

# Learners and Learning

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*The SAIDE Teacher Education Series*

**Saide**   
South African Institute  
for Distance Education



# Learners and Learning

## Learning Guide

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# Preface

## The SAIDE Teacher Education Series

*Learners and Learning* 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.

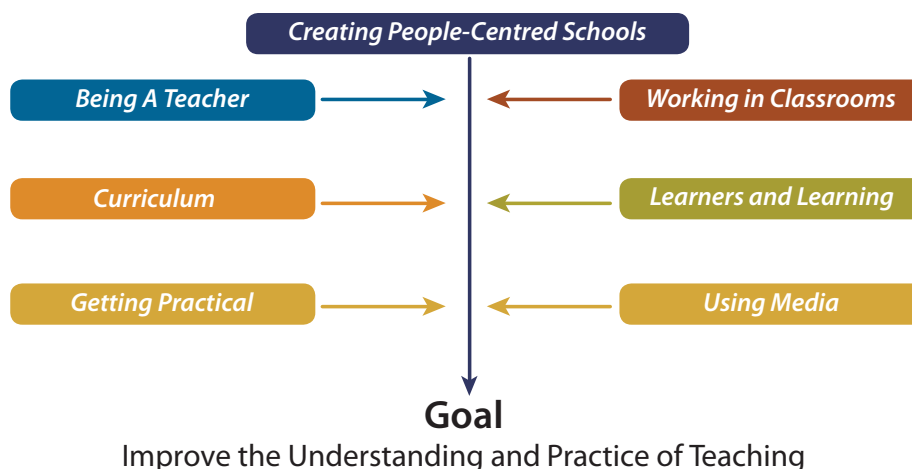
From within a framing context generated by *Creating People-Centred Schools*

- *Being a Teacher* and *Working in Classrooms* cover the professional and classroom contexts within which teachers practise
- *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](http://www.oerafrica.org).

## Inter-Relationship of SAIDE Teacher Education Modules



## Components of the Learners and Learning module

As its title suggests, *Learners and Learning* is a module that addresses most directly the central, core business of schooling. The aim of the module is to improve the teaching abilities of teachers. It accordingly promotes a theoretically informed understanding of what learning is, how it takes place, and how teachers may go about organising systematic learning. The module enables teachers to analyse learning, and, in so doing, to reflect on what they can do to improve it. Thus, while the module draws on the learning theories of writers like Piaget and Vygotsky, it grounds these examples, practical exercises, and case studies drawn from schools.

### Learning Guide

The different sections in the Learning Guide present a coherent progression.

**1. Section One: Introduction to the module**

This covers the writers' understanding of learning and how this informs the learning guide. It also explains how the writers intended the module to be studied.

**2. Section Two: Learning to know what we don't know**

How do we, as teachers, enable learners to learn by moving them from the known to the unknown?

**3. Section Three: School learning**

How is school learning different from everyday learning, and how can teachers implement good school learning in their classrooms?

**4. Section Four: Text as a context for learning**

What role do texts and literacy (reading and writing) play in learning, and how can teachers scaffold learning through texts?

**5. Section Five: How can teachers structure learning?**

What role do teachers play in producing and improving learning, and how can they structure learning?

**6. Section Six: Talking about theory**

How can teachers use different theories of learning to understand and promote learning?

### Readings

The Learning Guide is supported by a set of 17 readings that fall into the following sections, each with an introduction:

**1. Section 1: Classic theories of learning**

**2. Section 2: Learning theory as classroom practice**

**3. Section 3: From the known to the unknown**

**4. Section 4: Reading and schooling**

Not all the copyright holders of these readings have given permission to release them digitally, and so, although notes on all the readings are included, the full text is in some cases omitted.

The available readings can be downloaded from the *Learners and Learning* module page on [www.oerafrica.org](http://www.oerafrica.org).

### Audiotape

The audiotape includes interviews and discussions that cover three key questions:

1. What is learning?
2. Is there a difference between everyday learning and school learning?
3. How do we teach to enable learning?

For the most part of the 84 minutes (divided into clips that vary in length from 9 to 18½ minutes of recording) we listen to the views of experts who provide interesting and valuable insights and debates. The clips can be downloaded from the Learners and Learning module page on [www.oerafrica.org](http://www.oerafrica.org).



# Acknowledgements

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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.