

The OECS PD Magazine

Trending PD



COACHING
IN THE OECS

PD
Benefits

The OECS PD Model

Parents in PD
PD! Blueprint to Staying Teachable

6C's of
OECS PD

Professional



Development

The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) is an International Inter-governmental Organisation dedicated to economic harmonisation and integration, protection of human and legal rights, and the encouragement of good governance among independent and non-independent countries in the Eastern Caribbean.



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Trending PD

Acknowledgements:

This publication was peer reviewed by the participants to the OECS Professional Development Programme consultations conducted across the nine English-speaking OECS States and Associate States. We acknowledge the contributions of the following persons and institutions:

Ministries of Education of the OECS Member States with special thanks to the following members of the PD Magazine Team: **Antigua and Barbuda:** Arah David and Mavreen Gordon-Teague; **Dominica:** Corine George and Kisha Remie; **Grenada:** Karreen Francis-Gulston and Rickisha Phillip; **St. Lucia:** Marylene Auguste and Martina Poleon; **St. Kitts and Nevis:** Tricia Williams and Teresa Daveron; **St. Vincent and the Grenadines:** Asif Colin-Dover and Raphilia Adams.

Teachers' Colleges of the OECS Member States with special thanks to Mr Royston Emmanuel, SALCC, St. Lucia, for managing the consultations data
The Caribbean Union of Teachers
School of Education, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados

Special Thanks to our Development Partners:

Global Partnership for Education (GPE)
United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF)
United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
The World Bank

Also available at: <http://bit.ly/trending-pd>

Published by:

The Education Development Management Unit (EDMU)
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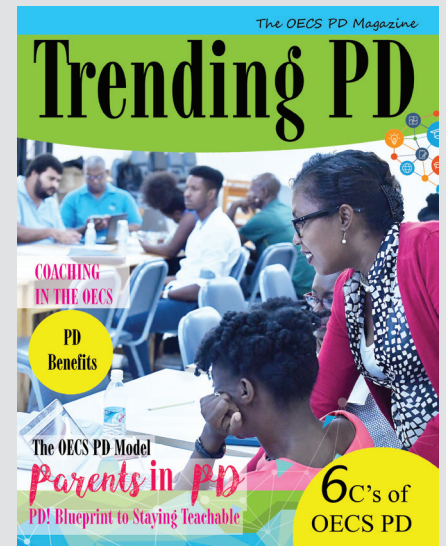




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To the Reader

Our growth as teachers, affirms our conviction that learning is a reciprocal experience, shared by the teacher and students. Our students have helped us to see that being a teacher means being a helpmate. Therefore, our ongoing quest as teachers is to meet the needs of each student, by balancing the demands of content and curriculum with humanity and compassion.

What better way to do this than by sharpening our Professional Development skills.

Professional Development is an exciting opportunity for us to invest in ourselves. It allows us to add value to the classroom experience of our learners and to improve the quality of work administered to students/learners ourselves as individual learners. PD is a way of life in the experience of a teacher and should be viewed and accepted as a part of the very fabric that makes the teacher the very professional that we aim to be. Professional development should not be engaged sporadically but should be meaningfully organized to meet our specific needs at the time.



From the teachers of the OECS PD Magazine Team.



How can we share this exciting news?

Educators of the OECS, including teachers, have started a 'movement' that puts Professional Development front and center. The aim is to transform the thinking and practices to ensure that we maximize the opportunities for professional growth available to us. This magazine will describe PD in ways that are relatable and will point out some of the PD practices that we are already doing as well as some new ideas to be implemented. It will give teachers better insight into Professional Development and its importance; and hopes to inspire the teacher to seek out PD opportunities that would help to improve professionally as we strive to become effective and efficient teachers influencing our students' learning and achievements. The aim is for the teachers to be the driving force in PD; the organisers, facilitators, evaluators. Join the movement! Join us up front and center!

What is PD?

Teacher Voices from the OECS.

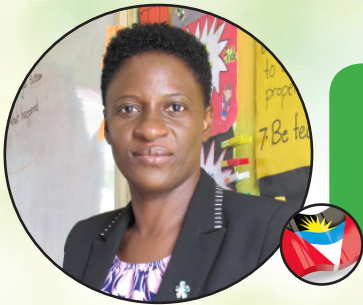


CORINE GEORGE - Dominica

PD focuses on improving my leadership and developmental skills, which provides great benefits towards students' learning and achievement in my classroom.

With regard to education, professional development refers to the use of professional learning opportunities to improve the effectiveness of educators so as to foster student success and the achievement of educational standards.

KARREEN FRANCIS-GULSTON - Grenada

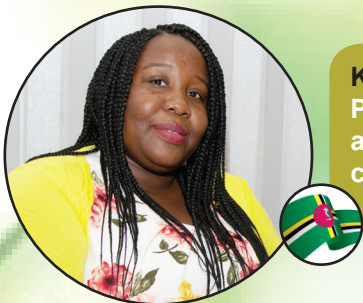


ARAH DAVID - Antigua/Barbuda

PD provides a platform for us as teachers to develop both professionally and personally. As I engage in various types of PD it shapes the way I think about my practice and aids me in adjusting new knowledge to building lifelong experiences.

MARYLEEN AUGUSTE - St. Lucia

Professional development is the wide range of learning experiences that teachers undertake individually or collectively to further enhance their professional practice for high teacher efficacy and improvement in student performance.



KISHA REMIE – Dominica

Professional development allows teachers to advance students academically by meeting the teacher's own needs that are constantly changing.

RAPHILLIA KING-ADAMS - St. Vincent & The Grenadines
I view professional development as an ongoing support system. It's the tool that I personally use to improve my pedagogical skills in my classroom.



MAVREEN GORDON-TEAGUE - Antigua/Barbuda
It's my belief that learning is indeed a lifelong process. For the teacher I consider continued and meaningful teacher professional development as the means by which teachers constantly improve upon their craft with the sole aim of improving their practice within the classroom.

ASIF COLLIN DOVER - St. Vincent & The Grenadines
In my opinion, PD is a way for me to improve on my already existing skills in an effort to effect meaningful changes in my classroom.



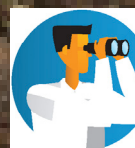
TERESA T. C. DAVERON - St. Kitts Nevis
Professional development provides opportune knowledge and skills for teacher to enhance their practice geared towards the teaching learning experience.

RICKISHA PHILLIP - Grenada
Teacher professional development to me deals with teachers enhancing their knowledge capacity which in turn will be used to cater to their students' individual requirements.



PLCs

**LUNCH
& LEARN**



OBSERVATION VISITS

PD! **Blueprint** to Staying **Teachable**



As teachers, we engage in a myriad of professional development activities which give us opportunities to trade ideas, share our students' struggles and build a support system.

Through the engagement of different forms of professional development, we can satisfy our own passion for learning, while also gathering fresh fruits of knowledge to bring back to our students.

Since effective professional development is a long-term process that intends to stimulate the development and evolution of the teacher, it is important that we be familiar with and engage in the different forms of professional development available.

In this way, we can continue to boost our confidence and get back to our classrooms with new ideas and renewed energy for diverse and high-needs educational settings.

Get Involved!!

PD provided me with an international passport for my career.



Types of PD

LEARNING WALKS

Professional development is provided as teachers open-up their classrooms to other teachers, collaborating and learning new ideas.

EDCAMP

This type of professional development session is fairly new. However, the concept is one that is not strange to our region.

A typical Edcamp starts with teachers coming together to identify topics in education that they want to learn about. You enter the room arranged with mini conference tables and sticky notes and/or papers.

Your role is to go to a table and write a topic or idea you wish to discuss and place the note on a display board.

The most popular topics are identified and teachers lead the group discussion based on their topics of interest.

LUNCH AND LEARN

Teachers designate lunch periods with professional leaders to share meaningful information and respond to questions and concerns of their colleagues.

WEBINARS

The word 'webinar' is a portmanteau word from 'web' as in internet and 'seminar'.

Essentially, then, webinars are professional development meetings or training sessions conducted over the internet.

USE OF VIDEOS

This is an effective way to identify strengths and weaknesses, particularly through reflection on authentic instruction taking place in the videos.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Why don't you consider professional learning communities (PLCs)?

PLCs, currently in vogue, see both teachers and students as learners.

In PLCs, teachers come together to answer essential questions to make informed decisions with the goal of enabling all students to be successful. By working collaboratively and focusing on student learning, teachers are given opportunities to grow as professionals.



PD Benefits

The world continues to experience changes that demand a focus on teaching critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity. We as educators will not give up on our promise to teach the next generation and to prepare them for the world of tomorrow. We are, therefore, constantly looking for new ways to improve our skills through professional development.

That's interesting, but as teachers from the Caribbean who are presently involved in PD daily at your schools, what are some of the benefits?

Team Work
Confidence
Relationships
Creativity
Collaboration
Knowledge
Job Satisfaction
Innovative

PD gives ongoing support to teachers.

PD allows time for teachers to learn and practice and to share ideas.

PD gives students the best opportunity to learn.

PD helps to develop a better qualified work team, with enhanced skills that benefit everyone involved.

PD provides the avenues for teachers to develop the competencies that will help them become peak performers.

PD fosters collaboration among teachers and creates opportunities for teachers.

PD allows teachers' strengths to be shared, as our focus shifts from teaching to learning.

PD re-energizes and sparks creativity and improves efficiency.

PD heightens awareness: continuous learning can prove valuable at any stage in your career.

Many federal education grant programs provide professional development funding. See for example:
<http://www.oas.org/en/scholarships/professionaldev.asp>



Simple Steps When Planning for PD

VISION: Where you want to go and what you hope to achieve. (To become a numeracy Coordinator)

OBJECTIVES: Meaningful steps that bring you closer to your goal.

(Get a degree in Mathematics. Do online courses in Leadership. Develop Communication skills.)

Step 1 TAKE INVENTORY

Identify where you are.

Reflect on your strengths and weaknesses.

Step 2 ANALYZE YOUR PERFORMANCE

Identify causes that hinder your progress.

Step 3 DECIDE ON THE APPROACH

Decide how you are going to get there. What opportunities and educational steps will help you improve and accelerate your performance? Use our 70/20/10 approach.

Step 4 DEVELOP A TIME LINE

When are you going to complete your training or accomplish goals?

Step 5 DETERMINE SUPPORT SYSTEM

Use your support system of at least one person to help you realize your goals and dreams.

Celebrate your successes.

Make changes to your plan if necessary.

Ask yourself these questions:

- What am I good at?
 - What do I need to improve?
 - Where do I want to be 1 year from now? 5 years from now?
 - How am I going to get there?
- Collect feedback from colleagues

Your Support System will:

- Help you see your blind spots.
- Help you get back on track.
- Help you reflect on obstacles and successes.
- Guide you through the tough parts of your journey.

1 INPUT

Time, finance, knowledge & skills.

2 PROCESS

Effectiveness, time, quality of work. Drive & Determination.

3 OUTCOME

Better classroom management. Improved student outcome. Better schools. Teacher Effectiveness. Improved Teaching & Learning.



Step 6 EVALUATE YOUR PLAN

Ensure that your goals and objectives are SMART. Ensure you can reach your targeted goals. Set attainable goals to reduce stressful situations. Evaluate your plan to ensure that it meets your targeted goals.

Step 7 MEASURE YOUR PROGRESS

Measure your progress/successes using these 2 simple steps. Identify ways you will evaluate your progress since personal development is ongoing and you need to track your progress. Use regular feedback, observations, qualitative and quantitative results.

Step 8 REFLECT

Reflect on your process. Focus on improvement of your knowledge and skills. Seek ways to heighten your effectiveness and efficiency in any institution or organization.

Make 70% of your PD in conjunction with other professionals, 20% on your own and 10% based on what you learn from students and their records.



Sometimes,
PD seems meaningless and a
waste of time and effort.
However, if effectively planned,
PD can work!!
Here are some
suggestions that will
HELP you as you
plan your PD and a few
statements as to HOW
these ideas can work

Professional Development **CAN WORK**

Here's Help

Focus PD on school and educational goals

Gather school-wide support

Match content of PD to teachers' and students' needs

Provide multiple opportunities for teacher collaboration

Focus on innovations that increase practical teaching skills that promote student success

Here's Why

By matching PD to goals it will help chart the course for the school's success.

Administrative and colleague awareness of researched benefits of professional development will foster enthusiasm and participation in PD.

Satisfaction that needs are being met will gain support for additional PD

Collaboration will enhance teacher self-efficacy and teamwork to achieve the desired goals.

By providing teachers with a platform to gain innovative skills, teachers will be more willing to use these skills in their classrooms and improve their craft.

Here's How

Collect data to identify priorities and formulate SMART goals to match the priorities

Identify key advocates to use established marketing approaches and strategic planning to generate teacher enthusiasm. The Principal needs to make full support clearly evident to all staff.

Use the assessment cycle and regular revision of plans to ensure that 'real' problems are being addressed. Connect specific student performance and results to PD.

Develop teams and schedules for team meetings and activities to achieve a coherent and coordinated approach. Teams may be grade-level or subject specific.

Encourage innovation by creating opportunities for teachers to share new ideas or tools they have been exposed to have or used. Generate funds to support innovative trials of approaches and ensure adequate assessments to justify resource allocations.



It is undisputable that teachers face enormous barriers to quality professional development.

Hi, I am Sarah. I need your help! Here is my story.

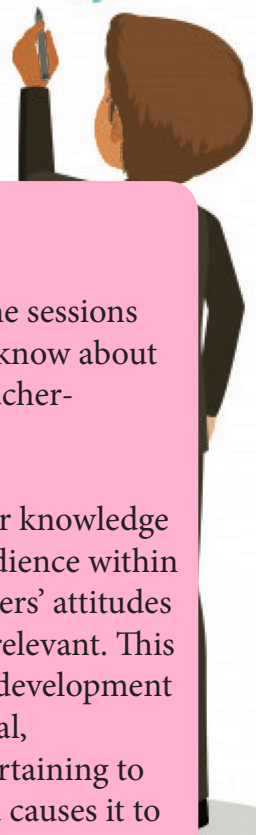
I am a primary school teacher from Anguilla and I am currently teaching Grade 3. I am also a member of the school's management team which is responsible for planning Teacher Professional Development Week. My role as organiser of this event involves inviting different professionals in the field of education to make presentations to the staff. In reflecting on these experiences, I surmised that they were seventy percent pointless. This was because most of the presenters went 'off-script' and did not address the issues which they were asked to. Further, my colleagues voiced their displeasure for the most part with some of those sessions. I informed them that my hands

were tied in a number of cases.

At another point in time, I was doing some research on ways to remediate problems in struggling learners. I got some really great insights which I shared with a few teachers at my school. One of the team members reasoned that the information that I passed on felt like information that should be given via a professional development workshop. However, another team member did an assessment of a sample of struggling students. The results indicated that the students had major problems with reading. Upon further investigation, I realised that my team's approach to reading needed to be phonics-based. I have been trying to get the teachers with a literacy background together, but they are so busy with their timetables that it just won't work. Further, many typically leave the school as soon as the bell sounds. My present inclination is to simply focus on my classroom and leave the issues to the Ministry of Education to handle.



*What exactly is the cause of the lack of interest in professional development from Sarah's story?
I am certain that many of you have felt like Sarah before.*



Barrier #1

The greatest problem faced by school districts and schools is not resistance to innovation, but the fragmentation, overload, and incoherence resulting from the unbridled acceptance of too many different innovations.

---Sarah in this case did well in identifying the area for PD (reading). However, was it a community decision or an individual one?

---It is not clear how much involvement other teachers had in the decisions to conduct PD. If an inclusive approach was not used, it is not surprising that Sarah had such difficulties.

Barrier #2

Sarah's conclusion that many of the sessions were 'pointless' matches what we know about some PD sessions that are not teacher-centered.

Often, the "experts" invited deliver knowledge on a particular topic to a large audience within a limited time period. Here, teachers' attitudes toward the topic are not deemed relevant. This approach makes the professional development of teachers intellectually superficial, disconnected from deep issues pertaining to the curriculum and learning, and causes it to be fragmented and noncumulative.

Sarah needs to recognize her peers as experts too, acknowledge their funds of knowledge and appreciate how these come to bear in PD engagements.



Barrier #3

As was the case with Sarah, policymakers are too often concerned with the ‘what’ of innovation rather than the ‘how’ of innovation. Professional development is development for performance (acquiring knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary before changes can be made) rather than development of performance (professional learning to support a change in practice).



Barrier #4

Teacher professional development programmes should not be a one-size-fits-all. Rather, the design and content of the programme must take into account the context in which the programme is to take place. Teacher professional development could adopt a bottom-up approach, where the starting point is an internal view (arising from the teachers themselves) of teaching rather than an external one (imposed on them by an outsider). Sarah’s top-down approach left the teachers feeling that they have no real personal investment in the programme. Consequently, they were less committed to it.

Case - Anse la Raye Infant School, St. Lucia

The Anse la Raye R.C. Infant school located on Saint Lucia's west coast has approximately 75 students on roll and is headed by a dedicated and ambitious principal and nine hard working and enthusiastic teachers. In 2010, Mrs. Mary Samuel, who was a teacher at the school, succeeded Mrs. Valerie St. Helene-Henry as principal.

During Mrs. Samuel's five-year tenure, she focused on enhancing teachers' skills and competencies, teaching quality and raising the standard of students' achievements. A number of areas for improvement were identified and teachers were given the opportunity to choose a topic to research and present at staff development workshops. She unlocked teachers' hidden capabilities and skills as she tapped into their strengths.

Initially, some teachers were apprehensive about that approach, but Mrs. Samuel believed in the abilities of the teachers to deliver with

excellence. To their surprise, teachers were able to execute their plans better than anticipated. The principal was impressed with the level of work accomplished by her teachers. The level of interaction among staff was also phenomenal and teachers discovered that they had hidden talents and were able to make presentations skillfully, which boosted their confidence.

Teachers returned to their classes





and implemented what they had learnt from their colleagues, which was evident in their planning and the execution of lessons. Consequently, Mrs. Samuel was able to utilize her teachers' expertise in various areas including planning of events and conducting Professional Development workshops. It was encouraging to see the knowledge imparted by her teachers as staff development was implemented in the classroom at all levels. As a result, improvements were noted in students' writing, expression and overall performance.

That very year there were drastic improvements in the students' results at the national assessment for Grade 2 students with a school average of 77%, a remarkable performance indeed. Additionally, the principal encouraged teachers' participation in other professional development workshops offered by the Ministry of Education or other organizations.

After the workshops, participating teachers were given the opportunity to impart the knowledge they had gained in staff development. This allowed them to keep abreast of new ideologies and skills which led to better students' outcomes. The approaches utilized by the principal brought about quality teaching and increased students' and school achievements.

Mr. Albert Joseph, another former teacher at the school, took up the mantle of principal in 2015. Cognizant of the school's success stories, he was able to take advantage of the team work and best practices he found there. The staff of the Anse la Raye Infant School have vowed to use professional development to allow them to work towards maintaining a successful academic environment and have committed themselves to work as a unit in sustaining a strong performance culture.

Parents in PD!

Why the Parents

Sessions that reach out to parents, assist not only in how to support student academic learning, but cover a plethora of issues, such as children's language development and their learning styles, parent nurturing and discipline strategies, child abuse prevention, anger management, and nutrition and health practices. These sessions can also help parents build parenting skills by assisting them in reaching their own academic and vocational goals. These outreach strategies help foster partnerships between schools and families.



Role of Parents in TPD (Trading Roles)

As parents, we have potential and we also have a vested interest in the future of our children's education. Our abilities become manifest when we are included in the design of our children's education and our skills and talents are made available to support the delivery. For instance, in the past, parents' expertise in different fields (the use of technology, craft, cake decorating, farming and cosmetology) were used to conduct workshops during teacher professional development sessions at the school level. As parents, we became a group learning from and supporting each other, supporting teachers, and better yet, supporting our children. This stimulated reciprocal relationships between us and the teachers. This also allowed us to progress from a latent to an active resource to our children's school.

I changed the global landscape of my daughter's education, by playing an active role in teacher professional development. When my five-year old daughter was introduced to a world of digraphs, phonemes, chunking and blending, I felt intimidated. Consequently, I contacted her teacher and asked for assistance in this regard. I participated in a teacher professional development session, which catered to the teaching of phonics for teachers and parents. I gained a rich breadth of knowledge in the field, which I am proud of. Now, I am always so excited to assist my daughter with assignments!

C's of OECS PD

1. **Collegial** - OECS Educators recognize the expertise and qualities of each other and develop respect for each other and their offerings as professionals.
2. **Creative** - OECS Educators challenge their thinking to find innovative and engaging ways to meet their needs and those of their peers towards improvement in specific areas where development is required.
3. **Continuous** - OECS Educators recognize that professional growth is a process and get set for the journey.
4. **Collaborative** - OECS Educators understand that partnering yields rewards if all parties to the engagement contribute meaningfully. They also see opportunity in the economic union and networking of the OECS territories.
5. **Comprehensive** - OECS Educators appreciate that addressing the needs of the sector through professional development requires a comprehensive approach that considers every single educator, with smaller programmes all connected in a coherent, well-defined and budgeted PD programme.
6. **Contextual** - OECS Educators know that PD is most meaningful when it considers the reality of the one(s) for whom the PD is intended. The context may be personal, school, district, national or regional. The context would also capture time, culture and the socio-political environment.

The OECS PD Model

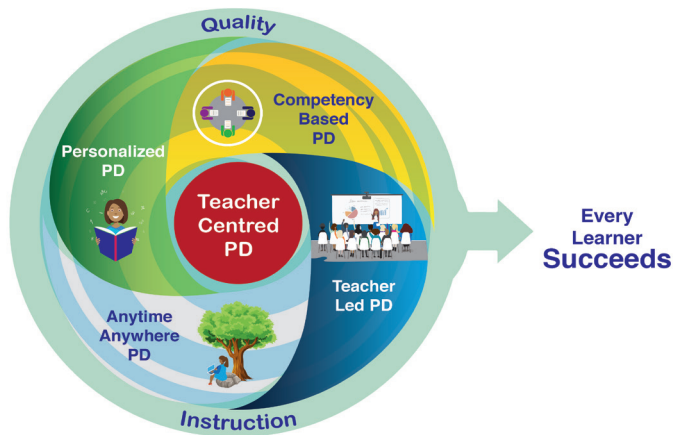


The OECS PD Model is an adaptation of the Student at the Center of Learning Framework which puts the student at the centre of all teaching and learning activities. It is founded on multiple research-based models of instruction and principles or tenets of learning that keep the focus on the student, resulting in a solid approach to instruction that meets various standards of quality. The model aims at deeper learning reflected in knowledge, skills and dispositions required for successful academic and civic life from the classroom into life-long experiences.



Educators in the OECS recognize a parallel between evidence-based teaching designed for students, as exemplified in the framework, and evidence-based approaches to teacher professional development. Some of the basic principles of evidence-based TPD are that it should focus on the needs of the teacher, ultimately with a view to meeting students' needs; that it should be continuous; that it may take various forms, times and spaces and that it should result in the teacher's growth as a professional and a practitioner. Therefore, a technical team comprising members of the EDMU of the OECS Commission, one teacher educator from St Lucia, one ELP National Focal Point from Grenada and one consultant team member from Canada decided to use the Student at the Centre of Learning Framework as the base for the development of the OECS PD Model. The result is a simple adaptation of the original framework. The original model and the adaptation are presented below.

OECS PD Model¹



The Model²

The four components of the OECS PD Model are intended to work in tandem to provide a robust and comprehensive professional development programme at various levels – from the personal level to the sector level of the education system. No one component of the model is more important than the other. The sum total of the experiences intended through the model is expected to lead to the kinds of competencies and dispositions required in teachers to meet students' needs, improve engagement and ultimately increase students' achievements. It is expected that the model will be

applied sector-wide, whether it be for teachers or teacher educators, early childhood or tertiary level educators. In that regard, the model is aligned to the CARICOM Human Resource Development 2030 Strategy which similarly has applications from early childhood to tertiary education. Further, both the PD model and the HRD Strategy have 'improved quality in delivery' as a key outcome. There is also consonance between the PD model and the OECS Development Strategy 2019 – 2028. The second strategic objective under Pillar 2 of the document speaks to promoting inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all. The OECS PD model has a similar objective for both teachers and students.



¹Adapted from: Student at the Centre of Learning Framework (<https://studentsatthecenterhub.org/interactive-framework/>)

²Model designed by Ms Rosemarie Lewis, Graphic Artist of the St Vincent and the Grenadines Ministry of Education.

Personalized PD

As the name implies, Personalized PD is designed for a “person” and as such is tantamount to differentiated PD. This differentiation can and should take place as a natural part of a sector-wide PD programme. The term personalized may also imply a group of “person(s)”, suggesting that it is not just one person. At the individual level, Personalized PD is easily interpreted as the PD activities that a professional would design for himself/herself based on evidenced needs in their practice, as well as their interests, inclusive of learning style. At the school, national and regional level: Personalized PD is such that it caters to the individual needs of persons for whom the PD is designed. It advocates against one-size-fits-all models of PD and necessitates PD that is adequately informed by data. It also requires adequate flexibility in the scheduling and designing to allow for different needs to be addressed in strategic ways.

Competency-based PD

In competency-based PD, data is used to identify the specific areas where teachers need to improve and place them on a spectrum from novice to mastery. While it is not necessary to use the terminology of “novice” or “master”, particularly considering the dynamic nature of knowledge and learning, the idea is that a professional may be completely new to a particular aspect of education or may be weak in some practice that is required. Conversely, a teacher may demonstrate excellent knowledge and skill in a particular area. Competency-based PD identifies where the educator is on the spectrum and develops a pathway to mastery. The activities are not necessarily different from those of general PD programmes, but the intention is specific: grow and develop in the identified area towards mastery, and then move on to the next area where mastery is required. Given the nature of learning, of course, the application of this component may not be linear. In other words, a professional may be moving towards mastery in more than one area, depending on his/her abilities, needs, interests and circumstances. This aspect of PD may be designed by the individual, but normally would be driven by Supervisors in collaboration with the target audience.

Teacher-Led PD

Teacher-led PD is exactly what the name says: PD that is led by teachers, from concept to completion. It foregrounds existing teacher competencies and expertise, placing high value on the contributions they can make. It encourages



teachers to look within and dispel the notion that someone from outside must be engaged to take care of teachers' PD needs. It creates an enabling environment for teacher growth and development by allowing teachers the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills, share these with their peers and continue the growth trajectory through these opportunities. That enabling environment is extended to teachers who lack certain knowledge and skills. Just like student-centred learning provides students with opportunities to lead and learn by doing, teacher-led PD provides opportunities for teachers to increase their knowledge and skills, as well as change their attitudes and dispositions, by taking the lead in various forms of evidence-based PD.



Anytime, Anywhere PD

This component of the model makes it clear that quality PD can happen anytime and anywhere. It does not embrace tradition that dictates that PD happens in a room where teachers are locked away from the outside world for 6 – 8 hours, sometimes for several days, to ensure that they “get it”. It underscores the value of quality professional conversations, outside of formal training or PD sessions, conversations that lead to insights that translate to change in pedagogy and approaches resulting in improved student achievement. In this component, there is also a shift from one-shot PD activities in the school calendar in a formal setting, to “bite-size” continuous PD that may take place during staff meetings or briefings. Conceivably, for instance, teachers may view a three-minute video on a specific topic and respond to it and the implications for their practice. The entire activity may take just 10 – 15 minutes. Similar activities can take place during, planning meetings, at lunch time or after school; whatever, whenever and wherever teachers decide, including in a WhatsApp forum with no time boundaries, and they may be planned or unplanned.

General Comments

It is important to recognize that the components do not function as discreet entities, independent of each other. There is significant overlap for each. For instance, a competency-based PD programme that is developed by the professional him/herself is both personalized and teacher-led. Considering the interweaving of the components, there are multiple possible configurations of this nature where overlap becomes evident.

Revolving around the four components of the OECS PD Model is quality instruction. It is envisaged that should a professional apply the model as described above, the result will be quality instruction that leads to the mantra of the OECS, Every Learner Succeeds. ‘Quality Instruction’ also encircles the model as an encapsulation of the four components. The paths from each component to that outer circle suggest that any and all of the components lead to quality instruction, but that as a combined entity, the greatest connection of the components to quality instruction is found.



Teacher Coaches in the OECS

Professional development took a giant leap forward when the OECS USAID Early Learners Programme acknowledged that the traditional workshop alone would not make the grade. We, ELP Coordinators, echoed the sentiments that effective workshops go far beyond the “what” and delve well into the realm of the , “how” “when” and “why”, as we planned national training

sessions. However, we knew that the real change would be effected when we visited teachers in their classrooms following the workshops. In six member states of the OECS (Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada , St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent) a different approach to teacher professional development began: teacher coaching.

What does coaching under the Early Learners Programme look like?

Coaches or ELP Coordinators communicate with Principals and teachers via telephone and WhatsApp groups to set up appointments to visits schools and observe teacher instructional practices in the classroom. During teacher conferences, discussions are held about planning and assessment, as well as teacher personal professional development. The teacher sets a personal goal, which is supported by the Coach, who may help the teacher locate resources to meet that goal. In this

process, teacher and coach grow together and both develop new insights and instructional skills.



Teachers as Coaches?

Most of us ELP Coordinators had been teachers just a few weeks before the implementation of the Early Learners Programme intervention. As it turns out, that made the biggest difference, because we could relate clearly to the excitement, struggles, frustrations and ultimate successes that all teachers face in the classroom. We knew that progress

would not be instantaneous, but that it would be guaranteed. We discovered the passion that teachers have for teaching, their dedication to the success of their students, and their desire to always



improve. Following intense and in-depth training in coaching and mentoring, ELP Coordinators in the six member states were equipped to provide support to teachers in over 300 schools and to help teachers extend on their repertoire of effective teaching practices. Although the challenges were many, the professional development through the application of teaching and learning theory, as well as professional interactions with parents, teachers and other educators, was almost immeasurable.

An equal measure of value is gained as we support teachers to coach each other. The collaborative effort can lead to exponential growth, as we have seen.



COACHING IN THE OECS

The nature of coaching provided to teachers

Of all my responsibilities as an ELP Coordinator, I am most pleased with my work as a Coach. I meet with teachers to unlock potential, empower and build capacity for professional development. I enjoy the one- on- one, face to face conversations after each lesson observed to enhance learning and development. As I praise the teachers for the areas where strength is noted, they have a sense of self-awareness and personal responsibility to strengthen areas of weakness that they come to realize. I take pleasure in facilitating through questioning and active listening. At the same time, teachers are comfortable discussing and sharing in a reassuring and supportive climate. It is a wonderful experience to dialogue with teachers, to assist in improving their pedagogical skills and provide opportunities for reflection and problem solving. This experience is mutually rewarding!

How being a coach has helped me professionally

Serving as an ELP coach, I know what it is like to collaborate with a diverse set of professionals. I have opportunities to share a wide range of best practices, ideas, strategies and solutions. I get to learn and grow, and then impart valuable teaching strategies to my colleagues to assist them in the teaching-learning environment. My knowledge base has expanded with new techniques that I can now impart to other teachers. In addition, I have been pleased to work towards creating a safe space for teachers to share not just success, but also challenges.



*Edmira Walker,
St. Vincent & the Grenadines*



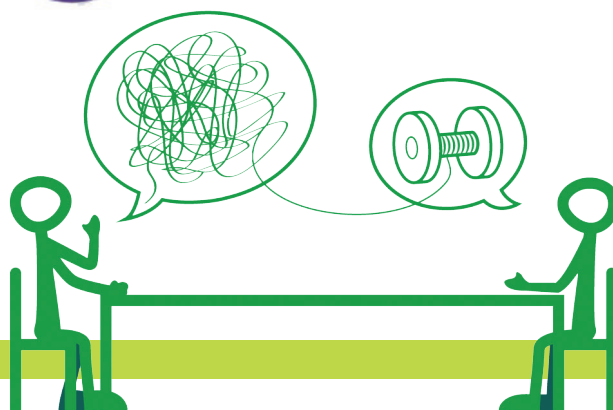
*JerryAnn Francis,
Antigua & Barbuda*

Teacher Responses to Coaching

"Can you come and see me today?"
"I want to show you what my children did"
"How well they are reading"
"Just have you listen to what they have to say."
*"This 'To-With and By' method works better than I
thought it would for me"*
*"I am learning to 'Gradually Release the
Responsibility"*
*'Two Cent Worth' Formative Assessment Strategy is
new:*
"I like it!"
*"It works for me....Not so much so for Little Johnny,
He says I never give him enough money and that fifty
cents would work better for HE"*
*"The language Block and ELP Resources are a life
saver"*
"Less Lesson Planning for individual subjects"
"I just love the colourful paper!"
*"I really didn't think this thing would work for
true"*
*"I am glad I had your support to help me get
through"*
"Thank you"



*Juanelle De Silva,
St. Kitts*



COACHING IN THE OECS

My Journey as an Instructional Leader

Reflections of learning and leading

My journey as an Early Learners Programme Co-ordinator began about two years ago and over the course of my expedition, I have grown and learned more than I thought possible. I started this venture as a new Reading Resource teacher, hungry to learn more about Literacy. As a classroom teacher, I identified some deficits and issues relating to literacy. As such, I viewed this as an opportunity to acquire a prescription for remedying issues I was experiencing. You see, I already knew where I wanted to be and had taken numerous courses and jumped at every opportunity available to develop more skills in Literacy. I thought that I knew exactly what I was heading towards when I applied to become an ELP Coordinator. Was I ever sooo wrong!

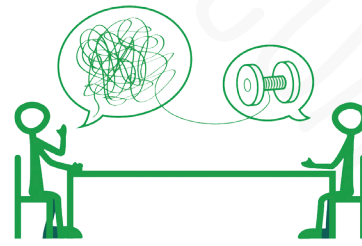
Sharing in the OECS Early Learners Programme has taught me so much more than prescriptive strategies about the teaching of reading; it has taught me how to become a better me. I have learned how to think more critically, to become an active listener and how to be a resource to teachers, students and the community at large. I also learned to find the various answers and approaches to the information that I don't know and how important teamwork, communication and planning are. Most importantly, what I've gleaned from this experience thus far is the importance of developing leadership skills.



*Renee Anthony,
Nevis*



COACHING IN THE OECS

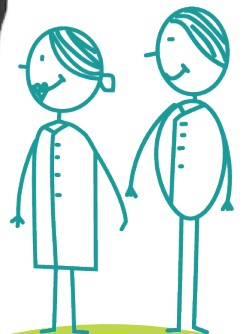


The Value of Coaching to Coordinators- From Teacher to Coach.

The caterpillar must change in order to become the beautiful butterfly. ELP Coordinators experienced similar transformations. The two-year experience has brought opportunities for professional and personal growth. Serving as a teacher has nurtured and revitalized my self-esteem and confidence as a professional. With so many opportunities to interact with teachers and children, it has unearthed a love for teaching in the early grades. My previous teaching experiences placed me at the heart of adolescent literacy, while I have always had the desire for teaching early grades. The project has provided me with the opportunity to impact the teachers of the early grades and to interact with those precious little ones, our students. I love the coaching act! My emotional intelligence has grown by leaps and bounds and now I have a greater appreciation for the human element within the professional realm. Through coaching, I have become a listener, a researcher and a literacy expert, each role serving a different need. The small nine-member team of the St. Lucia ELP Coordinators is a close-knit family. Our differences and our strengths complement each other and make us a very formidable team.



*Jennifer Raphael,
St. Lucia*



Schools Looking Within

GREEN BAY PRIMARY SCHOOL, ANTIGUA

Green Bay Primary School's new professional learning community (PLC) is changing the school's approach to reading development, and teachers are optimistic that this will lead to improved student achievement.

Nestled in the quiet, low socio-economic community of Green Bay in St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda, the Green Bay Primary School faces considerable challenges.

"Right now, we are an under-performing school in all areas, and we have been so for a long time, even before I came here four years ago," pointed out principal, Mrs. Jose Joseph. "So we had to make some choices as to how to get our performance up." One of these choices was to follow an entirely new approach to teaching reading.

"I think the Ministry was at its wits' end with what is needed for us to improve," Mrs. Joseph disclosed, "so I went and asked for permission for us to look at doing things a little differently. And I got that permission, so we are starting to change a lot of things."

Now Green Bay Primary School is on a mission to improve three areas of its operations: their students' achievements; the school's curriculum instruction and assessment; and community and family involvement in helping with children's academic development at home. These improvements are captured in a school improvement plan that Mrs. Joseph developed.

When Green Bay Primary successfully applied for a reading development grant under the Early Learner's Programme (ELP), the school decided to use the proceeds to fund main aspects of its school improvement plan. As Mrs. Joseph observed, "we're one of the ELP pilot schools, so instead of doing something that would take us totally off our track, we just started implementing our own programme that we had started before – which is along the same line – so it wasn't a problem."

At the heart of the school's new approach to supporting their students' reading development is a professional learning community or PLC within Green Bay Primary. The PLC is the driving force of the school's improvement plan.

Said Mrs. Joseph: "The PLC is where the teachers would do all the planning. Instead of one teacher in the classroom, a group of them come together. When the teachers go to the PLC, they take the samples of the students' work; they analyze it, get data from it; and collectively, they decide what intervention they are



going to implement. They analyze the students' performance and their own as well."

In this way, the PLC keeps the focus on "teaching and learning," that sometimes gets side-tracked with all the other things happening within the school. More importantly, it allows the school to accumulate useful data to guide effective teaching interventions.

Every week the teachers have 70 minutes of scheduled PLC time. This, however, poses a challenge for the school because when teachers are in PLC sessions, the school struggles to find other teachers to supervise classes.

The workings of the PLC have been captured in an impressive manual developed by Mrs. Joseph. This manual provides a blueprint for how the PLC should operate and is regularly used by teachers to run PLC sessions, thereby adding an element of sustainability to this initiative.

Mrs. Joseph notes; "This school improvement plan is sustainable because we collect data and because of the functioning of the PLC. Even if a new teacher comes in, or even if I am not here, the work will continue."

"The PLC has made an impact," asserted Eulisa Anderson, the school's special needs teacher. "The group I am in, they really shared their experiences, and the different methods they use that they

find have been working with the children. This has helped me because my class has children from multiple grades, and I was able to incorporate different activities for each grade level."

Her colleague, kindergarten teacher Roshelle Goodwin, agreed, saying "the PLC works because I talked to the teachers in Grade 1, and I was able to focus on particular areas in my teaching so that my students were better prepared when they go into Grade 1."

As Ms. Anderson described, "in the PLC, the week before we would come up with the solution to a particular problem—and when we come the following week, would discuss whether it worked, and what changes we would have to make in order to have a positive outcome. The benefit is getting the different viewpoints, the different advice. This has helped me as a teacher by giving me more ideas."

Mrs. Joseph is the first to point out that the school's achievements to date have not translated into an overall improvement in student reading levels as yet; but both Ms. Anderson and Ms. Goodwin have seen more engagement and interaction in their students' learning—and now, after a long time, expectations at Green Bay Primary are running high.

In the PLC, the week before we would come up with the solution to a particular problem—and when we come the following week, we'll discuss whether it worked, and what changes we would have to make in order to have a positive outcome. The benefit is getting the different viewpoints, the different advice. This is helped me as a teacher by giving me more ideas.

-Ms. Eulisa Anderson,
Special Needs Teacher,
Greenbay Primary School,
St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda.





Got it! *Write it!*

What is this talk I'm hearing about PD recording?

“Recording professional development is a way of tracking and documenting the skills, knowledge and experience that I gain both formally and informally as I work, beyond any initial training. It's a record of what I've experienced, learned and can then apply.”

With all other tasks we have as teachers, isn't that plenty of work?

“It does involve some time and effort, but I find it is as important as keeping records for my students. It is a way for me to track my own learning. It provides the opportunity for me to review what I have done as a guide for further development.”

I can remember PD I have done. Why do I need to keep a written record?

“Having evidence of PD done highlights my professional interest and accomplishments. It is an avenue to enhance talents which could help me grow professionally and increase the impact of the contribution that I can make to teaching and learning and the education sector by extension. I realize that as I teach, I must be reflective and document my students' growth and progress. By the same token, I have to highlight my areas of growth and development through PD.

Taking the time to document provides confirmation of my own personal development, adding to a rich portfolio. Remember teacher training portfolio?”



I am just interested in teaching my students. They are my priority!

“This documentation will help to improve my skills and to become more proficient on the job. It is all about my students – just that the lens is my professional growth. As I develop my expertise, my students will reap the maximum benefit. My PD is for the benefit of my students!”

Ok, this makes sense; but how do you document your PD?

“Well I have used journals, blogs, and annotated extracts from our professional development plans or performance reviews. Additionally, you can make use of the log samples presented in our PD magazine for the different professional development activities we undertake.

professional development experience will be less of a challenge. This approach does not require a 400-word essay but encourages the individual to highlight the most important takeaways and to be able to personalize this information according to current needs of learners. This approach encourages the individual professional to ask questions such as “What is my greatest takeaway?”, “What new thing will I try?”,

“What should I continue/discontinue?”, “How do I get in contact with a resource person in _____?”

Some people use notebooks to keep their records but I usually use my phone to enter a quick note. I usually go back to that note and just keep adding to it. Looking back at it over time is like looking at a grocery list to see what I have missed or need to get. Reviewing that list tells me my next step.



‘Bee-ing’ a Teacher



There is much that we can learn from a colony of bees. They are most industrious and in a single colony, thousands of bees work together with a singular purpose. As an individual, the strongest bee would be severely limited in working to achieve the objectives of the colony. But with joint efforts, bees overcome formidable odds and achieve outstanding success in producing honey and protecting the colony. Bees are not driven by pride, selfish ambition or a desire to be the best of the bees. What drives a bee is the goal of the colony and its heritage within that colony.

The job of a genuine teacher is much like that of a bee. The genuine teacher is industrious and focused, ever conscious of the community goal of student growth, development, learning and success. Like-minded genuine teachers follow the Six C’s of OECS PD.

Teachers collaborating in a collegial environment would certainly redound to the success of students entrusted to their care. That collaboration and collegiality

foster introspection and reflection, creating a fertile environment for expanding teachers’ repertoire of knowledge, skills, attitudes, aptitudes and strategies for tackling challenges related to student learning.

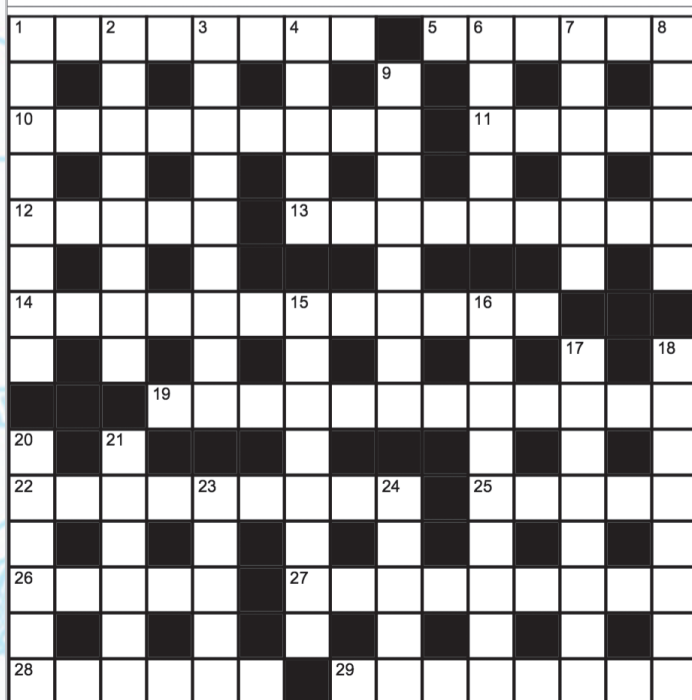
The Education Development Management Unit (EDMU) of the OECS Commission is working to create the environment for a thriving colony of teachers working towards high quality student achievement. Opportunities have been created for education officials across the OECS to collaborate on key documents, approaches, programme and implementation activities. The EDMU has now established an online learning hub where teachers, teacher educators and other education officials can connect and collaborate with the aim of honing their craft and creating a clear path to high quality achievement for students. What is envisaged is no less than a colony of teachers hovering together, building materials, ideas, strategies and the like; all the ingredients for making student learning a clear and present reality. (oecslearninghub.com) With that accomplished, we expect sweet results indeed.

**OECS
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WELCOME TO PUZZLE MANIA

Crossword



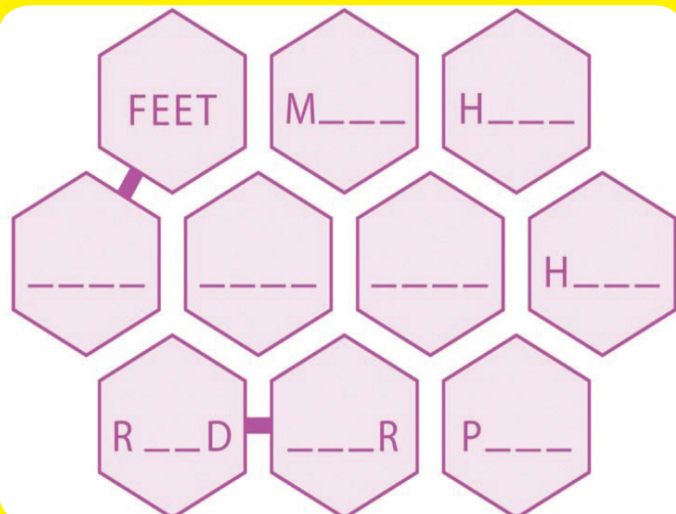
ACROSS

- 1 Moving restlessly from front of boat with fish (8)
- 5 Damned well after illness, containing second (6)
- 10 Before one's mass, hear about European form of religious instruction (9)
- 11 Reprimanded about learner, part of issue that needs raising (5)
- 12 Boundaries around English or French city (5)
- 13 Put away amount of money, as stated, for dance (9)
- 14 Devour gin, led astray — did consume too much (12)
- 19 For example, realists work hard in quietly greeting defeated team (12)
- 22 Some president, I calculate, is lacking any distinction (9)
- 25 Possibly brilliant change of direction (5)
- 26 Persistently pester last chap in undistinguished trio (5)
- 27 After short spell, keyboard player missing second drummer (9)
- 28 Craftsperson who ultimately puts black away? (6)
- 29 Wild animals in conflict with outfit protecting hospital (8)

DOWN

- 1 Choose an ancient character said to be old-fashioned rogue (8)
- 2 Frequently ring paper initially, then another (8)
- 3 The better he is, the less likely people will pick his work (9)
- 4 Quality of wine the writer's included — that's what we hear (5)
- 6 Like marginally unfinished book, yet to be censored (5)
- 7 Would-be partner having diamonds, perhaps, and gold (6)
- 8 Shake hand, finally, of less conventional type (6)
- 9 Runs, full of self-satisfaction, on reconstructed legs (8)
- 15 Fastidious as daughter about cutting flower (8)
- 16 Incidentally, it has an aptness as an anagram (2,7)
- 17 Leader from Mexico I'm lodging in Oregon otherwise (8)
- 18 A call for assistance installing finest building material (8)
- 20 Man on board British ship at sea hiding nothing (6)
- 21 Arcane splinter group holding on (6)
- 23 Herb's something with great healing power reportedly (5)
- 24 Line adding novel contribution to mathematical work (5)

Word worm



From wherever you start (hint: it's probably easiest to start at the top left), join the hexagons by creating a new word that is only one letter different from where you started. Each hexagon must connect to exactly two adjacent hexagons.

SUDOKU

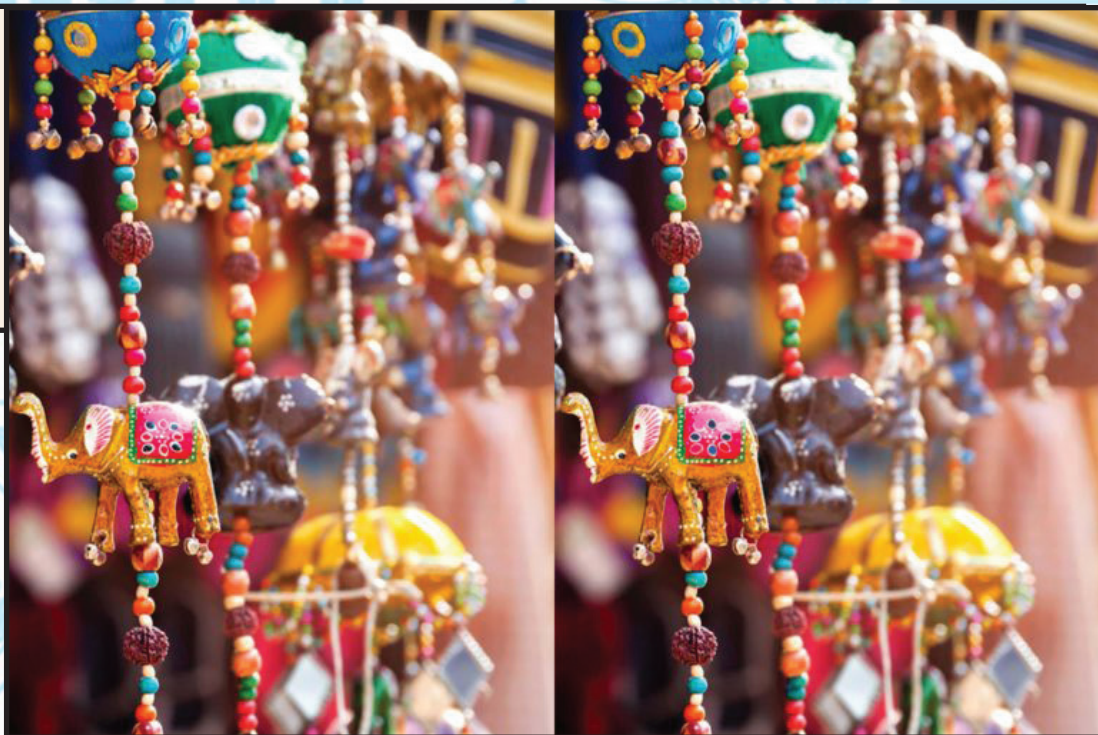
		4	6		8	5		
					7	6	2	9
6				2	5	8	4	7
	9	3	7		2		6	5
	7	5					8	
2	6	8			4			3
		6	8		9	7		2
	8			3		4		6
		2		7		3	5	8

Riddle

I have cities, but no houses. I have mountains, but no trees.
I have water, but no fish. What am I?

Spot the Changes

There are seven differences in these pictures. Does your eye spot them all?



What is the correct answer

$$6^2 \div 2(3) + 4$$

Life Science Word Search

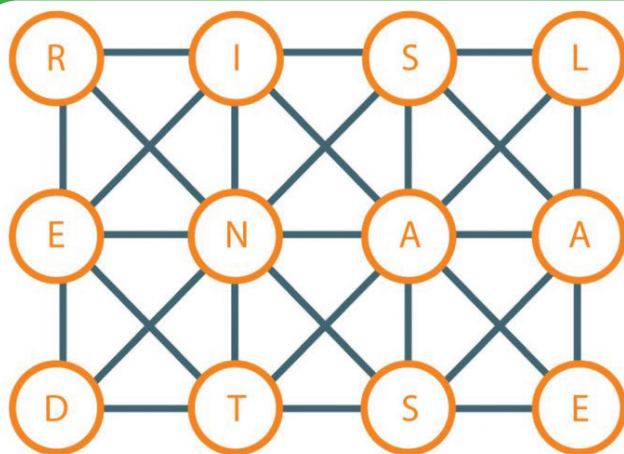
I N T H O Z Y G I I T I S S U E T
P H O T O S Y N T H E S I S O O N
S O V N H G L G E N S S P I E I Y
R E A E O H L P O O O S U S T G M
L I C G M O Y A G T E P M I O E M
N O U I E T H H Y K E E H L I E I
I T O T O M P C V N T C O M T H T
S N L N S N O I T A R I P S E R O
O E E A T G R S B L B E Y A S E S
Y G C E A U O O O P Y S T L M I I
M O N H S E L T E M O I B P S Y S
C H P O I I H L I C O S M O S I S
E T E R S E C N E M A R I T X O I
A A I M A I R E T C A B H Y S O L
S P B O A L L E L E M B L C M R H
L S E N S L U S E Y C E O L P A B
I S U E L C U N S S M C T R L E S

Allele
Antigen
Bacteria
Biology
Biome
Cell
Chitin
Chlorophyll
Chromosome
Cytoplasm

Ecosystem
Genotype
Homeostasis
Hormone
Metabolism
Mitosis
Nucleus
Osmosis
Pathogen
Phagocytosis




Photosynthesis
Plankton
Respiration
Species
Symbiosis
Tissue
Vacuole
Virus
Xylem
Zygote

Spell it Out



Spell out a two-word place name by traveling from each letter along the lines. You can only go through each circle once. (Hint: it's a statuesque location.)

Guess the words or phrases?

CCCCCCC	T O W N	LE / VEL	R O A D S	KNEE LIGHTS
	GIVE GET GIVE GET GIVE GET GIVE GET	AID AID AID AID AID AID	BLOOD  IIIII	G N I K A M LOST LOST LOST LOST
NIGHT ↑	YOU JUST ME	WAY DO	LIE	MILLIOIN
LAND TIME	eCONOMY	AGED AGED AGED	MORAL 	BEHIND

Riddle

You see a boat filled with people. It has not sunk, but when you look again you don't see a single person on the boat. Why?



THIS IS THE FUTURE OF
EDUCATION



British Virgin Islands

Anguilla

Saint Martin

Sint Maarten

Barbuda

Saint Kitts

Nevis

Antigua

Montserrat

Guadeloupe

Dominica

Martinique

Saint Lucia

Saint Vincent

Grenadines

Grenada

Barbados