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The SAIDE Teacher Education Series

Being a Teacher is one of the modules in the SAIDE Teacher Education Series developed between 1998 and 2002.

This comprehensive multi-media series comprises:

- Learning Guides, which operate much as a teacher does in structuring learning, explaining concepts, exploring debates in the field, and direct readers to other parts of the module at appropriate times;
- Readings which function as a ‘mini-library’ of edited readings for further exploration of concepts, issues and debates raised in the Learning Guide;
- An audiotape which use interviews and classroom events to develop the issues raised in each of the modules (not for all modules)
- A video which bring issues and debates from the modules to life (not for all modules).

Although designed to support the learning guides, the readings, as well as the audio and video resources could also be used independently of the learning guides. Used creatively, they provide valuable resources to support existing teacher education programmes.

This set of learning guides with accompanying readers develop teachers’ abilities to use theory in practice; and to understand, intervene in and improve their practice as teachers. The diagram below shows the inter-relationships of the modules in terms of curriculum coverage.

From within a framing context generated by Creating People-Centred Schools

- Being a Teacher and Working in Classrooms cover the professional and classroom contexts within which teachers practice
- Curriculum and Learners and Learning provide a theoretical understanding of resources or tools teachers may draw on
- Getting Practical and Using Media draw on the above in guiding practice.

Curriculum and Getting Practical are available in second editions from Oxford University Press. The other titles are available on www.oerafrica.org.

Inter-Relationship of SAIDE Teacher Education Modules

Creating People-Centred Schools

Being A Teacher → Working in Classrooms

Curriculum → Learners and Learning

Getting Practical → Using Media

Goal: Improve the Understanding and Practice of Teaching
Components of the Being a Teacher module

Teachers are not just teachers. They are also people. In straddling issues of both professional and personal identity, this module comes to grips with the professional choices teachers are required to make, and do make, in developing the knowledge, skills and values of learners.

This module is suitable for both inducting novice teachers into the role of the teacher and for in-service programmes in which practising teachers could valuably compare their own experiences with this systematic overview of the role of a teacher and teaching as a profession. The contextual setting in South Africa is readily adaptable to other settings: the core issues are the same.

Learning guide

The different sections in this module present a coherent progression. However, the seven sections are downloadable as individual units.

1. Section One: Introducing the module
   This section argues the case for studying what ‘being a teacher’ means in relation to national needs and those of individual learners, and explains how the writers intended the module to be tackled.

2. Section Two: Being a teacher in South Africa
   This section is not as strongly rooted in South Africa as its title suggests. It addresses the basic question of what it means to be a teacher in a broader social setting.

3. Section Three: Teaching as a profession
   The meaning and implications of teachers’ professional responsibilities are developed and extended through comparison with other professions.

4. Section Four: The teacher’s authority: sustaining an effective learning environment
   The issue of an orderly learning environment (involving rules, discipline and punishment) is explored in relation to broader issues of individual rights and freedom in a democracy.

5. Section Five: The teacher as knowledge-worker
   Should teachers be imparting content knowledge or playing the role of a facilitator in a more learner-centred approach? This fundamental question – which may not have an either / or answer – links well the module ‘Learners and Learning’.

6. Section Six: Teachers, values and society
   Nothing in teaching is free of social dimensions and value questions. Teaching can therefore not be ‘neutral’, and teachers cannot sidestep the issue of their role in relation to sets of values. This section explores the role of the teacher in exercising and encouraging particular values.

7. Section Seven: Making a difference
   What essential qualities do teachers (and schools) need in order to ‘make a difference’? This section provides a platform for teacher agency and reflective practice.

Readings

There are 20 edited key readings to support the following topics (Sections 2-7 above):

→ Introduction to the readings
→ Section One: Being a teacher in South Africa
→ Section Two: Teaching as a profession
→ Section Three: The teacher’s authority: sustaining an effective learning environment
→ Section Four: Teachers as ‘knowledge-workers’
→ Section Five: Teachers, values and society
→ Section Six: Making a difference

Not all the copyright holders of these readings have given permission to release them digitally. Where we do have permission, the titles on the content page of each section will hyperlink to the text of the reading.

The available readings can be downloaded from the Being a Teacher module page on www.oerafrica.org.
**Video**

Part of the module is a 47 minute long video which introduces viewers to the perceptions, doubts and concerns of student teachers about their choice of career. Through a range of interviews with two celebrities and teachers, as well as clips of classroom teaching and school management practices, we explore the role of the teacher as a knowledge worker, care giver, and change agent through teaching and management. On the basis of these experiences, we return to the questions that initiated the tour of schools and classrooms.

The video is divided into clips each approximately 10 minutes long. These can be downloaded from the Being a Teacher module page on [www.oerafrica.org](http://www.oerafrica.org).

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The first edition was published by SAIDE/Oxford in 2001 under conventional 'All rights reserved.' This (slightly adapted) 2010 version is available digitally on [www.oerafrica.org](http://www.oerafrica.org) under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 licence to facilitate updating and adaptation by users. The processes involved in making the 2010 version available were managed by Ken Harley and Tessa Welch, with funding from the International Association for Digital Publications.