HOW-TO GUIDE

A Guide to Applying Teacher-Led Innovation in Grade Four

SPRING OF WISDOM

JULY 2026

01 Implementation Principles

This plan is a response to uniform teaching and students' tiredness from textbooks without practical activities.

Evidence: Najiba Jafari (teacher) and Marwa (student) confirmed that only textbook-based teaching causes tiredness and a big difference in learning speed.

Inclusion: Activities are designed in a way that students with different learning speeds, through group and pair work, have equal opportunity to understand the lesson.

Alignment: The content of this innovation is fully aligned with the Grade 4 curriculum in Dari, Math, and Science subjects.

02 Detailed Instruction of Learning Activities

Section A: Literacy and Language Area

First, by applying the human-centered design process, we used specific activities such as information gathering, group discussions, surveys, and consultations among the design team and school stakeholders, interviews with beneficiaries, and observation of the real school environment to identify the real challenges and problems that our students and teachers face.

After interviews with Grade 4 students, teachers, and parents, we found that due to the use of less effective methods, lack of using methods suitable to students' learning levels, lack of enough teaching materials, not using environmental materials during teaching, and lack of motivation for learning, students need more support in both academic and life skills.

We collected this information and identified different insights. Each team member analyzed their findings from previous steps, and we prepared a list of students' problems and needs.

02 Detailed Instruction continued

Then, by using different idea-generation techniques such as brainstorming, mind mapping, and problem-definition insights, we created innovative ideas to respond to students' learning problems. We also prepared and designed our first prototype using simple and available materials (teaching and environmental materials).

Finally, we tested our prototype with 15 students and 3 talented teachers from our school in Dari, Math, and Science subjects. During the testing process, we carefully observed and identified standards to measure the success of our ideas by noting the level of satisfaction of students/stakeholders, and by reviewing the usability and practicality of the methods and activities.

In the end, we held a final meeting with program stakeholders to collect opinions, make conclusions, and select the solution. We concluded that the integrated learning solution should be implemented for two months during Grade 4 class hours.

- **Some main features of the Cheshma-e-Kherad learning method:** Giving opportunities to students for discovery: exploratory opportunities are success and activities through which students can learn new skills, gain new ideas and experiences. Students read a text, explain its meaning in simple language, and separate and write the verbs and adjectives from the text. This helps improve their reading and writing.

02 Detailed Instruction continued

- **Practical experiential learning:** For example, students plant different plants, observe and record their growth process. They learn by observation that plants need light, water, and soil. They experience practical concepts directly, such as giving water, changing soil, giving sunlight, and analyzing the reason for wilting.

- **Visual and practical language learning:** Students guess given words on the board or flashcards, pronounce them, write their spelling, and make sentences.

- **Measurement of volume:** For example, students measure water using a spoon, bottle, or glass and say which container holds more water.

- **Role play:** Students understand concepts better through acting and performance.

02 Detailed Instruction continued

- **Connection to real life:** Lesson concepts are connected to real life examples and problems of students. Activity: students work in pairs, one gives a concept and the other explains it in simple language and connects it to daily life.

- **Active and participatory learning:** Active learning focuses on sustainability, using child-centered, game-based, and interactive methods where students have an active role and work together in projects.

- **Need-based activities:** In this activity, for each lesson topic, a chart is used with three important questions: What do you know? What do you want to know? and What have you learned? This helps us understand students' interests and present lessons accordingly and identify results. Then learning activities are applied in three main academic areas (literacy, numeracy, and science) and also in two non-academic areas, organized in one educational package.

Section B: Science Area and Skills

For effective, comprehensive, fast, and creative teaching of science topics, we carry out the following activities for students in group, pair, or participatory methods:

02 Section B continued

- **Planting plants:** Different plants are planted by students in pots through exploratory practice, and they understand the process of their growth.
- **Responsibility in protecting the environment:** Collecting recyclable materials from the school yard and outside it, and making handicrafts.
- **Using simple environmental materials:** For learning about root, stem, and leaf of plants.
- **Using simple environmental materials:** Teaching aids such as pictures, scientific models, educational flip charts, real objects, and model objects.
- **Practical work:** By tasting fruits and identifying their taste.

02 Detailed Instruction continued

- **Role play:** In understanding communicable and non-communicable diseases and not following hygiene.
- **Water cycle topic:** The teacher explains the stages of the water cycle (evaporation, condensation, precipitation, and absorption) using a physical model or pictures on the board.
- **Practical activity:** Students do a simple experiment where they place a container of water under the sun and observe and record the changes.
- **Project-based:** Students prepare a chart or a 3D model of the water cycle and present it to the class.

Section C: Literacy Learning Activities

- **Playing with words:** Opposite and similar words are written on cards with sentence making. Students are asked to make simple sentences using the words and use opposite and similar words in them. This activity strengthens spelling and writing skills and helps identify opposite and similar words.
- **Growth mindset approach:** Making mistakes is part of learning. Confidence in one's abilities and continuous effort in class are encouraged, and mistakes are reviewed instead of punishment.

02 Section C continued

- **Scientific and literary visits:** Students are taken to places such as the library, museum, or school yard. They discuss what they observe, then return to class and present and read their observations. This activity helps their progress.

- **Reading, writing, and memorizing:** Students read a story, then memorize key and important points. The teacher asks questions about the story in a question-and-answer form. This strengthens their memory, reading, and writing.

- **Knowledge wall:** A part of the classroom is set as a knowledge wall. When students learn new things, they write them on paper and place them there. This wall keeps growing and creates a sense of progress in students.

- **Suggested learning:** Students are given a meaningful picture. They understand its concept and write an essay from it, then come to the front of the class and read it. This activity improves their reading and writing skills and helps them understand concepts.

Section D: Mathematics Activities

The following activities are for teaching:

- **Number line:** Students make a number line using cards or sticks, arrange numbers in ascending and descending order, or find missing numbers. This helps improve their understanding and memory.

02 Section D continued

- **Small economy game:** Students improve life skills by using play money and acting as buyer and seller. For example, buying pens, notebooks, and food items from a shop or market. This helps them learn social relations and also learn addition and subtraction.

- **Math in nature:** Students better understand addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division by using beans, chickpeas, small stones, sticks, and model money so they can learn practically.

- **Making geometric shapes:** Using colored paper, wax, and simple environmental materials, students make geometric shapes such as triangle, square, rectangle, and circle, and calculate their perimeter and area. This is a better method for their learning.

- **Measuring objects:** Students use a ruler or measuring tape to measure the length and width of objects such as tables, boards, and books, and record them.

- **Understanding time:** Students make a clock individually and are asked to read the time on it. They also learn that time has value and importance in life and should be used effectively.

- **Teaching addition and subtraction:** The teacher teaches basic concepts of addition and subtraction in class using the board and verbal explanation.

- **Practical activity:** The teacher divides students into small groups and gives each group beans or small objects to practice addition and subtraction in a practical way.

- **Project-based:** Students do a simple activity like buying and selling in a “model shop.” Each group must use addition and subtraction of prices to calculate total costs.

04 Management, Capacity Building, and Sustainability

Teacher-centered: Teachers share their experiences with other schoolteachers through seminars and learning circles (peer learning).

Supportive monitoring: The head teacher and school principal visit activities daily and record improvement feedback in an observation booklet.

Sustainability: Using recycled and environmental materials ensures that these activities can be repeated in future years without dependence on large budgets.

05 Evaluation of Learning Results and Celebrating Innovators

Evaluation model (What): In each lesson, the teacher measures learning by asking: “What do you know?”, “What do you want to know?”, and “What did you learn?”

Comparative evaluation: Comparing questionnaires at the start and end of the project to show students’ progress.

Celebration: Displaying students’ 3D models and essays in the school yard and recognizing innovative teachers in school council meetings.

06 Recommendation to Teachers

Making mistakes is part of learning; with encouragement and a smile, grow students' self-confidence in the Spring of Wisdom.