

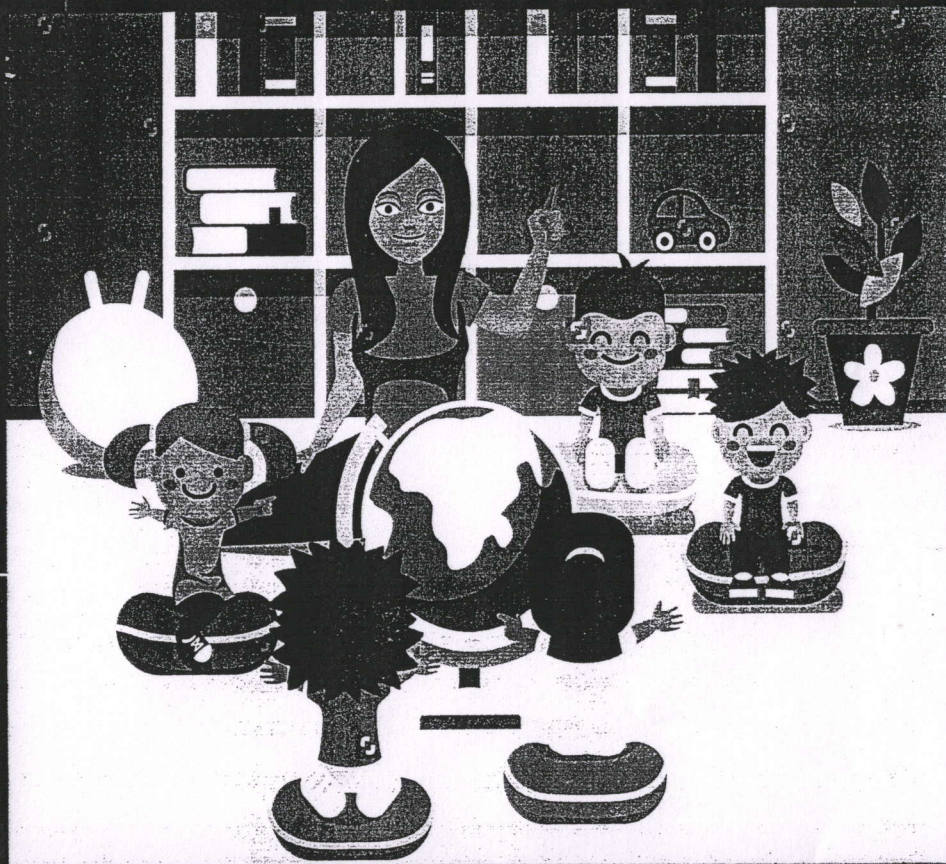


**ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE OF EDUCATION (AUTONOMOUS)**

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**PALAYAMKOTTAI - 627002.**

# **PRODUCING EMPLOYABLE TEACHERS: PROSPECTS, CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES**



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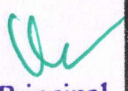
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## Work Skills Needed for a History Teacher

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**T**eacher is a person who shapes up the whole life of the students through his knowledge, patience, love and care. He shapes the future of every student by providing various threads of thought from antiquity to the present day. This is specifically done by a history teacher. History teachers are great sources of knowledge, prosperity and enlightenment from which anyone can be benefited for their whole life. They serve as the real light in everyone's life as they help students with a broad exposure to historical events and as well as make their ways in the life. They are the God gifted people in everyone's life who lead students towards success without any selfishness. Really, they can be called as builders of the dazzling future of our nation through history education. History teachers at all levels typically need to hold some important skills. The author of this paper being a history teacher for 25 years enumerates some of the important skills needed for history teachers in general.

### Necessary Education

The major and required areas of study are usually dependent on what education level and subject a teacher is interested in teaching. If a history teacher wants to work at the elementary level, he likely need a bachelor's degree in history and diploma training in education. To teach at the secondary level, one needs to obtain at least a graduate degree in the subject history and a Bachelor of education degree. For the post secondary level a post graduate degree and a Bachelor of education degree are must.

For teaching positions at universities a history teacher requires a doctorate or a pass in the National Eligibility Test.

### Work Skills

To be a successful history teacher, clear communication skills are essential. Students must be able to thoroughly understand what the teacher is teaching. Additionally, possessing a trustworthy and confident attitude is needed to inspire students. Organization is a skill that can help properly manage the lesson plans, assignments, quizzes and projects that a history teacher employs in classroom. The 21st Century Skills identified for a history teacher is the 4 C's: content knowledge, critical thinking, communication, and creativity and innovation. In addition to that the challenging 21st century student communities and workplaces expect a history teacher to be skilled in Map reading and Mind Mapping.

### Content Knowledge

Teachers do need to know their subject content. They have a professional responsibility to keep up with developments in their field. Moreover, a love of the subject and a willingness to convey them to students may enhance the learning of the students. The content becomes the be-all and end-all of the teaching process; it matters more than anything else.

The best and the most important way to improve the teaching is by developing the content knowledge. Because teachers' content knowledge influences how teachers engage students with the

subject matter, how teachers evaluate and use instructional materials and also it influences what students learn.

Besides the content knowledge, Knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values, and their philosophical and historical grounds, Knowledge of learners and their characteristics, knowledge of the strategies of classroom management, Knowledge of educational context, Knowledge of Curriculum and Knowledge of Pedagogy are also important.

### Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is the ability to think clearly and rationally about what to do or what to believe. It includes the ability to engage in reflective and independent thinking. Someone with critical thinking skills is able to do the following: understand the logical connections between ideas. The skills that are needed in order to be able to think critically are varied and it includes observation, analysis, interpretation, reflection, evaluation, inference, explanation, problem solving, and decision making. These are very important for any subject teachers. Specifically history teachers need to be able to:

- a) Think about an event, topic or issue in an objective and critical way as most of the topics are controversial.
- b) Identify the different arguments there are in relation to a sensitive issues like politics, religion and caste.
- c) Evaluate a point of view to determine how valid it is, because most of the past events have no enough sources.
- d) Recognize any weaknesses or negative points that there are in the events, or happenings of the past.

- e) Notice what implications there might be behind teaching the particular event to the students.

### Communication

Communication Skills refers to the use language to communicate, to express, to get the ideas across, and to connect with the students to whom a teacher is teaching. The success of a history teacher depends upon his ability to communicate with students, face to face, as well as virtually. Communicating effectively is one of the most powerful skills for achieving the teachers' objectives.

A history teacher deals with, something dead or past. To be the best communicator a history teacher has to:

- a) Be confident to say what he thinks. The teacher will be more confident when he has more from beginning to end content knowledge.
- b) Start with simple interaction, as a history teacher you are dealing with abstract concepts.
- c) Look into the eyes of the students with whom he is conversing. This can make the teaching more successful. Eye contact conveys interest of the teacher on students and encourages the students to be interested in teacher and in the subject in return.
- d) Use gestures. These include gestures with hands and face. The best history teacher speaks with his whole body in the class.
- e) Enunciate the words. Speak clearly and don't mumble. Pronounce words correctly. Use the right words. Develop and animate the voice. Then only a history teacher can make the past into real through his teaching.

### Creativity and Innovation

Creativity and innovation are the essence of teaching and learning including any social science discipline. Creativity and innovation bring about interest and motivation to learners which eventually lead to better learning. An innovative history teacher will constantly think of better ways of teaching the subject. He will constantly formulate new ways and approaches to teaching and learning to maximize the output of learning. In order to foster creativity a history teacher can follow any one of the creativity model to teach history. The history teacher has to allow space for creativity and see creativity in a positive light. Then only use of creativity will be possible.

### Mind Mapping

A mind map is a diagram used to visually organize information. It is often created around a single concept, drawn as an image in the center of a blank landscape page, to which associated representations of ideas such as images, words and parts of words are added. It is a powerful graphic technique which provides a universal key to unlock the potential of the students' brain.

The steps to make a mind map are very simple in nature. The following are the major steps to be followed in developing a mind map.

- a) Start in the centre of a blank page turned sideways.
- b) Use an image or picture for the central idea.
- c) Use colours throughout
- d) Connect the main branches to the central image and connect the second- and third-level branches to the first and second levels, etc.

- e) Make the branches curved rather than straight-lined.
- f) Use one key word per line.
- g) Use images throughout.

### Map Reading

Every map is a representation of a larger portion of the earth. Maps are the basic tools of geography. They enable teacher and students to depict spatial phenomenon on paper. There are conventions used in cartography which allow a map to be read efficiently and quickly. A good map will have a legend or key which will show the user what different symbols mean. The following are the important map reading skills needed.

- a) Identifying the colours: Blue - water features like lakes, ponds and streams, Black - man-made objects or rock features like roads, trails, buildings, cliffs, boulders, White - open woods you could run through, Green - thick vegetation (light green) or light (dark green) that you might want to avoid, Yellow - open land, semi-open land, where you can look up and see the sky like fields or power lines and Brown - land features like earth banks or contours.
- b) Scaling: Scale refers to the relationship between the size of the map and the actual size of area that is mapped, or relative distance. On a 1:10,000 scale, one of any unit on the ground equals 10,000 of the same unit on the ground.
- c) Understanding the Legend: By using symbols, lines and colors, topographic maps illustrate both natural and human-made features. In order to read a map, it is important to understand what these symbols, lines and colors represent. Topographic maps identify

land-use areas by using different colors of shading to represent each type of area. Typically, these shadings are identified on the legend.

- d) Knowing the Contours: contour lines and the brown squiggly lines you see on the map. They represent elevation in the landscape. As a beginner, you only need to know that the closer the lines are together the steeper the landscape.
- e) Aware of the Coordinating System: Latitude and Longitude are the true coordinating system. The Earth is divided into a grid of circular segments which are perpendicular to one another, called latitude and longitude. Latitude lines run horizontally, to the equator. Degrees of latitude are numbered from 0° to 90° north and south. Zero degrees (0°) is the equator, 90° north is the North Pole, and 90° south is the South Pole. Longitude lines (also called meridians) run perpendicular to latitude lines. Their spacing is widest at the equator, and converges at the Poles. The prime meridian or Greenwich Meridian (0° longitude) runs through Greenwich, England. Half way around the Earth, the degrees meet (180° east and west) in the Pacific Ocean, just west of the Midway Islands, and just East of the Fiji Islands and New Zealand.

### Conclusion

Gone are the days of a teaching in a class room using a one-way communication mode, where teachers words were considered as words of God, and students sit quietly embracing his words, busy in listening to him. Those days have long been replaced with more innovative and creative ways of teaching, sharing, disseminating, discussing and facilitating the knowledge of history to the

students. With information and communication technology being the flesh and blood the students always question on teachers teaching. They ask for evidences and resources in history learning. They are empowered to be partly responsible for their learning. So by all means a history teacher should incorporate creativity and innovation in his teaching.

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