

Value based teaching of english

Experience, Meaning of Life



Value based teaching of English Education is not the filling of a pail, But the lighting of a fire. William Butler Yeats Education, which is the vehicle of knowledge, self preservation, and success not only gives us a platform to succeed but also imparts the knowledge of conduct, strength, character and self-respect. It is not an accessory to life but it is a necessity. Will Durant says ' Education is the transmission of civilization'. It gives us the knowledge of the difference between right and wrong, a belief in God, the importance of hard work and self respect. Education is a continuous learning experience form people, learning from success and failures, learning from leaders and followers. Mahathma Gandhi once said that education not only moulds the new generation but also reflects a society's fundamental assumptions about itself and the individuals that compose it. In the words of Martin Luther King Jr, ' Intelligence plus character... that is the goal of true education'.

Education tries to develop in three aspects physique, mentality and character. Plutarch asserts that ' A mind is a fire to be kindled, not a vessel to be filled'. Education is the source which kindles the mind to live a goal oriented life. The purpose of education is to mould the students in all the three domains and makes them aware of honesty, humility, morality and other moral values. It provides profession as well as a purpose of life. The actual aim of life is to know oneself and be oneself. Education gives us the unique knowledge of knowing oneself which makes life better and purposeful. Education is a light to ignorance, a way to success. The world classical text Tirukkural describes the value of education, Learning is excellence Of worth that none destroy; To man nought else affords Reality of joy" — (Learning XL-6) Thiruvalluvar opines that education makes a person

free from fear, he can go anywhere and the place or country became his own. He further adds that an uneducated person is like an animal, and he is like a barren field. Education gives tolerance, patient; it nurtures and empowers the people. The teaching of moral and ethical values to the student is called value based education. C. R. Lewis says, ' Education without values as useful as it is, seems rather to make a man; a perfect human being with optimistic ideas. The contemporary society does not care for the culture, value of life, humanity, moral and ethical values. Education tries to generate the student to become a good student. The Parliamentary Committee in India, in its 81st report on value-based education in 1999 strongly suggested that value based education should be introduced at the school level and extended to college and university level. According to the committee, ' Education should aim at multifaceted development, of a human being-his intellectual, physical, spiritual and ethical development.' The lives of great poets and great personalities itself teaches our students the correct way of living. A teacher of English can take the simple example of the contemporary writers work to teach values. The main purpose of education is to make them understand not only in the classroom but outside the classroom also. Prof. Anil Sarwal's survey says ' At present over 6. 5 billion human beings use over 6, 800 languages to carry out their affairs, but English has emerged as the de facto global language for universal communication in the closing years of the 20th century though there are still challenges to its functionality as global language given the linguistic prejudices that still have strong roots in many parts of the world'. Education now days are result-oriented. Schools and colleges concentrated mainly on

the curriculum and the result percentage. Of course results do matter, but then again there is more to our life than the performance in the bit of paper. Our educational system is far more advanced and progressive in terms of academic standards in comparison with the USA or UK but in terms of creativity, independent study and objective approach towards a subject we feel inadequate in experience. Literature is an instrument of reason and English language became its dignified medium. Literature as it starts earlier concentrated mainly on the moral values. From the ancient Aesop's fable of the 'Tortoise and the Hare', in which the plodding and determined tortoise wins a race against the much faster yet extremely arrogant hare, the stated moral is "slow and steady wins the race". It can also teach other morals, for instance that "arrogance or over confidence in one's abilities may lead to failure or the loss of an event, race or contest". In Shakespeare's plays he used stock characters to present the moral. The moral in Shakespeare's plays may be more nuanced but no less present, and the writers point up in other ways. Throughout the history of recorded literature, the majority of fictional writing has served not only to entertain but also to instruct, inform or improve the readership. The novels of Charles Dickens are a vehicle for morals regarding the social and economic system. Literature is used to teach moral values other than any other subject. It teaches the behaviour, ways of thinking and use of language to be followed or avoided. Never give up! It is wiser and better, Always to hope than once despair: Fling off the load of Doubt's cankering fetter, And break the dark spell of tyrannical care; Never give up! Or the burden may sink you- Providence kindly has mingled the cup, And, in all trials or troubles, bethink you, The watchword of life must be,

never give up! The above is an extract of an anonymous verses and songs from chartist literature. It teaches the values of hope which is the watchword of life. It presents the values of hard work and hope which leads to success in difficult situation. The greatest work in Russian Literature “ War and Peace” by Leo Tolstoy, constantly emphasizes the irrational motives for human behaviour in both peace and war. It reveals the truth behind the falsity of earthly life. When it is taught by the teacher, he may emphasis the non-violent resistance. Yes, love.... But not the love that loves for something, or because of something, but that love that I felt for the first time, when dying, I saw my enemy and yet loved him. I knew that feeling of love which is the essence of the soul, for which no object is needed. And I know that blissful feeling now too. To love one’s neighbour’s; to love one’s enemies, to love everything - to love God and all His manifestations. Some one dear to one can loved with human love; but an enemy can be loved with divine love. And that was why I felt such joy when I felt that I loved that man. What happened to him? Is he alive... Loving with human love, one may pass form love to hatred; but divine love cannot change. (War and Peace) The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway is the symbolic exploration of the human struggle with the natural world, the human capacity to transcend hardship, and personal triumph won from defeat. His works teaches and gives hope to the readers as well as the students. It also portrays the importance of human courage and prowess, the dignity amid the harshness of the world. The hero has his own code of values. It leaves a message to the society that “ A man can be destroyed but not defeated”. It gives a hope to the younger generation students. The poems of Robert Frost give an idea about what is

life and encourages self-reliance, not following where other has led. In another poem Mending wall he advises to the people to keep good relation. “ Good fences make good neighbours” Thoreau’s Civil Disobedience presents the man’s duty to the society and in government, by presenting the vices; he gives a message that the man in the society should be aware of these vices. He is concerned with the problem of existence in the society. His poems depict the theme of human limitation. The universe seems chaotic and horrific because man’s limited faculties cannot comprehend its meaning. He insists on duty, responsibilities of an individual. Margrat Atwood’s works we may find the human nature of loving animals, when it is taught by the teacher he or she can teach the value of humanity and kindness which should be shown to the animals. Her works are conscious about environmental issues and it nurtures the importance of nature in the mind of people. Post colonial writings show how the society is scattered with racial problems. When it is taught to the students of English, they were aware of the racial problems and they know their struggles. They may be practising it in their life, the struggle of people who were under the colonisation, depicts and teaches the national integrity in the minds of students who learn the plays or works. Among the ethical works written in Indian languages, Tirukkural stands supreme. The main aim of this ethical text is to prescribe the noble virtues to be adopted, and to prohibit the detestable vices to be abhorred. Dharma or Aram indicates the positive and negative virtues to be followed by the householder. Valluvar talks about all the values which make man’s life fruitful. He describes the right way of earning money, how to lead peaceful life, even the qualities of a ruler in the democratic country. Gifts,

grace, right, sceptre Care of people's weal: These four a light Of dreaded
 kings reveal (Chapter LXXIII-8) There are many hurdles and hardships in the
 life of a man. Valluvar insists on the way of escape from the hardship and
 talks about hopefulness in trouble. Who pain as pleasure takes, He shall
 acquire The bliss to which His foes in vain aspire. (Chapter LXIII-10) It talks
 about friendship, love, power of speech, purity in action, way of
 accumulating wealth, military spirit etc., As hand of him whose Vesture slips
 away, Friendship at once The coming grief will stay (Friendship LXXIX-8) In
 Gitanjali, Rabindranath Tagore views the relationship between God and man,
 purity, deliverance, life, philosophical ideas about life. Tagore a superb
 representative of his country- India — the man who wrote its national
 anthem- his life and words go far beyond his country. He is a product of the
 best of both traditional Indian and modern western cultures. He exemplifies
 the ideas important to us of goodness, meaningful work and world culture.
 His works and some of his poem induce the patriotic spirit in the young
 minds. Where there is, mind without fear and the head Is held high Where
 knowledge is free Where the world has not been broken up Into fragments
 Where the
 mind is led forward by thee Into ever-widening thought and action In that
 heaven of freedom, my father, let My country awake. (Gitanjali — I)
 Shakespeare was not of an age but for all times because his characters are
 true to the eternal aspects of human life and not limited to any
 contemporary life. Shakespeare's tragedies exhibit the decorum " Character
 is Destiny". Most of the characters regret for what they have done is bad. He
 insists that even one flaw in the character of a person may ruin his life. In

King Lear, he presents life through the character of Lear. He learns the value of patience and worth of 'unaccommodated man'. He begins to realize his own faults as a king and almost understands his failure as a father. It also presents the value of true love of Cordelia. Through the character of Cordelia the student may understand the virtues of devotion, kindness beauty and honesty- honesty of a fault. Cordelia is an embodiment of virtues; her reunion with Lear- shows the triumph of love and forgiveness over hatred and spite. When the students read literature, which mirrors the society clearly, they may shape their own life in a good way. If the teachers use the world literature to teach English, he can site more examples to the students which are from ordinary men and women and the student may understand the values and they can implement it in their life. P. Hiltrud Dave Eve, Assistant Professor, KSR College of Eng., E-mail : hiltrudeve@gmail. com