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Student-centred Schooling and The Three-Frame Day

Education in the '*compulsory schooling world*' is generally dominated by subject-centric, teacher-centric, and school-centric practices. These traditional, nineteenth century ways of organising schooling are so prevalent that they have 'brand image'; many people accept that schools are simply 'like that'. Educationalists, business leaders, and parents are calling for a paradigm shift, therefore, a clear distinction between subject-centric and student-centric schooling has become a necessity.

Subject-centredness is the dominant form of schooling available today. Subject-centred schooling:

- forms around a hierarchy of subjects.
- assumes that subject knowledge is built from a logical progression of concepts.
- delivers a 'segment' of the subject per year.
- operates 'same day'/'same way' teaching for the majority of students.
- promotes comparing and internal testing.
- promotes final examinations.

Student-centredness stands at the opposite pole. Student-centred schooling:

- forms around individual learners – their academic level, their interests & dispositions; their humanity.
- believes learners learn at different rates and in different ways.
- delivers academic learning at the level of the learner.
- asks 'what does an individual student know; what does s/he need to know next?'
- knows learners interact with content in many ways – not merely with their intellects.
- promotes formative assessment via authentic tasks.

The standard school timetable, which most schools operate under, is one of the reasons outmoded subject-centricity persists. New structures, *which influence how learning is delivered on a daily basis*, are needed if schooling is to move along the continuum, away from subject-centric, towards student-centric practices. Educationalists are strong advocates of student-centredness, however, their advice goes largely unheeded. Schools stand ready for a description of *how* this is to be achieved. Green School operates a distinctive daily timetabling structure called The Three-Frame Day (3FD) that has been designed specifically to sustain its student-centric commitment. Thus, every day, Green school operates in three discrete ways, namely in *integral*, *instructional* and *experiential* frames.

The integral frame utilizes thematic teaching and focuses on engaging, and satisfying, the ‘whole person’.

The instructional frame focuses on core, discrete intellectual competencies that require repetition to reach proficiency, namely literacy, numeracy, and languages other than English; attention to detail for individual learners maximizes success in this frame.

The experiential frame links students to real life experiences via workplaces where adults operate commercially and via practical opportunities that arise anywhere in the learning village. This frame delivers opportunities to develop technological skill and works back into the instructional frame by providing ‘real life’ problems for the students to solve.

Detailed curriculum preparation based on The Three-Frame Day (3FD) ensures that Green School is able to allocate significant amounts of time, on a daily basis, to these three demands or ‘frames’. The three-frame day is the structure into which Green School teachers pour their creativity and energy. It is a unique contribution to the urgent demand for student-centricity. In effect students come to school, *every day*, in order to:

- develop as people and to practice approaching content with an integral perspective.
- build competencies in fundamental literacy, numeracy, and languages other than English.
- cultivate entrepreneurial and technological skill in order to be self-starters in the world of work.

Green School is primed to share this inspiring vision with the world.

Three-Frame Day Features

- ❖ *The integral frame* is delivered via *thematic lessons*. These lessons challenge the classical ‘Big Four’ operational styles: intrapersonal, intellectual, emotional, and physical, every day. [Any learning content can be approached via the ‘Big Four’; of trees, for example, we might (a) ask, introspectively, what significance a tree has for us, (b) inquire what processes are at work when a deciduous tree drops its leaves, (c) write a poem about a tree, and (d) plant a tree.] Eight or nine themes are presented each year and, on each school day, a thematic lesson is allocated about one hour, forty-five minutes. Because each theme is offered consecutively for about twenty teaching days, the content is integrated into the student’s store of knowledge during sleep, thus allowing them to make deeper and more personalised responses. Students are encouraged to engage orally, as well as via writing, with the thematic content so that vitally important speaking competencies are developed. [A distribution chart, showing a typical sequence of themes, is available.]
- ❖ *The instructional frame* is delivered in standard school periods, called *proficiency lessons*, of about 45 minutes each. There are 15 proficiency lessons each week. These lessons, which target the basic academic skills requiring repetition, focus on number, measure, and algebra in mathematics, reading and writing in English, and vocabulary in languages other than English (LOTE) – in Green School this means Indonesian. [The remaining proficiency lessons are used as shown in the example timetable at the foot of this article.] Proficiency Lessons are offered as *individual learning programmes* (ILPs); that is, student learning is assessed and then, as individuals, they proceed to the next step on the continuum of skills within the subject area. In effect, this means that multiple learning experiences will be operating inside one class during any particular proficiency lesson. For this to be possible, subject syllabuses, written in great detail, need to be available. Every discrete fact in the subject area needs a specific learning outcome’ (SLO). Thus, in proficiency lessons, useful questions for parents are: ‘What is my child learning?’ and ‘What will they be learning next?’ These questions replace the comparative questions typical in subject-centred

regimes. Further, ILPs make it possible for students to manage their own progress and, indeed, to report on their progress to parents and caregivers. Learning research shows that, in order to be remembered, discrete facts must be engaged three times in one week; thus, these lessons are allocated three repetitions per week. In this regime, engagement and learning are maximised. In addition, since the SLO for every lesson is understood by the teachers and students, closely targeted formative assessment can occur. Teachers address only the identified SLO in their comments and marking and, in the introduction of any lesson, they clearly differentiate between ‘task’ – the activity that will convey the learning, the ‘learning intention – what is to be acquired by the student as a result of the task, and the ‘criterion for success’ (TLC).

- ❖ *The experiential frame* is delivered daily in extended sessions (about one hour fifteen minutes) called *practical lessons*. Five subject areas are offered in this frame: Health and Wellbeing, Environmental Education, Enterprise Education, Visual Arts Education, and Performance Arts Education. All practical lessons are linked, via adults working in the field, to real-world expertise and enterprises. For the young children this means that practitioners are invited into the classrooms and, for older students, it means they visit, and inquire into, workplaces and workplace practices. In this frame the practical lesson teachers are encouraged to be flexible with time so that, when authentic opportunities arise – for example, the rice harvest – they can commandeer an entire week of afternoons to enter deeply into the activity.

A typical 3FD timetable is included at the end of this article to illustrate a possible distribution of the three frames.

Greening student-centric practice




The arguments for including sustainability education in a school’s curriculum are compelling and frequently repeated. However, an intriguing question that delves deeper into the *strategies* for delivering ‘green schooling’ warrants reflection: ‘How can ‘green studies’ penetrate the entire ethos of a school?’ It is common for social improvement drivers in schooling (take religion as an example) to become a rather ineffective ‘moon’ orbiting *Planet Standard Schooling*. When this happens (and it does, frequently, when educators set out to ‘save the world’) the ‘message’ easily becomes a matter of small, or no, consequence against the panorama of ‘real education’.

In Green School education in sustainability deeply penetrates the entire operation; it is part of the air we breathe and the ground we walk on – at every turn. How has this transformation been achieved? The grounds and buildings are their own testimonial but it is in the *delivery* of Green Studies that exciting and significant penetration occurs. In short, ‘sustainability’ components attach to thematic teaching (the integral frame) - *in all subject areas*; the ‘Green Team’ (GT) input into mathematics, social studies, English, and science themes – working shoulder-to-shoulder with other teachers in those subject areas. Further, the GT is able to take-over significant blocks of time from other ‘experiential frame’ teachers when events of ecological and environmental significance occur; for example – when the subak are opened and the padis are flooded other practical endeavours might be suspended while they take over the afternoon programme for an entire week. ‘Barefoot schooling’ is prized; the GT knows how to access the priceless wisdom held in the hands and hearts of the many Balinese artisans who work with, and around us. Further, our environmental educators are viewed as researchers and teacher educators who have the important role of increasing the green wisdom of the entire staff.

Environmental sustainability, deep respect for the earth, and intentional eco-harmony are not subjects in the Green School curriculum – they are inevitable consequences of the way we live.

In summary, Green School’s entire approach is sustainable. The school offers education where environmental responsibility is an inevitable consequence of its humane schooling vision.

Summary of the Three-Frame Day

	3FD	ICON	Common name	Key Features
H O L I S T I C	Integral frame		Thematic Lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Includes the 'big four', every day. ii. About 20 consecutive sessions, of 1h.45m, on one theme. iii. Utilises sleep. iv. Develops speaking skill.
	Instructional frame		Proficiency Lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. SLOs ii. ILPs iii. TLC iv. Formative assessment. v. Delivered in standard lesson units – (about 45 minutes each). vi. Each core SLOs gets 3 hits per week. vii. Includes Written English; mathematics: number, measure, and algebra, and LOTE.
	Experiential frame		Practical Lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Includes Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Environmental Education, Enterprise Education, and Health & Physical Education. ii. Authentic – i.e. taps into the wisdom in the workplace. iii. Flexible – is responsive to live opportunities; i.e. one 'subject' can commandeer all five sessions inside one week.

Typical Three-frame Day Timetable

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
15 mins	Fitness	Fitness	Fitness	Fitness	Fitness
1 hr 45 mins	Thematic Lesson	Thematic Lesson	Thematic Lesson	Thematic Lesson	Thematic Lesson
40 mins	Morning Recess	Morning Recess	Morning Recess	Morning Recess	Morning Recess
45 mins	PrL LOTE	PrL LOTE	PrL LOTE	PrL English - didactic '3 Windows' +ILPs	PrL English - didactic '3 Windows' +ILPs
45 mins	PrL English - didactic '3 Windows' +ILPs	PrL Maths – didactic '3 windows' +ILPs	PrL Maths – didactic '3 windows' +ILPs	PrL Maths – didactic '3 windows' +ILPs	PrL Maths ILPs & catch-ups
50 mins	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
15 mins	Instructional reading	Instructional reading	Instructional reading	Instructional reading	Instructional reading
45 mins	PrL Maths ILPs & catch-ups	PrL Spelling & handwriting	PrL English ILPs & catch-ups	PrL English ILPs & catch-ups	PrL Social skills
1 hr 10 mins	PL Visual Arts	PL Performance Arts	PL Physical Education	PL Environmental Education	PL Enterprise Education
10 mins	Home room	Home room	Home room	Home room	Home room
10 mins	Pick-Up	Pick-Up	Pick-Up	Pick-Up	Pick-Up