STIR Education
Micro-Innovations that raise results

THREE STEP TEACHING
STIR EDUCATION

At STIR Education, our belief is that the best way to improve the quality of education is to empower teachers and principals. As the people closest to the challenges of providing all children a high quality education, teachers and principals are uniquely placed to lead change in the education system.

STIR has two very simple ideas about how to do this:
1. By identifying the teachers and principals who have created successful, innovative practices – what we call ‘micro-innovations’ to improve education in their schools and recognising their efforts publicly.
2. By creating an ecosystem that enables those micro-innovations to be shared with other teachers and schools – through partner organisations and teacher networks – and that encourages and inspires the development of additional micro-innovations

By identifying teachers’ innovations and building the STIR network of teachers – what will become India’s most creative community of teachers - our aim is to improve the quality of education for over 1 million children in the next three years.

This guide introduces just five of our micro-innovations:
We hope that it inspires you to introduce a similar idea in your classroom, to share your own micro-innovations with STIR and to join the STIR network of innovative educators!

FOCUS: LEARNING
THREE STEP TEACHING

RUBY NASREEN AND MAJEEDIYA MODEL SCHOOL

Ruby Nasreen is a Standard 3 teacher at Majeediya Model School and is also in charge of cultural programmes and examinations. Ruby believes very strongly that the strongest teachers in a school should work with junior classes in order to provide a very firm foundation for their learning.

Majeedia Model School is an English medium school serving approximately 420 students, all of whom are from the Muslim community. The school charges fees of ₹300 per month per child. Many students at the school are the children of migrants to Delhi from nearby states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Most of the parents work as artisans in local hosiery and embroidery businesses and most of the children at the school are first generation learners.
HOW CAN I ENCOURAGE MORE FOCUS ON WHAT STUDENTS ARE LEARNING?

Student learning needs to be reinforced if students are to build on their learning in future lessons. Ideally, students should have the opportunity to identify and understand their areas for improvement and to quickly correct any mistakes they might have made. When trying to encourage students to revise for exams, Ruby noticed that her students were not taking time to prepare properly, that their learning was not being reinforced and that they needed to have material presented in different ways in order to learn effectively. Ruby and teachers throughout the school felt that students were not developing the ability to assess their own learning.

“I really want all students to develop the ability to learn independently. I needed a way to show students techniques reinforce their learning and to help students learn how to learn.”

DO THESE CHALLENGES SOUND FAMILIAR?

Ruby developed a SOLUTION that helps to REINFORCE STUDENT LEARNING and show them how to REVISE EFFECTIVELY.

RUBY’S SOLUTION: THREE STEP TEACHING

Ruby has developed a three step process to help students learn and to help each other to learn. Firstly, she writes a question on the blackboard and asks students to answer it on their own as best they can (ideally they would have already done some of their own revision at home). She then asks the students exchange notebooks with a partner to provide feedback to each other and share additional knowledge or ideas. Finally, she asks each student to check their original classroom notes on the relevant subject and to add any further points that they have missed to their new answers. The process is repeated with further questions.
Could you introduce a three-step learning process to help children revise and reinforce learning? How else could children be supported to develop into confident and independent learners? Could you create other systems to encourage peer learning?

You could introduce the three-step learning approach in exactly the same way that Ruby has (see Step by Step guide) or you could create your own technique to help your students become independent learners. Either way, they will benefit in the short term with test results and in the long term as life-long learners.

Ruby’s micro-innovation is successful because it provides children with opportunities to recognise their mistakes and, very quickly, to put them right or build on and further improve their answers.

Ruby has some important advice for teachers planning to introduce three-step learning:

1. **Give students time to go through the three stage process** and check-in regularly with the class as they work

2. **Encourage students** and praise them when they recognise a mistake and correct it.

THREE STEP TEACHING

STEP BY STEP GUIDE

To introduce the three-step learning process as Ruby has, follow the steps below:

1. Once you complete a topic or part of the syllabus and want to help reinforce children’s learning, **ask them to revise the material at home**.

2. In the next lesson, **prepare some revision questions for your students** and write them on the blackboard or pass them out on paper.

3. Firstly, **ask the students to write their own answer to the question** and give them time to check through their answers and correct any errors they spot, or improve their answer further.

4. Secondly, **ask the students to exchange their notebooks with their buddies** and to check each other’s notebooks with a different coloured ink. This gives the students feedback from peers.
5. Thirdly, the students take their own notebooks back and re-check their own responses with the help of their original notes or from the textbook. This means they can check their answers using all of the materials available. By now, they have gone through the same material 3 times which helps them remember and understand the material in more detail.

6. To help improve comprehension in English, for example, Ruby uses the three step system as follows:

a) After writing some questions on the blackboard, Ruby asks her class to answer a question in Hindi – to check knowledge and understanding.

b) Then, she asks the students to write this answer in their notebooks in English, formalising the learning and requiring them to think for themselves in English.

c) Finally, students swap notebooks with peers in order to check that both the original answer and that the written English was correct.

WHAT DO OTHER TEACHERS SAY?

POSITIVE BENEFITS:

“I have used Ruby madam’s method in my class to reinforce Hindi learning. The kids review each other’s paper and are on the lookout to spot errors. The added advantage is that once the students know the steps or points where most of their friends make mistakes they are more focused on those places while doing their own work in future. In a way the method makes my students more cognizant of their mistakes and places where they might tend to make errors.”

CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME:

“The problem that I face with the idea is that if I spend time using the idea with my students I have to give it one whole period as students take time evaluating each other’s notebooks and thus I am forced to leave one subject from my timetable that day. It takes planning to use the technique carefully.”