IN Focus

BEING INTERNET SAFE & SMART!

In today's digital age, the *internet* has become an *indispensable tool* in our classrooms, opening doors to a vast world of knowledge and learning opportunities. From interactive lessons to real-time research, it empowers students and educators alike, making education more dynamic and accessible than ever before. However, as we embrace these digital advance-ments, it's crucial to navigate the online world with care.

In this issue, we'll explore *how to harness the power of the internet for educational excellence while ensuring that safety remains a top priority.* By blending smart practices with robust security measures, we can create a learning environment that not only fuels curiosity but also protects against online risks.

Ensuring a safe and effective digital learning environment is a shared responsibility that involves all stakeholders in education — the government, schools, educators, parents, and students. It is essential for each group to collaborate in designing comprehensive policy measures, and safety guidelines that address the multifaceted challenges of the online world. Schools can elevate their IT resources for magical learning experiences. Educators must teach safe OER practices, & parents can ensure safety too.

By working together, we can strike the right balance between leveraging the internet's educa-tional benefits & maintaining a secure online experience.

Let's *make the most* of our digital resources while *staying vigilant* and secure!

> *Online security isn't something you buy, it's something you do, and it takes AWARE people to do it right.*

WONDER WORDS

SMART CLASSROOM: Smart classrooms are technology-enhanced classrooms that foster opportunities for teaching & learning by integrating ICT, e.g. computers, specialized software, audience response technology, assistive listening devices, networking, and audio/visual capabilities.

AI-AIDED LEARNING: Learning Systems that integrate AI technologies to create a more personalised, engaging, in-the-flow learning experience; by leveraging machine learning algorithms and data analytics to understand the learning behaviour of individuals, providing adaptive, customised content and feedback in real time.

PHISHING: The fraudulent practice of sending emails or other messages by pretending to be from reputable organisations, in order to induce individuals to reveal personal information, passwords & credit card numbers for cyber crimes.

MALWARE: Software that is specifically designed to disrupt, damage, or gain unauthorized access to a computer system.

CYBER BULLYING: the use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass, or target another person through online threats, aggressive or rude texts, tweets, posts, or messages, posting personal information, pictures or videos designed to hurt .

"Don't be safety BLINDED, Be safety MINDED!
Internet safety by accident is NOT an option."

QED Talk

NEP 2020's focus on the INTERNET:
Safe & Smart Integration in Education

MR. ARJUN TANDON

Founder: Bulwark Systems, *Director:* St Kabir Group of Schools, Vadodara
SPJMIR - Owner Management Program, MSU - PGD in Cyber Law, IT ACT
2000, Business Law, Intellectual Property Rights.
Expertise in ICT, Secure Enterprise Solutions, Network Security.

■ *Enterprise Solutions, Progressive School Education & IT Security make strange bed-fellows!*
How did you adapt and empower yourself with such a 'perfect' mix of skills to handle the challenges of the Education World?

Ah, the trifecta of enterprise solutions, progressive school education, and IT security—it's like trying to juggle flaming torches while riding a unicycle on a tightrope. But let me tell you, it's a thrilling ride!

1. Learning to Juggle: I started by embracing that education isn't just about textbooks and tests. It's about *preparing students for a world that's increasingly digital and interconnected*. With enterprise solutions, I saw an opportunity to *streamline operations and improve efficiency*. It's like giving a school a jetpack to fly into the future instead of trudging along on foot.

2. Progressive Education: Progressive education was the perfect complement, allowing us to focus on holistic development. Instead of cramming facts, we aim to *nurture critical thinking and problem-solving skills*. This approach is like teaching students to be navigators in a sea of information rather than passengers on a ship—an essential component of the 21st-century skills that our students will be prepared with.

3. The IT Security Net: And then there's IT security, the trusty net that keeps us from plunging into the digital abyss. With so much data being generated and shared, ensuring its safety became a top priority. I quickly realized that security isn't just about firewalls and passwords—it's about creating a culture of awareness and responsibility. It's like teaching students *not just to lock the front door but also to check if the windows are open*.

4. Empowering Myself: To juggle these diverse roles, I immersed myself in continuous learning. Fortunately, my experience of the last two decades dealing with network security for enterprises came in handy. I also surrounded myself with a team of experts who share the same vision. Together, we brainstorm, innovate, and sometimes even argue, *all in the spirit of finding the best solutions for our schools*.

5. Creating Synergy: The key to balancing these seemingly strange bedfellows is *creating synergy*. By integrating enterprise solutions, we can automate routine tasks, *giving teachers more time to focus on creative and progressive teaching methods*. Meanwhile, robust IT security ensures that these *innovations aren't compromised by cyber threats*.

6. A Perfect Mix: This 'perfect' mix of skills allows us to create *an environment where students thrive*. It's like having the perfect recipe—each ingredient enhances the others, resulting in a dish that's *greater than the sum of its parts*.

So, while it may seem like a strange combination, it's actually a *harmonious blend that prepares our students* not just for the future, but for a future that's safe, innovative, and full of possibilities. And if I ever do fall off the unicycle, I know I've got a great safety net in place!

■ *Education, innovation and technology are terms which are now very frequently combined together. Please share your views about the synergy among these 3 elements for Technology enabled Learning. To what extent is it prevalent in India today?*

Education, innovation, and technology—three elements that, when combined, *form a powerful triad capable of transforming the way we learn and teach*. Imagine them as the **Three Musketeers of the 21st century classroom**, working together to *make learning more engaging, effective, and accessible*.

1. Synergy in Technology-Enabled Learning: *Education is the foundation*, the noble quest for knowledge that drives us forward. *Innovation adds the creative spark*, ensuring we're not just stuck in the past with dusty chalkboards and dreary textbooks. And *technology is the tool that brings it all to life*, **turning concepts into interactive experiences and bridging gaps between students and resources**. There is an overload of information available, so it is very pertinent to separate the wheat from the chaff first, to identify the authenticity of the information before utilising it simultaneously, not getting lost in the labyrinth of distraction with the information.

Together, these elements create a dynamic learning environment. *Here's how they synergise*.

- **Personalized Learning:** Technology allows for *personalised education experiences*, tailoring lessons to fit each student's learning pace and style. It's like having a classroom with a built-in compass that points each student toward their unique path.
- **Interactive and Engaging Content:** Through virtual reality, gamification, and multimedia, *learning becomes an interactive adventure*. Students can explore ancient civilisations or conduct science experiments without leaving their desks. It's history class but with a time machine!
- **Global Collaboration:** With technology, *students can connect with peers and experts worldwide*. They can *participate in global projects, share ideas, and learn from diverse perspectives*. It's like having a classroom without walls, where borders are just lines on a map.

2. The Prevalence in India Today: In India, the synergy of education, innovation, and technology is *gaining momentum*, but there's still a journey ahead:

- **Urban Areas:** In many urban schools, technology-enabled learning is becoming more prevalent. Smart classrooms, online resources, & digital assessments are increasing & edtech solutions, are *making learning more interactive and efficient*.
- **Rural Areas:** In rural regions, the picture is more varied. While there have been significant efforts to introduce technology, *challenges such as infrastructure, internet connectivity, and teacher training remain*. However, initiatives like digital literacy programs and government support are helping to bridge the gap.
- **Government Initiatives:** The Indian government has launched several initiatives to promote digital education, eg. the DIKSHA platform, which provides teachers & students with digital learning resources. T*hese efforts democratise education and make it more inclusive*. The Government of Gujarat has made computers available with educational software in Gujarati language to rural schools. Though the utilisation falls short of anticipated levels, I appreciate the vision.
- **Challenges and Opportunities:** While technology makes inroads, challenges like access, affordability, and digital literacy persist. The *potential is vast,* and with continued investment and innovation, *India can harness this synergy* to create an education system that's both *modern and equitable*.

So, the **synergy** among education, innovation, and technology has the **power to reshape the educational landscape**. In India, we're on an exciting path, albeit with hurdles to overcome. As we continue to blend these elements, the future of learning looks bright, **promising a generation of students who are not only well-educated but also tech-savvy and ready to tackle the challenges of tomorrow.** In the meantime, let's keep our humour intact, our minds open, and our fingers crossed that the Wi-Fi never crashes during an important lesson!

■ *The newsprint these days is full of 'online' scams & frauds - what advice would you offer to Parents and Educators to help them face the dilemma of 'HOW MUCH of Internet Surfing is safe for the kids' ?*

Navigating the vast ocean of the internet can be like venturing into the *Wild West*—full of opportunities and dangers lurking around every corner. For parents and educators, figuring out how much internet surfing is safe for kids is like trying to find the right balance for keeping them safe from digital tumbleweeds.

Advice for Parents and Educators:

1. Set Clear Boundaries: *(a) Internet Time Limits*: Establish reasonable time limits for internet use - the online world must not overshadow outdoor play and face-to-face interactions. Think of it as giving them a *digital bedtime*—too much screen time, and they'll have cyber sheep jumping over firewalls instead of fences. *(b) Age-Appropriate Content*: Ensure that children access age-appropriate websites and apps. Use parental controls and filters to block inappropriate content - quite like having a *digital bouncer at the door*, ensuring only the right guests get in.

2. Educate and Empower: *(a) Digital Literacy:* Teach kids about online safety, privacy, and the importance of not sharing personal information. Equip them with the skills to recognise phishing emails, suspicious links, and the classic "prince from a distant land" scams. *(b) Critical Thinking*: Encourage kids to *question what they see online* and to differentiate between credible sources and fake news. It's like training them to be internet detectives, ready to debunk myths and avoid traps.

3. Be Involved: *(a) Co-Surf the Web*: Spend time online with your kids, exploring websites and apps *together*. This not only provides a chance to bond, but also allows you to guide them in navigating the internet safely. Plus, you'll get to see firsthand whether their "research" really involves watching cat videos! *(b) Open Communication*: Maintain an open dialogue about their online experiences. Encourage kids to share anything that makes them uncomfortable and assure them they won't be scolded for speaking up. After all, it's better to know they encountered a digital troll than to discover it too late. Online bonds can go wrong!

4. Model Good Behaviour: *Set an Example* and *demonstrate responsible internet use* in your own habits. Kids learn a lot by watching, so if they *see you practising safe surfing,* they're more likely to do the same.

5. Stay Informed: *Keep Up with Trends* about the latest apps, games, and online trends. This helps you understand your kids' interests and allows you to guide them appropriately. It's like trying to stay hip to the latest dance craze—except in this case, the dance could lead to malware if you're not careful.

Finding the right balance between safety and freedom in internet use is crucial for parents and educators. By setting clear boundaries, educating kids about digital literacy, and maintaining open communication, we can help them safely navigate the digital world. The *goal is to equip them with the tools to make wise decisions online*, ensuring that their internet adventures are *filled with discovery, not distress.*

And remember, while *we can't wrap our kids in digital bubble wrap*, we can *give them the knowledge and confidence* to face whatever the internet throws their way—preferably without getting scammed into thinking they've won a lifetime supply of free pizzas from a Nigerian prince! Or getting caught up in the online games that throw challenges that instigate the children to do crazy tasks like last month, a child jumped from the 14th floor, leading to his fatal fate in Pune, India - RIP.

■ *Please comment on the much- quoted phrase "What goes on the Internet stays on the Internet." Is it true?*

Ah, that age-old adage....well, it's as timeless as a cat video and as cautionary as a poorly timed tweet! Let's unpack this phrase with a bit of humour bundled with some serious insight. Here's the Truth Behind the Phrase:

1. **Digital Footprints:** When you post something online, it leaves a *digital footprint* that can be remarkably *difficult to erase*. Even if you delete a post, chances are someone, somewhere, has already screenshotted it, ensuring its immortality. It's like trying to put toothpaste back in the tube—once it's out, good luck:

2. **Search Engines and Archives**: Search engines and internet archives *keep copies of webpages*, meaning that even *"deleted" content can often be retrieved*. It's like having a nosy librarian who remembers every book you've ever borrowed (*or snuck out with*).

3. Data Persistence: Websites and social media platforms often keep data for analysis, marketing, and legal purposes. This means your digital footprint might linger longer than that forgotten casserole in the back of your fridge.

Exceptions and Considerations : *(a) Privacy Settings and Controls*: Using strong privacy settings can help limit who sees your content. While this doesn't guarantee complete erasure, it does make it harder for the average person to stumble upon your questionable karaoke performance from the COVID-19 days! *(b) Right to be Forgotten*: In some regions, laws like the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in the EU give individuals the right to request the removal of certain personal data from the internet. It's like a digital broom, sweeping away old cobwebs—but only under specific conditions. *(c) Encryption and Secure Platforms*: Using secure, encrypted platforms for sensitive communications can help ensure your private messages stay private. Just remember, if it's something you wouldn't want on a billboard, maybe *think twice before typing it out*—even in a secure chat.

Practical Advice :

- **Think Before you Post**: The best way to avoid unwanted permanence is to *think before you post*. Ask yourself if the content is something you'd be comfortable seeing five years from now or explaining to your future employer—or your grandmother!
- **Educate & Advocate**: Educate yourself and others about digital permanence and the importance of online reputation management. Encourage discussions about *responsible internet use in schools, workplaces, and homes*.

While the phrase "*What goes on the Internet stays on the Internet*" might not be true in every single case, it serves as a *powerful reminder of the potential longevity of online actions*. In our digital age, it's wise to assume that anything shared online could potentially stick around forever, like a digital tattoo. So, let's make sure it's a tattoo we won't regret—a tasteful dolphin, perhaps, instead of a misspelt slogan!

■ **In a world that demands that students remain updated with information and current affairs (***in order to 'stand out'***), what are the bare essentials that Schools should take cognizance of, when offering IT enabled curricula?**

In today's fast-paced world, keeping students updated with current events, new knowledge & lateral information is like trying to keep up with the latest smartphone release; *challenging but essential*. Schools are crucial in equipping kids with tools they need to thrive in this

information-rich environment. Here are the bare essentials schools should consider when offering IT-enabled curricula:

1. Critical Thinking and Media Literacy: *(a) Teach Critical Evaluation* - students should be trained to evaluate sources of information critically. Encourage them to question the credibility of news and data, much like a detective analysing evidence. Are they reading a reliable source or just a cleverly disguised advertisement? *(b) Promote Media Literacy* - help students understand *how media is created and consumed*. Discuss bias, fact-checking, and the *importance of diverse perspectives*. It's like giving them X-ray glasses to see through the smoke and mirrors of the information jungle.

2. Access to Diverse Resources: *(a) Provide a Range of Sources* - offer students access to various resources, including online databases, digital libraries, and news platforms. Ensure they're *exposed to different viewpoints and global perspectives*. It is a buffet of knowledge, where sampling everything leads to a more balanced intellectual diet. *(b) Utilize Open Educational Resources (OER)* - encourage the use of OER, which are freely accessible & openly licensed educational materials. These *resources can keep curricula up to date* without breaking the bank.

3. Integrate Technology Effectively: *(a) Embrace Interactive Tools* - Use interactive tools and platforms that engage students in active learning. Tools like virtual simulations, online discussions, and collaborative projects can *make learning dynamic and memorable,* like turning a history lesson into a time-travel adventure. *(b) Leverage Data Analytics* - Utilize data analytics to *personalise learning experiences and identify areas where students may need additional support*. It's like having a digital magnifying glass that helps teachers spot the little clues in each student's learning journey.

4. Develop Digital Skills: *(a) Focus on Digital Literacy* - Teach students the essential digital skills needed for today's world, such as *coding, data analysis, and information management*. Prepare them not just to consume technology but to create and innovate with it. *(b) Cybersecurity Awareness* - Include *cybersecurity education* to ensure students can protect their digital identities. It's like teaching them to lock the door before going to sleep but in the digital realm.

5. Foster a Global Perspective: *(a) Encourage Global Connections* - Use technology to *connect* students *with peers worldwide*. Projects like virtual exchanges and international collaborations can *broaden horizons and deepen understanding*. It's like opening a window to the world without leaving the classroom. *(b) Stay Updated with Trends* - Ensure that *both educators and students* stay informed about the latest technological trends and global events. Regular professional development and workshops can keep teachers on the cutting edge.

Incorporating IT-enabled curricula in schools requires a thoughtful approach that balances access to information with the skills to analyse and use it wisely. By focusing on critical thinking, diverse resources, effective technology integration, digital skills, and global awareness, schools can help students stand out in a world that demands agility and insight.

Ultimately, the goal is to *empower students to navigate the sea of information confidently and responsibly,* turning them into savvy sailors rather than hapless castaways. And if they learn to avoid the occasional digital iceberg along the way, all the better!

■ *School-aged children have fallen victim to varied crimes on the Internet. What are the activities they should absolutely refrain from and how can they protect themselves while going online?*

The internet, while being an incredible resource for learning and connection, can also be a treacherous place for school-aged children, if they're not careful. Think of it as a sprawling city with delightful parks and shady alleyways; knowing where to wander and what to avoid is crucial. *Here's a guide* on what activities children should absolutely refrain from and how they can protect themselves while exploring the online world :

1. **Never share personal details**: This **i**nformation can be used for *identity theft or to locate someone in real life*, which is as unwelcome as receiving a pop quiz on a Monday morning.
2. **Avoid chatting with strangers**: Refrain from conversing with unknown individuals on social media, gaming platforms, or chat rooms, because *online predators often masquerade as peers to build trust and manipulate* children.
3. **Don't click on Unknown Links**: Avoid clicking on links from unknown or suspicious sources, including those in emails, messages, or pop-up ads. These can lead to malicious websites that install malware or attempt phishing attacks, which are like digital booby traps.
4. **Be wary of online challenges or quizzes**: Especially the ones that request personal data or unusual actions, because these can be schemes to collect personal information or encourage dangerous behaviour.
5. **Avoid downloading unauthorized software or files**: downloading apps, software, or files from untrusted websites may contain viruses or malware that can compromise the device and personal data.

So Children, **take charge**! Remember to Strengthen Privacy Settings, Use Strong Passwords, Enable Two-Factor Authentication, Educate Yourselves about Scams and Phishing, Use Open Communication with Adults, Install Security Software & Stick To the Time Limits!

■ *Your final words on striking the right balance of Internet power and Cyber Safety....*

In this balancing act, let's equip our students with the skills and confidence to explore the digital world safely, nurturing a generation of informed, responsible, and empowered digital citizens. And remember, just as we wouldn't send a sailor out to sea without a life jacket, we shouldn't send our students into the digital realm without the knowledge and tools to protect themselves. *Here's to safe and inspiring digital adventures!* ***

READ TO SUCCEED

FOR TEACHERS

Effective Teaching with Internet Technologies: *Pedagogy and Practice*

- by **Alan Pritchard**

This timely book helps teachers develop pedagogical skills in using the internet through a series of case studies of good practice, all of which are based on extensive classroom research & strong pedagogical focus. The aim of this book is to support schools in using the internet effectively. Accessible and practical, it is a guidebook on how integrate the use of technology across teaching and learning, with a range of ideas which can be used in different classroom settings. The emphasis is on practical ways of developing skills in teaching and learning, rather than on the technical specifics of the technology itself. Illustrative material - examples of children's work, website links, and further details of how projects were set up - are on a companion website.

FOR PARENTS

Parenting in the Digital World:
A Step-by-Step Guide to Internet Safety

- by **Clayton Cranford**

Brilliantly organized, easy to follow, and offering screenshots and step-by-step instructions on how to manage the privacy settings on different operating systems and applications - this book is a MUST read for all parents. The overview of the most popular apps being used today will be an important eye-opener for many caring adults. Schools and Parents, can together keep safe from crimes against children and support their success of being safe, yet smart twenty-first century net users.

HEY FRIEND,
YOU'VE GOT MESSAGE / MAIL!

PHISHING

Beware of These :

Blank or generic greetings, Sense of urgency, Non-routine business requests, Suspicious email addresses, Unfamiliar sender, Request for sensitive or personal information, Offer sounds too good to be true / offer money the quick way, Misspelling - typos - unfamiliar languages, Forged links to web sites.

EMAILS

Good Habits to Stay Safe:

Don't open unexpected attachments, Use a spam filter & avoid unsolicited bulk messages, Beware of Spoof Emails/Phishing, Don't send sensitive data in email, Avoid clicking on links in the body of an email message, Use anti-malware software, Keep passwords secure, Keep away from open WiFi, Log-out of email accounts after work.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Enjoy but Protect Yourself:

Personalize your privacy settings, Limit who can view your information, Know how to report-block-filter content, Look before you Click & Pause before you Post, Turn off geolocation, Use a private internet connection, Talk to friends about public posts, Report harassment / inappropriate items, Have strong & updated passwords, Do regularl SM privacy checks.

Also visit :
https://mckenziesheriff.net/usrfiles/cp/McGruff-Safe-Kids-Internet-Kit.pdf

ENGAGING ONLINE TEACHING TRICKS YOU MUST TRY!

School Education these days, not just in India but world-wide, is undergoing transformational changes. And one area that stands out (*fueled by the pandemic in 2020-21*), is **Technology**.

From improving communication through wider reach, meetings and easy access, to pumping up presentations & lessons, and organising calendars....there is *no limit to the ways in which one can use technology in education, for customised & effective TL practices*. While most nations have gone back to the traditional classroom practices, a few have opted for a rich blend of the old and the new, harnessing the best and safe that technology can offer to education.

Here some **SMART ways** to continue using **Internet aided learning** in school education:

- **Online Planning & Sharing**: Covid had switched us all into the online mode with Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, and a host of other similar software, allowing teachers to do practically everything - attendance, class sessions, homework, interactivity, break-out groups, etc. Even today, teachers can **continue to use the power of online calendar planning** to keep the students, teachers and management abreast with the flow of curriculum, celebrations and events for the year, deadlines for submission and an added advantage of **Making the Learning Visible (MLV)**.

- **Using Virtual Manipulative**: Many teachers may have already used manipulatives like tangrams, blocks, ten blocks, coin and notes, etc - to help students to visualise concepts and engage in tactile experiential learning. **Virtual manipulatives help students to comprehend complex concepts** in class and teachers can offer the turn by turn chance to get a feel.
  Try this :
  https://www.brainingcamp.com/manipulatives, https://www.splashlearn.com/tools/virtual-manipulatives.

- **Digital Field Tours**: As they say *seeing is believing*. Imagine if students didn't have to look at one-two odd static photos of Egypt inserted within text paras in the textbook AND if they could *actually watch a virtual tour* of the Pyramids, the Sphinx and the Ramses statues, OR enter the human body and travel the course of the digestive system! In 2D or 3D or 4D - depending on the resource of the school! *Google Street View* has been used till date to explore parks, forests, deserts, canyons, and important monuments right from the seats of the classroom. Now, there are many online libraries that offer **well-designed virtual tours** of historic and significant places, internal spaces unreachable by man, which can be shown in class to **create the** "*I feel I'm there*" **kind of experience**!
  Try these links :
  - *https://www.visiblebody.com/*
  - *https://www.wmf.org/around-world-wmf?gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQjwn9y1BhC2ARIsAG5IY-7pc1YAa4gWJdHA_u0sLQ-20Ykmciy9e2aF4f7Lq37YwS67PBqoFigaAk6pEALw_wcB*

- **Online Recap-modules for Concept Revision:** Teachers will agree that there are many instances, every year, when a particular concept has been repeatedly covered in previous grades with marginally increased levels of complexity. Rather than wasting precious classroom time, re-teaching the concept and handing out worksheets for revision & assessment, smart schools are developing **online recap modules, scaffolded by levels of complexity, which revise the 'previous knowledge' through a virtual lesson and pose a tests at the end of each level.** Teacher can track students progress and completion of these modules, at their own time and pace, *before the new topic introduction*. Create your own modules or you could try *Udemy*.
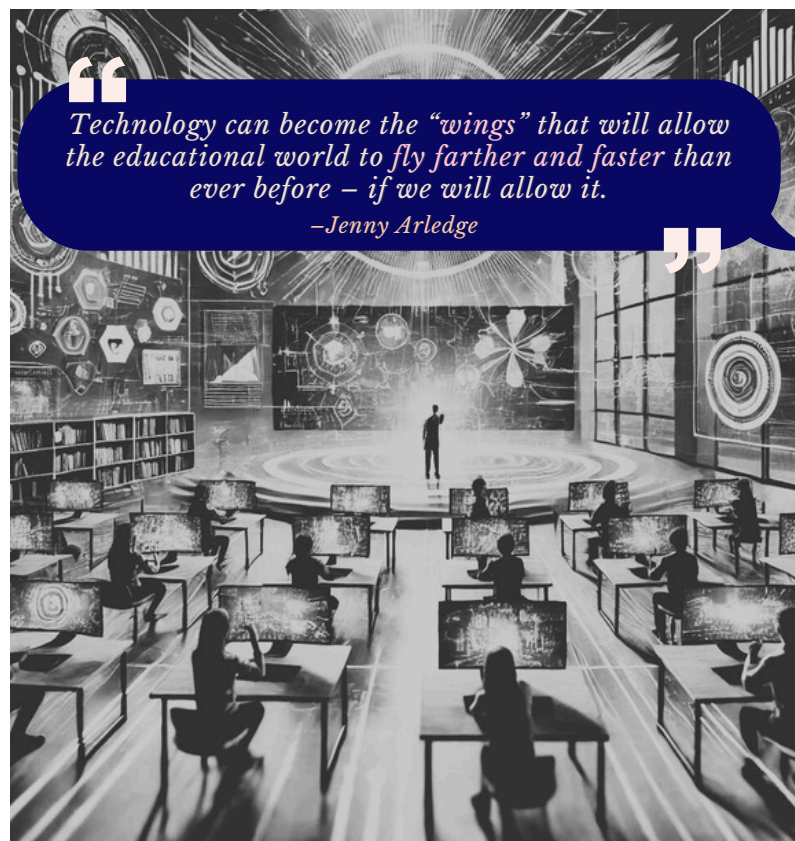
- **Embracing Social media:** Let's face it, students cannot be kept away from social media and they quite enjoy it. How about thinking about **embracing 'X' and 'Meta' into their school education,** to keep alive the interest, willing participation and achievement of curricular goals? We can create groups to post discussion topics, ask Qs, as well as teach them about the **skills of online communication, respectful language and etiquette**. Such activities also encourage **teamwork and collaboration**.
  Try this :
  https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-for-education/

- **Live coverage sessions:** Smart classrooms that have internet connection should capitalise on *bringing the real-world into the class by logging online onto relevant sites.* For example, in case of a climatic catastrophe occurring somewhere (*like hurricanes, typhoons and volcanic eruptions)*, teachers can log onto live news coverages thereby bringing the real world into their learning! *Qs on what is being viewed can steer the learning further* - "what do you see happening?", "how is it affecting the people and animals?", "have you ever been through a similar experience?"

- **Audiobooks & Podcasts:** Great speeches, motivational podcasts, interviews and multimedia based audiobooks can aid the Teaching-Learning process tremendously in the long run. For example - during the Covid years, we had made around 50 audiobooks of the English lessons (*replete with background scores, appropriate and timely sound effects, voice pitch variations*), to allow children to listen to well-read text (prose and poetry). Since kids could listen to these as many times as they wished from the comforts of their homes, they could *practice and perfect reading skills with proper pronunciation & fluency*. The multimedia *worked well for differentiated learners* and transformed a traditional dry text-based reading session. Similarly, podcasts of famous speeches & interviews *hone the listening skills* and teachers can plan for worksheets based on such content.

> *Technology can become the "wings" that will allow the educational world to fly farther and faster than ever before – if we will allow it.*
> *–Jenny Arledge*

Finally, we can agree that ... ensuring our kids' safe use of the power of the Internet is a *partnership* that includes - *frank communication, awareness* and *smart use of technology*. By bringing the best and most effective online aids into education, and simultaneously, by empowering ourselves and kids about existing online risks, establishing clear limits and boundaries, and by encouraging critical thinking - we can *collectively* create a safer digital arena for students to explore and learn. *Schools play a crucial role* in this, by providing kids with the know-how to navigate the digital world responsibly. Also, *parents and educators can work in tandem* to empower their children to *harness the internet's benefits*, while *shielding them from potential hazards*. *******

INTERNET SAFETY QUOTES FOR KIDS

"Check before you Click": be mindful of what you *do* online, what information you *give out* to people or scammers, or even what website you *enter*.

"Passwords are like Underwear": When setting passwords for your online presence, *remember 3 things* -
(a) Don't let people know about it
(b) Change it often
(c) Make it as cryptic as you can and note it in a safe place for memory reference.

"If you don't know the Sender, it might be a Pretender": Some people lie about who they are online. Unless you have met them in real life, the person behind the screen could be anyone with harmful intentions.

"Prevent a Jam, Don't Open Spam": Sometimes people hide dangerous soft - ware in email links. Don't open any emails from people you don't know. Even if you do open the email, do not click on any links that might be present.

"Keep your Profiles Private": Lots of sites have the option to have a private profile; so only people you have *accepted* as friends can see your information and what you post. Be sure to not invite anyone else to see your profile.

"THINK before you Post": When creating a post online, follow these simple steps before hitting send.
   T = is it **TRUE**?
   H = is it **HELPFUL**?
   I = is it **INSPIRING**?
   N = is it **NECESSARY**?
   K = is it **KIND**?
If your post or message doesn't fit in with one or more of these ideas, *rethink* what you were planning to send out.

Seek a Known Adult's help if you find anything unpleasant, scary or suspicious.

And remember, it is **better** to have *meaningful 'human' connections with a smaller number of friends*, **than** collecting a large number of unknown digital followers.

QED News

BUILDING *Independence* - Empowering Leaders, Parents & Teachers

QEDpress August 2022 highlighted the importance of *Building Independence among students*; while **QEDpress August 2023** focussed on *Independence in the Workplace*. In **QEDpress August 2023** we have covered a theme that also builds *Independence & Confidence in using the Internet*. (To access previous Independence Day issues please visit: **https://www.qedrak.com/newsletter/**)
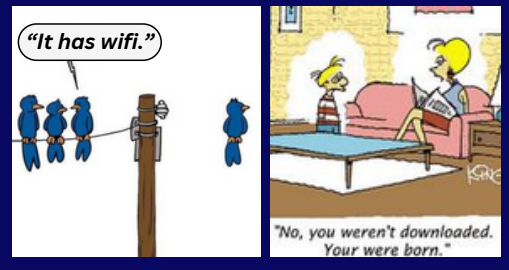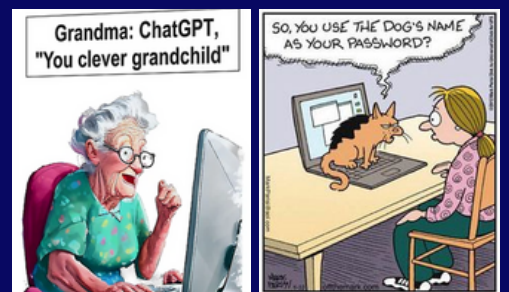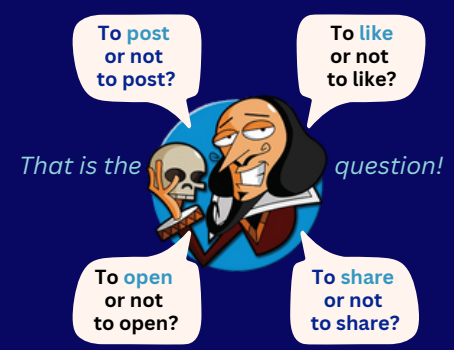
In our journey of **Continuing Professional Development**, we reached out to varied stakeholders in education - Leaders, Teachers, Parents & Students as well. Over late **July & August '24**, the **QEDRAK Team** organised some engaging sessions :
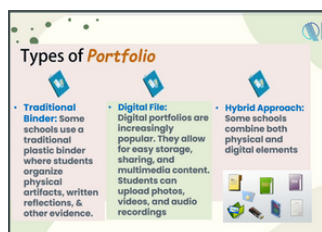
JML Parent Sessions

Under the *QED-TIPS* banner, Team QEDRAK conducted a **Parenting Session** covering the importance and nature of "*Involved Parenting*". Across 2 dedicated sessions, Parents of Gr. 1-2 and Gr. 3-4 participated in a 90 minute, knowledge-filled, interactive and role-play based session on involvement in one's child's education as a *Partner with the School* - with added insights on **How to inculcate the 7 Habits** effectively in children (*inspired by '7 Habits for Happy Kids'* by *Sean Covey).*

Projects, Portfolios & SLCs

Team QEDRAK conducted a **Teachers Workshop** on the role and importance of *Projects, Portfolios & Student Led Conferences* for the Middle & High School Educators of JML School, Mumbai. While *Projects* provide practical real-life experiences that deepen understanding and foster critical thinking; *Portfolios* allow students to collate and organise their achievements & challenges over time into a binder or digital archive, encouraging self-reflection & ownership over their learning. *Student Led Conferences* empower students to share & communicate their progress to teachers & parents through *Portfolios*, touching upon winning & failure moments, strengths & weaknesses, and the journey of learning. Together, *these 3 elements prepare students for higher academics* and future challenges.

RIB-TICKLERS

To **post** or not to post?   To **like** or not to like?

That is the question!

To **open** or not to open?   To **share** or not to share?

Grandma: ChatGPT, "You clever grandchild"

SO, YOU USE THE DOG'S NAME AS YOUR PASSWORD?

"It has wifi."
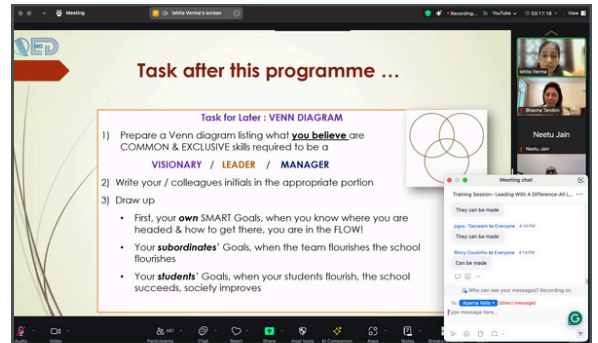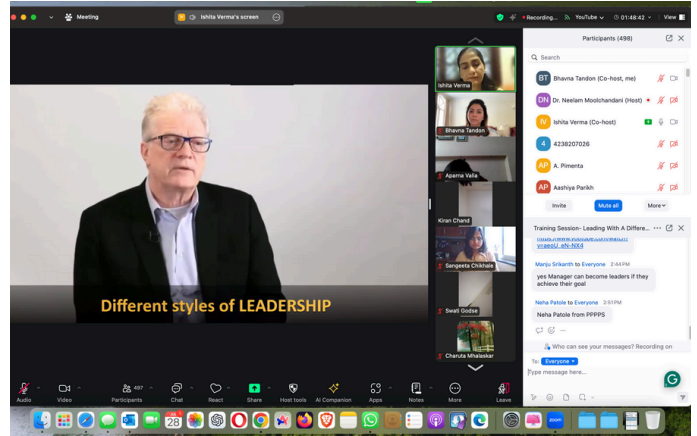
"No, you weren't downloaded. Your were born."

Phonics Workshop

A *Workshop on Phonics and Early Literacy* was conducted for the Nurs to Grade 2 educators of JML School, Mumbai, to equip them with essential strategies and tools for fostering foundational reading skills in young learners. Through interactive sessions and hands-on activities, participants delved into effective phonics instruction techniques, explored best practices for developing phonemic awareness, and learned to implement engaging literacy activities that can capture students' interest & help to attain NEP's FLN goals.

USF Maharashtra Leaders & Educators

Team QEDRAK conducted a 2.5 hrs session on *Transformational Leadership* for the *Unaided Schools Forum of Maharashtra (with almost 800 online participants on Zoom & YouTube).* The session offered insight on how *paradigm shifts, transformation in perception and planning* can help *each stake-holder of the school* (student, teacher, leaders & management) to achieve their full potential in this modern age. The session also touched upon shared goals, innovative practices, and the need for collaborative and supportive environment for creating a vibrant and effective learning community.

The **September 2024** issue is based on the theme - **Teacher Enrichment & Empowerment**. Please send your contributions - an effective classroom strategy / class humour / vocab word / a featured article / book titles, etc. related to the theme to - **team@qedrak.com**

RESOURCES AND KNOWLEDGEWARE

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