to take responsibility, developing enthusiasm and creativity, and engendering a feeling of trust. These are not 'tasks' that can be delegated to other people, but are an integral part of the human interaction that encourages learning.

The question of how to deal with problems of time and space is always linked to the purposes of teaching and to the teaching and learning demands of different subjects or learning areas. How do you think Bulelwa would respond if you were to ask her what she sees as the purposes of her teaching and how these purposes relate to the strategy she has proposed? Perhaps she would have difficulty answering this question because she has not really thought about it before. Perhaps her strategy of shifting decisions onto others doesn't encourage her to ask these fundamental questions about her own practices. Perhaps her description of teaching as letting teachers 'get on with the job of teaching' reflects her view of teaching as merely getting information across as determined by others in the Education Department. But is this not a narrow and ultimately unfruitful view of teaching?



Week 16 begins.



Take some time to reflect on the issues being raised here.



Bear this question in mind as we move on to the other strategies suggested by Emma's colleagues. We'll come back to it later.

Let's return for a moment to the conversation between Emma and her colleagues:

EMMA (after thinking about what Bulelwa has said): *You know, I like my learners coming to me to discuss their problems. I feel I get to know them better and so I have insight into the kind of conditions that they have to cope with. All this impacts on their behaviour in my class and their enthusiasm for my subject. If I don't know what problems my learners have to deal with, I can't really plan my teaching to connect with their own situations. And, if I were to phone the secretary at eleven at night to type the next day's work-sheet for me, you can imagine how welcome that would be!*

Analysis and evaluation of Strategy Two

Now let's have a closer look at Strategy Two, which offers a technical solution to the problem of coping with limited classroom time and space. Yasmine's classroom, I suspect, will be similar to the first classroom described in Kohl's text. (At this point you might like to go back to your workbook and look at the map, types of behaviour, and purpose you noted down for the first classroom.) Desks in neat rows, clear rules and regulations about what is allowed and what is not allowed, discussion is very focussed and led by the teacher, there is no time to pursue side issues that may arise. The focus is on the syllabus, and learning often consists of memorization (when there is no time to discuss further). Now, it seems as though there might be some merit in this approach - Yasmine certainly thinks so, as her class usually does well in the exams. To have a clear structure in terms of which to tackle the work, to have clear rules of behaviour, to get through the syllabus, and enable the learners to do well in the final examinations are all very commendable. This helps the teacher maintain control of the purpose of the lesson, the type of behaviour she wants from her learners and to structure the classroom and the lesson plan in such a way that she is always in control.



Take some time to reflect on the issues being raised here.

Stop. Think.

What do you think of Yasmine's strategy? Before reading the following discussion, you might like to make some brief notes on your assessment of the strategy.

We've seen that Yasmine's strategy helps to provide structure and direction to her lessons. But is it a good 'recipe' to apply at all times and in all situations? Would you teach a Grade 11 class in the same way as you would teach a Grade 8 class? Would you teach plant classification in biology in the same way as you would teach the

discovery of diamonds in South African history or the analysis of a love sonnet in English poetry? Whereas one lesson might focus on learning *that* diamonds were discovered near Kimberley in 1871, another might focus on learning *how* to classify a rose or how to grasp the poet's emotions. As we saw in Section Four, learning through doing uses time differently. Learning by listening and learning by puzzling things out for yourself takes longer than learning by seeing how others do it. Different learning processes use time differently. The teacher has to cope with a constantly fluctuating process of learning that, like composing a song, is characterized by times of intense activity and creativity and times of feeling that there is no progress. It is therefore not fruitful to force a 'recipe' onto all lessons.

From our discussions in Sections Two and Four, you may remember that we cannot divorce the question of how we arrange the internal space and time of teaching from the questions of *who* and *what* we are teaching. So, in order to understand Yasmine's position better, we need to ask her, first of all, what she sees as the purposes of her teaching. What do you think she might say? Why does she not allow time for discussion on 'other' matters? Why are the desks in strict rows? Why does she think that good teachers are those who have full control? Full control to do or achieve what? Her reply might be, 'to get good marks in the exam'.

Think back to Emma's discussion with Bulelwa. Emma said that she thought teaching was more than merely getting information across. She said that teachers also had to deal with learners' individual problems, be sensitive to the difficulties they may be experiencing (not only with the work, but also with problems 'outside' the classroom), allow them space and time to become enthusiastic and excited about the discoveries they are making. Of course *one* of aims of teaching is to help each learner achieve certain performance standards or levels of competence as stipulated for each specific grade, but we share Emma's judgement that there is much more to teaching than this. Here's what she has to say:

EMMA (*who is still sitting in the staff-room talking to her colleagues*): You know, if I think of my lessons, I realize that life just doesn't follow a neat linear regular path. My class reacts differently in the last period on a Thursday than they do when I see them in the fourth period on a Monday. Also, I could not have predicted that Mac and Alfred would have a disruptive fight. It really broke the concentration of the whole class. When I planned my lesson I wanted them to work in groups and discover for themselves whether there was a link between the areas of arable land in South Africa and the levels of economic income. I was hoping that they'd get excited to find that many areas that have poor soil are also the areas where there's a problem of poverty. I had creative ideas about some of the kids telling stories about their families who I know live in the dry Richtersveld in the Northern Cape. If all the learners were as quick as Nomsa, Karin and Andile, I might've been able to do that, but I found that many of the others did not understand the map about economic distribution I discussed with them yesterday, so I had to go over that again. So a single recipe for a class of learners that learn at different rates won't work. How can one recipe help me to organize different learning processes, focussed on different tasks? I agree that a clear structure and clear rules are necessary, but I don't want to feel trapped by their being too inflexible. There must be some other way in which I can organize the fluid process of learning.

Have you noticed how clearly Emma's teaching intentions come through here? She says that she was hoping the learners would get excited about certain discoveries, that they would be able to make these discoveries for themselves, guided by Emma's teaching, and that they could enrich their understanding by linking it to stories of their own experiences. Another of her intentions was to get them to start asking some penetrating questions about the fairness of unequal land distribution and unequal economic levels. These are the intellectual activities that do not have as

their sole focus getting the learners to pass the exam. I suspect Emma is hoping that when her learners think back to her classes years later, they won't think of their good marks in the geography exam, but that they will remember the excitement of learning and the enrichment of their understanding. So, although she agrees that Yasmine's strategy might help solve her problem of fitting all the learning into the set number of periods in the semester and year, Emma has reservations about following this inflexible approach to teaching.

Analysis and evaluation of Strategy Three

Will Strategy Three help Emma? Have a look again at the map, behaviour and purposes you noted in your workbook relating to Kohl's second classroom. Although Joe – a student teacher – doesn't yet have a class of his own, when he does take up a teaching post, his classroom might look similar to the second one described by Kohl. Here there is no pre-arranged organization of time and space. There is no system and there are no clear set rules beforehand. If a system and rules should evolve, it would have to be initiated by the learners themselves. Learners would decide for themselves what, where, when, and how they are going to learn. In some way Joe's approach is similar to Bulelwa's: both of them see the problem of space and time as one that must be solved by 'others'. Bulelwa says that the education authorities and policy makers must solve the problem by making more resources available; Joe says that the solution to the problem must be the responsibility of the learners. In both cases, the teacher is not regarded as having a central role to play in solving the problem. Joe's solution also has two dimensions: one which makes the learners responsible for deciding on the regulative rules for learning time and space, and another which makes learners responsible for constructing their own curriculum. In assessing Joe's solution, let's focus on the first dimension only, that is, his suggestion that learners take responsibility for regulating *how* learning time and space are used.



Take some time to reflect on the issues being raised here.

Stop. Think.

Pause to make some brief notes on your assessment of Joe's solution before reading the comments that follow.

There are several *practical difficulties* in following this strategy. As Emma has already pointed out, the class is not a homogeneous group. Some learn more quickly than others, some are more responsible than others, some have different interests than others, some work better if they are told exactly what to do, others work better if they are given more freedom for exploration. Given such diversity of interests, abilities, and characters, how will the learners decide on the structure for the use of the common space of the classroom and the common time of the lesson, if different learners have different views of what they want?

Another practical difficulty in this strategy is that developing rules about the use of classroom time and space take time! There is a very real possibility that by the end of the semester there might still be no structure in place. How would the teacher give a responsible account of his time in the classroom to the parents at the parents' meeting at the end of the semester when they ask about the progress of their children?

Yet another practical difficulty with this approach is the need to work through a common syllabus or learning programme so that the standards determined by the Department of Education can be attained and so that learners can move more easily from one school to another. Think back to your investigation of external time and space in Section Three of the module. If learners decided for themselves what to learn and when, then there could not be something like a common matriculation examination, or even an internal school examination. Although there may be moves

afoot to scrap them, for the foreseeable future exams are a reality in most schools, and for that to work, there needs to be some common set of regulative rules to ensure that learners proceed systematically through a learning programme. Here's what Emma thinks about Joe's suggestion:

EMMA: *Joe, I'm not sure that I'll be doing my learners a favour by following your approach. Apart from obvious practical difficulties, there are other reasons why this approach makes me uncomfortable. If I think back to my own schooling, I liked those teachers who supported our learning in a systematic way. It made us feel that we were making progress from week to week. When we first started working with maps in geography I hated it. It seemed so irrelevant and boring. I mean, I didn't see myself as ever having to plot contours on a map. But my teacher really enjoyed his subject and he got very excited about different ways of constructing maps to tell different stories. And by being forced to do that section of work, I started seeing that mapmaking is like a form of storytelling. I got so excited about that and about geography in general that I became a geography teacher myself! It's almost as if the rules and routines that the teacher set helped me to focus attention so sharply that I began to see geography 'from the inside'. This is what I want to achieve with my classes, so I have to take ultimate responsibility for setting rules about how and when different learning activities happen.*

JOE: *Then you are just being a top-down autocratic teacher!*

EMMA and BULELWA (shouting out at the same time): *That's not true.*

EMMA: *There's a big difference between being an autocrat who allows no input from learners about pace, space and approaches to learning, and being an authority in the subject who makes informed decisions about how best to use the little bit of time I do have for geography every day. Of course, I want to create space and time for learners to think about and enjoy what they've learnt, to be creative and raise new questions, but it is my responsibility as a teacher to have some systematic overall plan in mind that steers them in a direction. Being an authority in the subject doesn't mean that I'm an autocratic teacher. In fact I'd be more likely to be autocratic if I weren't an authority. Then I would use my power to stop learners from questioning my ignorance!*

JOE: *You haven't managed to convince me. But suppose you are right ... suppose a teacher can be an authority without being authoritarian. You are still saying that the teacher must be the central director of activities. If I had to choose between following a teacher-centred approach or a learner-centred one, I'd much rather choose the learner-centred one. And I'd much rather work with a negotiated set of classroom rules than just dictating the rules and expecting compliance.*

Various arguments and counter-arguments emerge from this discussion. Emma does not think that Joe's strategy is a fruitful one because of the practical difficulty of getting learners to decide on the rules of the practice themselves. More importantly, she feels that there are substantial reasons that make Joe's approach problematic. Looking back on her own experience as a learner, she says that she benefited from those teachers who supported her learning in a systematic way because then she had a sense of making progress. Even though her geography teacher 'forced' her to do mapwork, she doesn't regard this as an autocratic wielding of power. Instead, she says that ultimately she came to love geography. So perhaps the most important reason why Emma thinks that Joe's approach isn't fruitful is because 'you can't expect learners to make informed decisions about what they want to learn about things they are not informed about'. In other words, learning is a form of

discovery guided by someone who knows the way through what is still unfamiliar to the learners.

To put this in language with which we are by now familiar: those practitioners who understand the practice are best able to make decisions about the control of internal space and time of that practice. This is because they are able to see which *regulative rules* are appropriate to the *constitutive rules* of the practice.

How do you think Joe would respond if we were to ask him, 'What is the purpose of your teaching?' Perhaps he would say that because his approach is learner-centred, the learners must decide for themselves what the purposes of learning should be. This means that every class, perhaps every individual learner, would have a different purpose. Can Joe really teach like this? Is it not only impractical but also inappropriate? If we were to ask Yasmine her purpose of teaching she would say that the teacher must take control as a person who knows what the learners as yet don't know, and it is her purpose to get them to know it so that they can pass the exam. In other words, where Joe is *learner-centred*, Yasmine is much more *teacher-centred*.

But where does Emma stand? She isn't comfortable with either of these positions. Although she sees that there are aspects of Yasmine's approach that make sense, as well as recognising the need for flexibility and for learner self-discovery which would be the kinds of things Joe supports, she regards teaching as more than either of these. She wants to make the practices of geography accessible (and exciting) to her learners and sometimes this means letting them discover things for themselves. At other times it means giving them a list of classifications to memorize and explain, and at yet other times it means getting them to draw things in different ways. In other words, sometimes Emma sees that it is appropriate for learners take the initiative, and at other times she sees herself as taking the central role in steering the learning process. So, perhaps we can get out of the deadlock of talk about learner-centred versus teacher-centred, and say that the practice of teaching is a matter of being *learning-centred*. In other words, the practice of teaching is focussed on encouraging learning activity. To put it differently, the purpose of teaching is to organize systematic learning. Maybe it is appropriate at times for the teacher to direct the process, at other times the learners may need to direct the process themselves.

Now what is your role as a teacher? When is it appropriate to do what? These are questions that you as a teacher need to ask yourself constantly. This module can't give you ready-made answers to these questions. Rather it tries to help you see that every time you ask yourself these questions, there are other deeper questions to ask about the purposes of your teaching and who your learners are. Once you have clarity about these, you can ask yourself, 'how can the available time and space be arranged so as to encourage *this* learning for *these* learners?'

Analysis and evaluation of Strategy Four

Let's look at whether Strategy Four can help Emma encourage learning within the constraints of her allocated space and time at Columbia High. Here Emma's friend who works at the SABC suggests that learning should be much more fun. He thinks that if information is presented in a dramatic setting, such as a video, then learning will increase. He believes that people learn by being entertained.

Stop. Think.

Refer to Activity 30 and your answers to questions on Postman's *Amusing Ourselves to Death*. Do you think that Emma's friend is right in thinking that people learn only if they are entertained? And how do you think a more entertaining approach would help Emma to cope with the problem of lack of time and space?



Pause to reflect on your own answers to these questions before proceeding.

Emma tries to figure out what she thinks about this strategy by telling her colleagues about it:

EMMA: *Maybe I should do what my TV friend suggests: he thinks that his own schooling was so boring that he remembers nothing useful from it at all, except that he's glad he doesn't have to go back! I'm afraid that at the moment the kids in my classes will remember nothing but a chaotic class and an exasperated geography teacher.*

YASMINE: *No, Emma, that's not true. Karin came to my class only last week and said that of all her subjects she enjoys geography the most. I don't know what you do, but your geography classes are obviously fun.*

EMMA: *Well, I don't think that I deliberately do that ... I don't even know what it would mean for me to make geography fun. Would I have to show videos with lots of action, some daredevil stunts for excitement, some jokes for laughs, some stories for entertaining? Something like 'Learning about Icebergs on the Titanic'? No, seriously, if I think of the TV shows I watch for entertainment, some of the daily soap operas and perhaps a comedy or two, I put up my feet, lie back and put my mind in neutral! I laugh, sometimes I get very weepy in the soopies, but if I really think about whether I have learned anything, I must admit that I haven't. It doesn't mean that I think soap operas are a waste of time, but then I don't watch them in order to learn anything. I watch them to laugh and relax.*

BULELWA: *I agree with Emma. I also watch the soopies, but certainly not so that I can become more competent in some intellectual skill. I can't remember very much about what happened in yesterday's episode, either. Entertainment may result in learning, but not all entertainment is necessarily a form of learning ...*

WOLE (who has been listening in on the conversation, now comes to join them): *Yes, I think Bulelwa has made a very important point, but I think we can turn it around as well. She says that not all entertainment needs to be educational, but I also think that not all learning needs to be entertaining.*

JOE: *So then you disagree with Emma's friend who believes that all learning should be entertaining.*

WOLE: *To a certain extent. It's the word 'all' that bothers me. Of course, learning can be fun and entertaining. I tell my pupils stories in history about the 1820 Settlers' attempts at farming that has them laughing out loud. So, I think that some learning can be fun, but that's a far step from saying all learning must be fun. I started out in a small rural farm school in the Transkei. Well, I can tell you there wasn't much fun there, but our teacher, Mr Mathebula, really taught me about making an effort if you want to achieve things, including an education. Yes, I know he came from a strict traditional background but, still, there is something that he taught me that's lasting. Bulelwa, you say that you can't even remember yesterday's soapie, and here I am remembering Mr Mathebula 0(30 years ago. He made us sweat I can tell you. But he also gave us a sense of pride, a sense of making progress, and a sense of our own capabilities and strengths. These for me have been significant lessons, but they had nothing to do with being entertained.*

EMMA: *So what you are saying is that entertainment and teaching have different purposes, and that sometimes they can overlap, but some-*

times not. Yes, I do want my learners to get excited and to look forward to coming to my classes and hopefully even develop a love for my subject. But I also want them to become critical and rigorous thinkers who make an effort to achieve levels of understanding that are not always easy, immediately obvious or accessible. This means that I demand hard work, effort and at times perspiration from them. Hardly the stuff of entertainment!

Let's try to capture some of the main points that emerge from this discussion.

Entertainment has as its definitive purpose to make us relax, laugh, feel good. The definitive purpose of teaching, on the other hand, is to promote and enable systematic learning or, more specifically, to help learners have access to the practices of the subject they are learning in order for them to become competent and critical participants in that practice. So the *formal (or definitive) purposes* of entertainment and teaching are distinct and do not overlap, even though teachers may sometimes use entertainment to help them accomplish their aims. To put this in more philosophical terms: there is a *contingent link* between teaching and entertainment, not a *necessary link*. This means that we can think of teaching as having a different set of constitutive rules from those of entertaining. It doesn't mean that we can't borrow some of the strategies of entertainment in our teaching – making our learners laugh, telling amusing stories, presenting information in a dramatic setting, showing films, and so on. But we don't use these as ends in themselves; we use them as strategies in order to help the learner gain access to the practices of our subject and to organize systematic learning. When these strategies do not fulfil this purpose, then they are inappropriate as teaching strategies. As Emma started to argue: teaching and learning are characterized for example by continuity, development of insight and understanding, development of skills, coherence, rules, perseverance, effort, critical engagement. Entertainment, on the other hand, is characterized by visual and auditory spectacle, laughs, and relaxation.

The main thrust of the argument of how this strategy would cope with the lack of time and space is to claim that if learners are entertained, they will pay attention and then the issue of 'wasted' time will not be such a problem anymore. In other words, entertainment is supposed to maximize engaged learning time. Proponents of this approach claim that teachers don't get through the curriculum in time because the learners take much longer to learn than the teacher has anticipated. This is often the case because the learners are bored. If they were entertained (or put differently, 'if information were presented in a dramatic setting', to use Postman's phrase), then they would learn much more quickly, thus solving the problem of the type of and lack of teaching and learning time.

What do you think? Are these convincing arguments? They focus on time but what about problems of space? (You might wish to reread Case study 1, which describes some of the difficulties Emma has to face in her geography classes.) Does the entertainment strategy help Emma cope with the overcrowded classroom, the traffic noise, the heat, the location of the classroom at the far end of the passage, the shortage of desks? Maybe there is some truth in the claim that entertainment can capture peoples' attention, but we have seen that is not the central question to ask. As a teacher you need to ask whether you are succeeding in achieving the purpose of your lesson. The purpose is not *merely* to hold learners' attention – it is to enable systematic learning and to make the practices of different learning areas accessible to the learners. So entertainment does not seem to be a suitable strategy for Emma to solve her problem of how to arrange the available time and space so as to create conditions that will encourage access to the practice of Geography and will enable systematic learning.

Fruitful ideas

We've seen that all four strategies are problematic. Some of them give Emma some fruitful ideas, but there isn't one that can really help her. So, let's see whether we can construct a strategy that picks up on the fruitful ideas in all four suggestions, but that can help Emma create conditions to encourage learning and fulfil the purposes of her teaching for a specific group of learners. What *are* the fruitful ideas that have emerged from the discussion about the four possible strategies? This is what you need to think about first.

ACTIVITY 31

We've discussed, at some length, the problems with each of the four strategies suggested to Emma for managing teaching and learning time and space in a crowded classroom and within the constraints of the school timetable. But even problematic solutions sometimes contain fruitful ideas.

- 1 Reread the full discussion between Emma and her colleagues.
- 2 Then, in your workbook:
 - a List what you think are the most fruitful ideas that have emerged from the teachers' discussion of each of the proposed strategies.
 - b For each item on your list, give at least one reason why you think it is a fruitful idea.

Now compare your ideas with the points made in the following discussion:

- The first strategy, as reflected by Bulelwa, highlights the consideration that problems of classroom space and time should not be seen in isolation – government policies, school-management systems, the socio-economic location of the school all impact on the problems that Emma faces in her classroom. But as a teacher although you need to be aware of the larger context in which these problems occur, you also have the ability (and responsibility) to take the initiative in working with, and trying to solve, these problems in your classroom. In other words, Emma does not want to lose sight of the fact that *the practice of teaching is an intentional activity and that the teacher is an agent in organizing systematic learning*.
- The second strategy, as reflected by Yasmine, illustrates that *order and planning by the teacher are important for systematic and directed learning to take place*. Without a clear sense of its purpose, teaching can lead to chaos in the classroom. But, as Emma rightly points out, there is much more to teaching than getting learners through the exam. Learning also has to do with discovering, developing new ways of thinking, and exploring different insights – learning activities that need flexibility of both time and space arrangements. So what Emma wants to hold onto is *the sense of purpose and order, coupled with flexibility of teaching*.
- The third strategy, as articulated by Joe, focuses on the important role of the learner in the learning process. Different learners learn at different rates, with different interests and different emphases. It seriously questions the centrality of the position of the (autocratic) teacher. But we need to consider *who* teaches *what* to *whom* (a three-way interrelation of Teacher-Content-Learner.) So, while keeping in mind the important part the learner plays in participating in the learning process, as well as the important part the teacher plays in ordering the learning process, Emma also sees her purpose as encouraging learning activities in whatever way possible. In other words, she sees teaching *as being learning-centred*.
- The fourth strategy, promoted by Emma's friend who works at the SABC, also picks up on an important aspect: it is important to hold the learners' attention in the learning process and to maximize engaged time. Being entertained or seeing information presented in a dramatic setting often does hold people's attention.



Spend about 30 minutes on this task. You might like to assess what you have written before proceeding.

But, as Emma argues, this is not a constitutive rule of teaching. In other words, entertaining learners may help to capture their attention, but it must capture their attention in order to achieve something different to merely being entertained: *it must encourage learning and help learners become informed and critical participants in the particular practices of that learning area.*

Developing a flexible, learning-centred approach

So now let's use these fruitful ideas to investigate an approach to arranging space and time that incorporates the notion of teaching as:

- an intentional practice;
- needing flexibility of approach;
- being learning-centred;
- needing to stimulate learners' interest and to hold their attention.

Refer to Kohl's description of his third classroom and to your drawing of it in Activity 30. Kohl notes that, typically, the same classroom will be used by a variety of different classes, often classes in a variety of different learning areas as well. For example, teachers in the Economic and Management Sciences share the class with teachers in the Arts and Culture learning area. Each subject or learning area has a different purpose and so may require a different arrangement of space and time. Not only do different learning areas or subjects have different specific purposes, but each grade has a different focus, and – to complicate matters – within each class there are different learners who learn at different rates and different levels of engagement, all necessitating a different arrangement of space and time.

How can teachers cope with all this diversity in arranging teaching space and time? Kohl suggests two different ways in which you can arrange your classroom space:

- 1 You can arrange the desks and resources in such a way as to suit your favourite class, or perhaps most frequent class. That means the other classes must fit into that arrangement, regardless of their specific learning focus. If we take seriously the argument that space and time arrangement must suit the purposes your teaching is trying to achieve, then this doesn't seem like a fruitful way to organize your classroom.
- 2 Another option is to 'neutralize' your classroom space. By this Kohl means that you arrange all desks in neat rows, and force each class to sit strictly according to some 'neutral' order, like in alphabetical order of surnames. Again, if the central idea of teaching is to arrange your classroom according to your teaching purposes and your learners, then this 'neutral' arrangement is not appropriate. 'Flexibility' is a key concept that Kohl offers teachers for thinking about how they can arrange their classroom. But, as we have learnt from the discussion of Emma and her colleagues, flexibility must be linked to a clear sense of purpose. The teacher needs to have a clear understanding as to why she is arranging the classroom in that specific way. So the key question for Emma (and any other teacher) is:
 - How can I best arrange my classroom so as to make the specific purposes of my learning area accessible to these specific learners?



It seems as though we have come back to the beginning again: we're still asking the same question and no clear 'recipe' has emerged.

What we have established thus far is to see the link between purposes of teaching, learning activities, different learners, and spatial and temporal arrangements. And we have seen that it is important to hold on to the notion of the teacher's own agency and initiative, flexibility of approach, being learning-centred, and sustaining learners' attention.

We've come a long way from thinking about Emma's problem of how to cope with her crowded classroom and too little time. We've established that there ought to be a link between the purposes of Emma's teaching, the kind of learning she wants to encourage in these specific learners, and the way she will organize the space in her classroom and the time available. We've also seen that it is important for Emma to use her own initiative (there are no set recipes), to be flexible in her approach, to be learning-centred, and to stimulate and sustain her learners' attention.

What have we learnt so far?

So, we come back to the questions that teachers need to ask, but now we can elaborate on them:

- 1 What are my *aims* in this lesson and *how do they relate to the subject* I am teaching or the *learning outcomes* I am trying to enable? (Is it my intention to get learners to *learn that ...* or *learn how ...* or to play, or to socialize them into the practice, or to stimulate their imagination, or to get them to engage critically?)
- 2 What kinds of *learning activity and interaction* do I want to encourage in my learners that will help them to realize the purpose of the lesson (and the subject)? (Do I want them to memorize, or to exercise and practise a particular skill, or to sit quietly and alone, or to engage in collective discussion?)
- 3 Who are the *learners* whom I need to teach? (Do they learn at different rates and at different levels of engagement? What age are they? What kind of home contexts are they socialized into? Do they have specific requirements?)
- 4 How can I *arrange the physical space in the classroom* and the *time available* to encourage appropriate behaviour and the learners' engagement in the lesson? (Do I arrange the desks in rows, in groups, or as an open classroom? What other resources should I use or bring into the classroom? How best can I work with the physical structure of the classroom? And so on.)



Have another look at the video and compare the two lessons. In which of the two lessons do you think the teacher has paid more serious attention to these questions? Why do you think this? In other words, what evidence can you cite from the video to support your answer?

5.4

Learning time and space beyond the classroom



Week 17 begins.



Set aside about 45 minutes for this task.

So far, we've assumed that teachers are responsible for arranging learning time and space only in the classroom. Emma's colleagues all propose strategies for managing time and space in the classroom. Similarly, all the planning questions listed above focus on how best to manage classroom time and space for teaching and learning. Of course, what happens in classrooms is crucial. But it is a mistake to think that the classroom walls limit the scope and responsibility for teaching and learning. Here's a task to help you see why this is a mistake.

ACTIVITY 32

Why is it a mistake to think that the classroom walls limit the scope and responsibility for teaching?

- 1 In your workbook, list any ideas you have in response to the above question.
- 2 Now turn back to Section Four and reread the analysis of time available for class teaching on pages 89 and 90.
 - a Think about whether the class time available is sufficient for the sort of *learning that* and *learning how* that lead to deep understanding and genuine skill.
 - b In your workbook, write a paragraph recording your thoughts.
- 3 Have another look at the school plans on pages 63 and 64 in Section Three and turn to your workbook and look at how you responded to Activity 18.
 - a Reread what you said about learning spaces outside the classroom, but inside the school boundaries.
 - b Now, in your workbook, give three examples of the kinds of learning activities that would be more appropriately done outside than inside the classroom.
 - c For each example, say *where* the activity should be done and *why* this would be the best place for it.
- 4 List all the places outside of school that you think could be used as learning spaces for extending and deepening learners' understanding or developing their skill. For each item on your list, say why you think this would be a good place for learning.
- 5 Reread the list of your first thoughts in 1 above. Then, reconsider the question 'Why is it a mistake to think that the classroom walls limit the scope and responsibility for teaching?' and make a second list, taking account of your responses to 2 to 4.

The various activities in Activity 32 should have helped you to see why it is a mistake to assume that teachers' responsibilities for learning time and space are limited to what happens within the classroom. For a conceptually richer picture, let's now add a few more considerations, all of them drawn from the analytical work done earlier in this module. As you've seen in the discussion of large classes, teachers' responsibility for arranging learning time and space depends on a notion of teaching as an intentional activity which needs:

- 1 to be *flexible*
- 2 to be *learning-centred*
- 3 to *stimulate learners' interest and hold their attention*.

If we think about them, all three of these criteria point beyond the classroom walls as well as within them. A flexible approach allows for a variety of activities within the

classroom but also allows for those kinds of learning activity that are better done outside. It's not just that taking learners out of the classroom may help to stimulate their interest. There may be other reasons – either practical or purposive – for doing so. Practically, working outside is a way of making space for group work or quiet contemplation when classrooms are too crowded. Also, some activities can't properly fulfil their purpose if they are conducted in the classroom. Think back to the distinction we made between *learning that* and *learning how*. Some kinds of learning how – like learning how to ride a bicycle or to identify rocks in their natural setting – can't be done in a classroom. Other kinds of learning can be done in a classroom but may be better done elsewhere. Think, for example, of a creative writing lesson on outdoor smells and sounds, a biology lesson on classifying plants growing in the school grounds, a maths lesson on measuring the perimeter of the soccer field.

There's still one very important conceptual piece needed to complete our picture. If you go back to the analyses in Section Two, you'll find the following key claim about teaching as a practice: *The definitive purpose of teaching as a practice is to promote and enable systematic learning.*

This is the piece we need to complete our picture of the scope of teachers' responsibility for arranging time and space for learning. There are two very important things to notice about the key claim. First is the word 'systematic'. When we call a process, procedure or approach 'systematic' we mean that it is not random, casual or sporadic, but forms a complex and coherent whole. So systematic learning doesn't take place in isolated bits and pieces but proceeds according to a coherent programme and forms a complex whole in which different things (for example, ideas, concepts, skills, attitudes, and values) are connected. The second important thing to notice about the key claim is the idea of a *definitive purpose*. To say that promoting and enabling systematic learning is the *definitive purpose* of the practice of teaching is to lay a special kind of responsibility on members of the practice. Failure to fulfil the responsibility would be to undermine or corrupt the practice.

What does all this mean for teachers?

Well, for one thing, it means that teachers' responsibility doesn't stop with planning for individual lessons. In order to enable systematic learning, teachers have to plan learning programmes for the whole year and to think about *where*, *when*, and *how* the different parts of the programme should be followed. As teachers we need to think about which aspects of the programme are best suited to group or individual work in the classroom and about which would be better accomplished outside the classroom, for example in the school grounds, or the hall, or the library. We also need to think about which aspects of the programme might be best accomplished outside the school - at home, in the streets, at a shopping centre, in a museum, a public library, or a local historical site. Finally, we need to think about how to encourage and enable learners to use different out-of-school times and spaces responsibly and appropriately. If teachers are responsible for providing enabling conditions for systematic learning and if these conditions include suitable arrangements of time and space, then it follows that they are *also* responsible for helping learners to structure their own learning time and space.

This last consideration is crucial. You may remember that the analysis in Section Two showed that teaching is a *co-operative* activity and that teaching isn't possible unless teachers and learners are in active co-operation. In other words, the activity of teaching is incomplete without the action of trying to learn. Although the teacher is the main agent, teaching is a *dual agency activity* in which both teacher and learner have important parts to play. For teaching to be successful, the learners need to engage actively in trying to learn. Part of the responsibility of anyone who is teaching is to act in a way that encourages learners to learn.

For many teachers, this is hard enough to accomplish in the classroom. We've already seen, through Emma's case and a range of other examples and readings, how allocated time and space at school often do not provide optimum conditions for learning. Through careful analyses of examples and arguments, we've also seen

“
**Teachers'
 responsibility doesn't
 stop with planning for
 individual lessons.**
 ”

that the time for learning varies according to who the learners are and what they are trying to learn. And – from our own experience as learners – we know that learning how to read, or to solve problems in geometry or to write coherent long essays is likely to take a long time, perhaps years, and lots of attentive practice.

The role of homework

This is why homework is so important. A well-conceived homework activity gives learners an opportunity to practise new skills and to apply concepts in a range of different examples. In addition, regular homework *may* help learners to get into the habit of structuring their own learning time and space. Homework can also open a space for learners to deepen their understanding, to explore issues that couldn't be explored during class and to work imaginatively on a project of special interest to them. Of course, homework can just be a chore, ignored until the last minute and then dashed off carelessly and only in enough detail to be able to say 'I did do my homework!' So, as teachers, what is our role in setting the conditions for meaningful homework?

Let's pause for a moment to reread a sentence from the description of Emma's class (Case study 1):

As she tries to quieten the class and give them their homework tasks, the bell rings for the end of the day and with an instantaneous goodbye, the class starts to move loudly to the door.



Have another look at the two lessons on the videotape for this module and make some notes on how the teacher deals with homework. Do you agree that the way the teacher sets the homework for the second lesson is much more likely to result in learners' approaching their homework systematically? Why or why not?

We know that Emma enjoys her subject, geography, and that she's eager to help her students to develop the same kind of enjoyment that comes from a deep understanding of the subject and its special ways of doing and thinking about things. In other words, Emma is eager to give her students access to the *conceptual space* that constitutes the practice of geography. Yet the way in which she tries to give them their homework task is bound to result in disappointing work. In their rush to leave for the next class, many of the learners may not have heard her instructions, others may have heard but not really paid attention and so may forget what was required of them. Homework under such conditions is a hit-and-miss affair, especially when it follows a disrupted lesson in which there has been very little engaged learning time.

Several of the concepts and principles that we have used in thinking about how to organize classroom space and time are also important when we think about how best to plan meaningful homework.



Spend about 30 minutes on this task. You might like to assess what you have written before proceeding.

ACTIVITY 33

1 In your workbook, write some guidelines on how to set meaningful home- work. Use the following concepts to help you draw up these guidelines:

- intended learning outcomes;
- allocated and engaged time;
- external time and space;
- internal time and space;
- learning-centred activities;
- rules.

In drawing up these homework guidelines, think about what teachers need to consider when they plan homework and about what they need to tell their learners so as to enable the learners to use their homework time properly.

2 Now give an example of some homework you would set. Your example should include details on:

- the subject or learning area (for example, mathematics, geography);
- the level (for example, Grade 1, Grade 4, Grade 11);
- the aims or intended learning outcomes of the homework;
- how the homework relates to this section of your learning programme (i.e. how it relates to classwork);
- what you will tell the learners about how best to arrange the space and time for their homework. (Think about who the learners are - how old are they, what are their special abilities or disabilities, what are their home circumstances like? Think about how to help learners to help themselves if they live in circumstances where it's difficult to find a quiet time and place for homework.)

In planning a homework activity, it's important for you to think about the point or purpose of the homework and then to make sure that the activity you plan fits the purpose. Sometimes you will have some particular learning objectives in mind, such as using the key to a map in order to read the map accurately, translating word problems into mathematical expressions, applying a familiar concept in unfamiliar ways, identifying and understanding the meaning of metaphors in a poem. Sometimes you may want learners to use their homework time to finish off work that couldn't be completed in class. And at other times, you may want learners to use homework time in a more open-ended way to explore an area of interest to them.

Once you are clear about the purpose of the homework, you can begin thinking about how long learners should spend on it and about where they might do it. You can then suggest how much time they should allocate, bearing in mind that other teachers may also have set homework and that the total amount of time allocated for homework should be feasible and appropriate to the learners' age and capacities. You might want to explain the difference between allocated and engaged time to the learners, or to use an analogy or example that will help them understand these concepts even if you don't use the words 'allocated' and 'engaged' time. This may help them to see that homework requires their full attention and that engagement may be easier to accomplish if they can find or make a special place for doing their homework. If the homework is intended to encourage learners to explore an area of interest, then the school library or a public library – or even a museum – may be the best place to do it. Libraries are also good quiet places to work for learners whose home circumstances are overcrowded or disruptive. You might want to remind your learners that their exercise books or files are also learning spaces that need to be arranged in a way that fits their purpose. Helping learners to develop working rhythms appropriate to the internal time of different activities may be quite difficult to accomplish. But in time, and through the right kind of homework and classroom activities, learners may come to experience the special sense of achievement that comes with 'getting the timing right'.

Other ways of engaging learners outside class- room time and space

Homework is only one of several ways of engaging learners outside of classroom time and space. Teachers also take their students on field trips and on visits to museums, historical sites, factories and libraries. Visits of this kind can be entertaining or boring (for teachers and learners alike), educationally enriching or a waste of everyone's time. They can be orderly but dull, chaotic and embarrassing for the teacher but an opportunity for student mischief, entertaining but educationally empty.

If they are to serve the definitive purpose of school teaching – that is, to promote and enable systematic learning – excursions need to be properly planned. Proper planning for an excursion doesn't mean heavy-handed control of every movement

nor does it require tedious worksheets that dampen the learners' enthusiasm and curb their curiosity and imagination. The places that are visited, just like schools and factories, have their own definitive arrangements of time and space. Part of the point of an excursion is to develop learners' sensitivity to different places and their typical practices, artefacts and temporal dimensions. In visiting a museum or an historical site we can, in the right frame of mind and if we learn how to look, cross the boundary – figuratively speaking – between present and past. Kindling the learners' historical imagination is surely one of the responsibilities of the history teacher and what better way to do this than through imaginative excursions into the past through visits to museums and historical sites. Excursions can also help to attune learners to the present and to the ways in which what they learn at school relates to the everyday world. Think, for example, of how maps can guide us through an unknown place and of how this might be better demonstrated through an excursion or an orienteering activity than through a lesson in the geography room. Let's end this discussion with some exploratory work on learning spaces beyond the school.



Since this is a group activity, one of the group's responsibilities will be to plan and allocate time for the activity.

ACTIVITY 34

This activity requires you to do some of your own 'research', with a group of two or three of your colleagues or fellow students. This is an opportunity for you to share your ideas and to engage in the kind of critical discussion that often results in fresh insights.

- 1 Start by rereading the discussion of institutional space and time in Section Three of this module. Notice that school time and space, prison time and space, and factory time and space are constructed and used in different ways and for different purposes.
- 2 With the members of your group, visit a place that you think could be incorporated into a systematic programme of learning. The place could be a church, a museum, a library, a farm, a research laboratory, the local shopping mall, an art gallery, an archaeological site, a railway or bus station, or any other place where people have structured the time and space for particular purposes. (Notice that this excludes natural sites such as mountains, valleys, forests, and rivers, although, of course, teachers may use all these sites as learning resources.)
- 3 On your visit and together with members of your group, make notes on:
 - how time and space are structured at the site (use the relevant concepts from Section Three of the module to help you) and how this fits the main purpose of the site;
 - the kinds of learning that could be enhanced through a site visit;
 - the kinds of learning activities that would be appropriate to the site;
 - the regulative rules that would be needed to ensure that learners use the site sensitively and with a proper respect for its special arrangements of time and space.
- 4 Individually, in your workbook, note any points of major disagreement within your group. Also make some brief notes on any ways in which your own thinking changed as a result of group discussion about the site, activities and rules.

Opening conceptual space: active participation and shared responsibility

5.5

As we come to the end of the module, it may be productive to go back to the beginning to see whether we can now extend some of our earlier ideas and deepen our understanding of teaching and its relationship to time and space. In Section Two we argued that school teaching is a practice that is centrally concerned with the kind of learning that leads to the development of conceptual frameworks in terms of which to understand the world in which we live our lives. For it to have a chance of being successful, such learning needs to be systematic and, as you will recall from our analysis in Section Two, needs to be organized by those who already understand those conceptual frameworks. But although the teacher is the main agent, teaching involves *an active, co-operative relationship* between the teacher and the learner(s). Both the teacher and the learner(s) have important parts to play. *Learners are active participants in a shared enterprise*, not merely the passive victims of teaching.



Week 18 begins.

Conceptual space

The idea of conceptual space needs to be elaborated. This idea comes into play in several of the other modules and is so central to the practice of teaching that we can't really count ourselves as members of the practice unless we understand the idea of conceptual space. Part of what it means to be a schoolteacher is to take responsibility for enabling learners to enter and work within new conceptual spaces. Teachers provide access to new conceptual spaces by enabling learners:

- to think mathematically;
- to use scientific concepts like momentum and energy;
- to see how language works in a poem or a novel,
- to use primary sources such as letters and diaries from the past to understand historical events;
- and so on.

It's not possible for us to investigate the idea of conceptual space fully here. But it's an idea that should be at the forefront of your thinking each time you plan a programme for systematic learning.

Co-operative relationships

In thinking about how best to organize time and space for developing conceptual understanding, we need to be a little clearer about the nature of the co-operative relationship between teacher and learner. We also need to be clearer about how learners relate to one another and about their shared responsibility in the enterprise of teaching and learning.

An analogy may help us to form a clear idea about co-operative relationships and their role in helping learners to develop and work within a range of conceptual frameworks for understanding the world. Let's begin, provisionally, with the idea that, in some respects at least, teaching is like a conversation. Conversation is an illuminating analogy because it helps us to see some of the special aspects of teaching more clearly, but like most analogies it may also be misleading and this is why we take it as 'provisional'.

From the earliest years of our lives we have conversations and, unless we are in the equivalent of solitary confinement, or are the victims of some kind of serious personal deficiency or illness, we spend many hours every day having conversations with those around us. We converse with family members, with friends and neighbours, and with people we may happen to meet at school or work, in the streets or in the taxi. Conversations are very familiar to us in our everyday lives as normal human beings, and we all know a lot about them, even if we haven't thought about them very clearly. One thing we know is that, like teaching, conversations involve people communicating with each other. Conversations usually take place in a shared space. The participants are in the same place at the same time. But it's also possible to have long-distance conversations by letter or over the telephone.

Conversations can take place at any time of the day or night, and they can take place anywhere as long as those taking part have some way of communicating with each other. Some conversations are very brief, perhaps just a few minutes in the taxi on the way to work; other conversations, perhaps with our mothers or lovers, extend over years. Some conversations involve only two people, other conversations involve many more.

You have probably already noticed some of the ways in which teaching and conversations are similar. Perhaps you have also noticed some of the ways in which they are different. Are the similarities striking enough for us to say that teaching is a kind of conversation? And, if it is, what might this mean for teachers' arrangements of learning time and space? Let's now eavesdrop on a staffroom conversation where the teachers at Columbia High are talking about this. You will find 'A staffroom conversation', in the reader for this module.



You will need about 20 minutes for the reading and perhaps another 10 minutes to make some notes.

ACTIVITY 35

Read 'A staffroom conversation' in the reader for this module. Once you have an overview, reread the conversation and make brief notes in your workbook about the different views of teaching expressed by the different participants.

In the conversation that you have just read, the teachers were exploring whether teaching could be seen as a kind of conversation. In their exploration, they said a number of interesting things about teaching and learning and knowledge. Although they didn't talk explicitly about time and space, what they said has some important implications for how teachers shape time and space for teaching and learning. The conversation was rudely cut off in the middle of Emma's speech, in which she was trying to say what she had 'suddenly understood'. We can summarize her main points:

- 1 Teaching is a 'practical business' and, although some 'theories of teaching' are of very little help, the 'pictures we have in our heads' make a difference to how we teach. 'Our concept of teaching shapes our practices as teachers ...'
- 2 There are advantages to thinking of teaching as a conversation.
- 3 But it must be a *particular kind* of conversation, one which does not 'wander all over the place', in which people listen carefully to what others are saying, and is connected in some way with what we think learning and knowledge are.

She then catches on to Yasmine's word 'discuss' and she is about to go on, but is rudely cut off in the middle. Your help is now needed.



Set aside 20 to 30 minutes for this task. Remember that it's sound learning practice to reread and assess what you have written before proceeding.

ACTIVITY 36

What Emma had 'suddenly understood' was that it might be better to think of teaching as a kind of *discussion*. Just when she was about to say why, the principal, Mr Speelman, interrupted the conversation.

Try to keep in mind the various things that were said during the whole conversation, then write the following in your workbook and complete Emma's speech for her - in about one page:

EMMA: *A 'discussion' is a special kind of conversation. I've been thinking that it would be better if we thought of teaching as a kind of discussion, especially if an important part of our work is to help learners to develop the critical outcomes that Joe and Andile have mentioned. Thinking of teaching as a kind of discussion would have the following advantages*

...

People taking part in a discussion are called 'discussants'. Discussants have responsibilities different from participants in other kinds of conversations. Discussants need to respect the views of fellow discussants and listen carefully to what they say – which certainly does not mean that they agree with everything they hear. Discussants take part in a discussion by trying to make contributions to the discussion; by trying to understand clearly what other discussants are saying and then taking the discussion forward.

A discussion is a kind of journey of exploration, and when discussants contribute to the discussion they might be taking a risk: they are bringing out into the open what they think, and in doing that they might find that others disagree. They might find that they have to defend their views against criticism, or they might even have to change their minds. Someone who says nothing in a discussion, someone who remains passive is not taking part in the discussion; discussants need to be active participants. Many of us remain silent in a discussion because we fear that if we open our mouths we might show how silly or ignorant we are. But if we remain silent, mere spectators overhearing a discussion, we lose the rich opportunities there are for learning from discussion.

What have we learnt so far?

Let's use these ideas about teaching, learning and discussion to draw together the main threads of this module and to direct our attention to other important questions which we haven't considered here but which you may want to think about as you pursue your teaching career. Three of the main threads are evident in our subtitle, Teaching, Time and Space.

In Section Two we developed a conception of school teaching as a practice whose definitive purpose is to promote and enable systematic learning. We also began an extended investigation of how the practice of school teaching both shapes, and is shaped by, time and space. During the course of their teaching, teachers shape the time and space that is internal to teaching. But how they shape the internal time and space is limited by the external allocation of time and space, through the timetable, school buildings and so on. In Section Three we investigated the external time and space of teaching by exploring some of the ways in which schools construct time and space. In Sections Four and Five we have focused primarily on how teachers exercise their agency in organizing time and space for systematic learning.

How does the idea that teaching is a kind of discussion help to advance our understanding of teaching as a co-operative practice that is constituted by its purpose of promoting and enabling systematic learning? Below are some key points we can draw from the analogy. You may want to add some more of your own.

- 1 In a co-operative teaching relationship, teachers and learners have a shared responsibility to participate in the lesson by contributing to discussion, listening with care and trying to understand what others are saying.
- 2 While teachers and learners all have a responsibility to contribute and are all worthy of equal respect, some participants (the teachers) know more

and can do more than others and so have a special responsibility to guide the discussion and set appropriate boundaries.

- 3 Active participation can be a risky business. Teachers are responsible for ensuring a classroom ethos where learners are willing to speak out but are also willing to accept fair and defensible criticism.
- 4 Discussions sometimes carry on over a long time and in different places. Discussants may need to remind one another of where they left off. The same applies to teaching and learning through discussion.

In this module we have engaged in an extended discussion of the practice of school teaching and its relationship to time and space. The discussion is an open-ended one. Although we have reached a number of clear conclusions, there is still room for further investigation. Indeed if you go back to the distinction between practices and institutions in Section Two, you'll see that practices can change, that they remain open to revision and improvement. Often change comes about through ongoing critical discussion among practitioners. Such critical discussion is also what keeps a practice alive and healthy.

Tutor-marked assignment 2

We end the module with an assignment that focuses on teaching as discussion but which asks you to draw on a wide range of concepts. While it is not necessary for you to do any additional reading for the assignment, you may find that some of the pieces in the reader for this module provide a helpful perspective.

If you cite any readings, remember to reference them fully.

In essay form, write 2 000 to 2 500 words in response to the following questions:

- If you decided to approach teaching as a discussion, how would this affect your arrangements of time and space?
- What space and time factors might constrain you in taking this approach?

In answering these questions you should try to use the following concepts:

- internal time and space;
- external time and space;
- regulative and constitutive rules;
- allocated and engaged time;
- routines and rituals;
- physical and conceptual space;
- systematic learning.

You should also provide a detailed, extended example to illustrate the crucial points in your answer. Remember that a discussion does not have to be restricted to the classroom.



Spend week 19 on this assignment.



Spend the final week (week 20) rereading the material to review the entire module.

Further reading

Time and space in teaching

Searle, J. 1999. *Mind, Language and Society*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

This intellectually demanding book is not about teaching, but many of Searle's concepts and arguments will deepen your understanding of teaching and learning. Searle's distinction between regulative and constitutive rules has been crucial in this module to our thinking about the relationship between teaching, time and space.

School time and space

Criticos, C. and Thurlow, M. (Eds) 1987. *Design of Learning Spaces*. Durban: University of Natal Media Resource Centre.

A collection of papers by South African architects, town and regional planners, and educators. Well illustrated with classroom layout plans and school site plans, this is excellent collection for getting you to think about the relationship between spatial arrangements and learning possibilities.

Christie, P. 1998. 'Schools as (Dis)organizations: the "breakdown of the culture of learning and teaching" in South African schools' in *Cambridge Journal of Education*, vol. 28 no.3, pp. 283-300.

A research article which includes an account of how the disorderly use of time and space in some South African schools has resulted in 'a breakdown of the culture of learning and teaching'. You will find an extract from this article in the reader for this module.

De Villiers, E. 1990. *Walking the Tightrope: Recollections of a Schoolteacher in Soweto*. Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball.

A personal account of a young white teacher's experiences of working in a dysfunctional South African township school.

Hargreaves, A. 1994. *Changing Teachers, Changing Times*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Fairly difficult reading, but Hargreaves is an elegant writer with a rich understanding of how changes towards the end of the twentieth century have affected teachers' time and work. The book includes a number of interesting case studies of Canadian teachers and how they respond to changing demands on their time.

Meighan, R. 1986. *A Sociology of Educating*. Third edition. London: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston.

This textbook has two easy-to-read chapters relating to school space and time: 'Space talks: The hidden curriculum of educational buildings' and 'Timetables'. Several of the tasks in this module were inspired by the activities in these two chapters.

Classroom time and space

Egan, K. 1992. *Imagination in Teaching and Learning*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

A thought-provoking book on the importance of imagination in teaching and learning.

Lubeck, S. 1984. 'Kinship and classrooms: an ethnographic perspective on education as cultural transmission' in *Sociology of Education*, vol. 57.

Maja, B. 1998. 'Access to learning: the enabling conditions for learning environments' in *Going for the Gap - Kenton*. Cape Town: Juta.

An investigation of learning conditions in some South African schools.

Moyles, J. 1992. *Organizing for Learning in the Primary Classroom*. London: Methuen.

A practical, easy-to-read book with several chapters on learning space and time for young learners. Although the book is written for teachers in England, many of the ideas can be adapted to suit the working conditions of teachers in Africa.

Powell, M. and Solity, M. 1990. *Teachers in Control: Cracking the Code*. London: Routledge.

Warnock, M. 1977. *Schools of Thought*. London: Faber.

A philosophical approach to issues in teaching and learning. Like Egan, Warnock argues that schools should nurture imagination.

Yamamoto, K. (Ed) 1979. *Children in Time and Space*. New York: Teachers College Press.

A collection of papers, two of which are included in the reader for this module: Nathalie Gehrke, 'Rituals of the hidden curriculum' and Beverley Hardcastle Lewis, 'Time and space in schools'. The collection includes an interesting discussion between the authors and a group of parents, teachers, student teachers, teacher educators, and educational psychologists.

Making learning time and space for large classes

Kohl, H. 1969. *The Open Classroom*. London: Methuen.

An easy-to-read account of Kohl's own teaching experiences, and of how he works with time and space in an 'open classroom'.

Postman, N. 1985. *Amusing Ourselves to Death*. London: Penguin Books.

Taylor, N. and Vinjevold, P. 1999. *Getting Learning Right: Report of the President's Education Initiative Research Project*. Johannesburg: Joint Education Trust.

A synthesis and discussion of 35 research studies, conducted in 1998, on different aspects of teaching and learning in South African schools. Several of the studies looked at uses of classroom time and space. For example, see the study on 'The enabling conditions for successful learning environments' by Botshabelo Maja and his colleagues (pp. 291-296).