

On this Teacher's Day, we extend our heartfelt appreciation to all dedicated educators whose invaluable contributions shape our future. While we can never fully repay their service and commitment, we can amplify their voices on issues that matter most to them.

One such concern frequently raised by educators is the challenge of balancing meaningful pedagogy with pressure for innovation. Many teachers have expressed that excessive emphasis on innovation for its own sake can undermine their core mission and diminish their professional satisfaction.

In recognition of this concern, we have dedicated this newsletter to exploring the importance of prioritising substantive teaching and learning over superficial innovation. This serves as our tribute to educators who are passionate about fostering deep, meaningful educational experiences for their students.

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**Let's
Explore
This
Together**



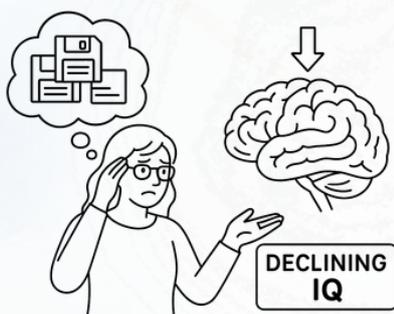
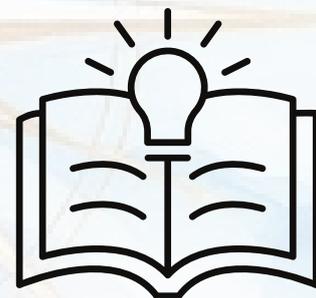
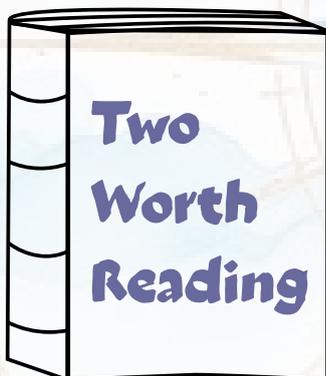
We keep looking for magic when we should be mastering the mundane. Every year, schools chase the next big thing: revolutionary curricula, game-changing technologies, transformative programs promising to revolutionise learning overnight. I've had school leaders tell me - Oh! We are an international school and we don't need CBSE level training. We need more advanced stuff. Meanwhile, master teachers (whether in a state board school or an international board school) quietly work miracles using lean lesson plans, making thinking visible routines, retrieval practice, spaced repetition, and consistent feedback loops - techniques based on the science of learning that are so simple they seem boring in a world obsessed with innovation theater.

The neuroscience is clear: the brain forgets and hence, learning happens through repetition, connection, and gradual release. Yet we keep expecting teachers to be educational entertainers, armed with endless novel activities and dazzling presentations. One veteran teacher shared how, in a class she observed, the teacher strung a series of 7 activities in a class of 30 min! We've confused engagement with entertainment, rigour with complexity, and innovation with effectiveness.

The most powerful classrooms I've observed aren't filled with flashy tech or elaborate projects. They hum with predictable routines: students know how learning works, mistakes are normalised, practice is purposeful, and feedback is immediate. Teachers don't reinvent daily—they perfect, refine, and deepen their core practices.

But here's the rub: simple doesn't mean easy. These "boring" techniques require tremendous skill, consistency, and system-wide support to implement well. When we abandon teachers to chase the next shiny strategy instead of helping them master the fundamentals, we fail everyone. To think that the "simple" can be taught in one sitting is naive. Even the finest teachers need consistent and periodic coaching and training.

Maybe excellence isn't about being extraordinary. Maybe it's about being extraordinarily consistent with what actually works.



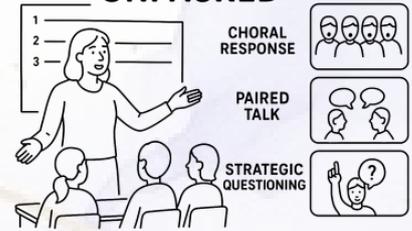
1. Research Spotlight: Barbara Oakley's "The Memory Paradox"

Neuroscientist Barbara Oakley's latest research reveals why our obsession with offloading knowledge to AI and digital tools is literally shrinking our brains' capacity for learning. Her study links the recent decline in IQ scores to educational practices that downplay memorization, showing how underuse of memory systems undermines reasoning and mental flexibility. The simple truth: when we don't exercise our declarative and procedural memory, we lose the cognitive infrastructure needed for deep thinking. Knowledge isn't outdated—it's the foundation intelligence is built on.

2. Perspective to Consider: Peps Mccrea's "Great Teaching, Unpacked"

This four-part documentary series captures exceptional teachers using deceptively simple techniques—choral response, paired talk, strategic questioning—to create extraordinary learning. What's revolutionary isn't the methods but their flawless execution and consistency. The series reveals that great teaching comes from mastering foundational practices like securing attention, teaching behavior explicitly, and adapting in real-time based on student understanding. No gimmicks, just expertise made visible.

GREAT TEACHING UNPACKED



Three to Try

Try This Tomorrow: The 3-Before-Me Rule



Before students can ask you a question, they must: check their notes, ask a peer, and try one more time independently. This simple routine builds self-reliance and peer learning while reducing teacher dependency. No training required, massive impact.

Question to Ask



"Which of my basic teaching practices could I refine rather than replace?" Often the path to excellence isn't adopting something new—it's perfecting what you're already doing with laser focus.

Tool/Resource:

Neuroscience-Based Daily Routine Checklist



Create a simple checklist: Do It Now task (retrieval), Learning objective visible, Success criteria clear, Spaced practice included, Exit ticket completed. Five predictable elements that align with how brains actually learn.

On My Radar



1. Students can "sense" when a teaching method fits right into how their brain works.



2. Crisp & methodical instructional routines give students a sense of progress and keeps them motivated.



3. How can metacognition be embedded in every subject & grade level?



4. What are the different curricula at play in a school?

Elevating Education to Excellence for Impact,

K. Anand

Chief Education Officer



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Excellence for Impact