



Head, Heart and Hands - The Importance of Our Actions

Intermediate to Advanced



Holistic education of the Head, Heart and Hands.

Instructions to Students:

The teacher asks the students what they understand by the 'education of the whole person' and either elicits or explains that this means an education of the Head, the Heart and the Hands. The students go on to discuss what Pestalozzi meant by a 'Head, Heart and Hands' education.

What do you do with your head? Think

What do you do with your heart? Feel love for others

What do you do with your hands? Do practical things

Head Think Academic, intellectual ability

Heart Feel love for others Feelings like happiness, emotions like love and a moral attitude

Hands Do practical things Practical activity, social skills, common sense and the determination to take action to help

Materials Needed

- Three large sheets of paper
- Three marker pens for each group of three students

The teacher asks the students to think of (and list) all the things they do in a normal school week and in a normal holiday week at home.

The students discuss which category - Head, Heart or Hands - some of the activities students have listed fall into, and why some of the activities are important. For example: 'A Head (Academic) activity - I study maths. This is important because I can go shopping and easily add up what I owe, so I won't get cheated'; 'A Heart (Social) activity - I read a letter to my old neighbour who is blind.'





Head, Heart and Hands - The Importance of Our Actions Continued

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This is important because it is helping the old neighbour out. It is also a Head (academic) activity because without being able to read I would not have been able to do this'; 'A Hands (practical) activity – I help to water the vegetables. This is important because the activity is helping towards providing food'.

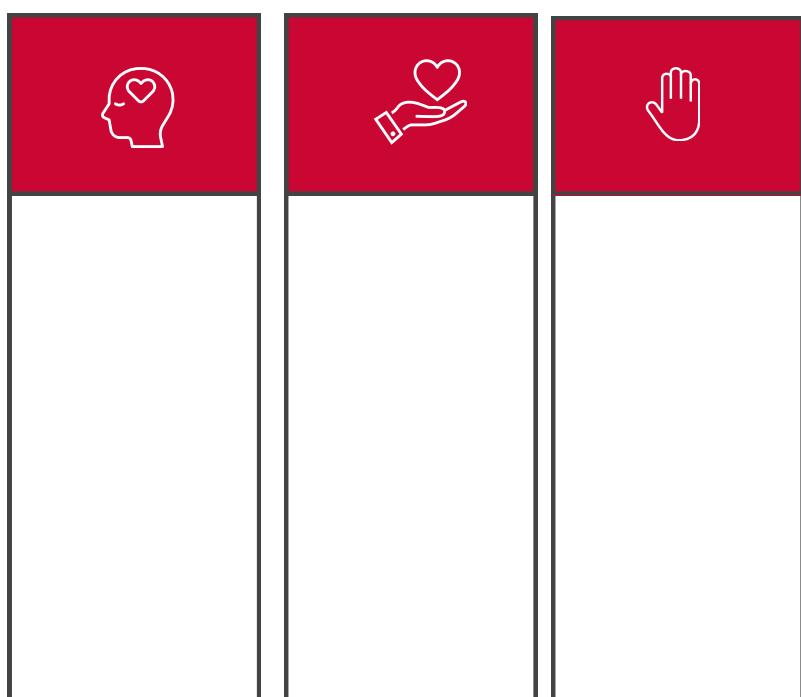
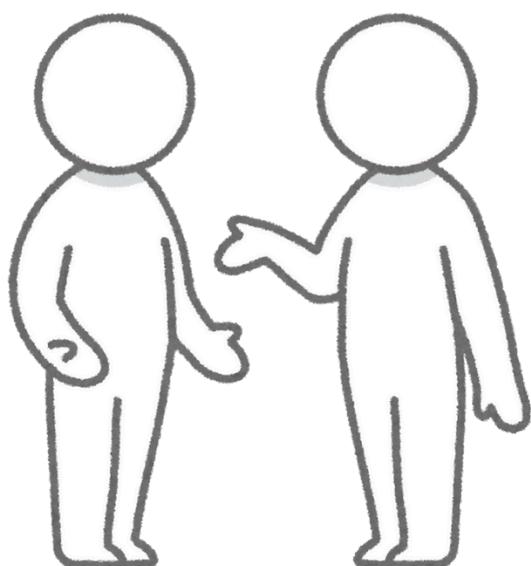
(NB: It is important that the students are aware that, as examples, Physical Education and Yoga (keeping the body healthy and fit), cooking the food (keeping the body healthy), bathing, cleaning the floor and washing up (keeping one's body and surroundings clean) are all important 'Hand' activities.)

The teacher divides the students into groups of three and gives each group three large sheets of paper and three marker pens.

Instructions to a group of students:

- Make titles for your three sheets of paper – one titled 'Head', one 'Heart' and one 'Hands'
- List your activities under Head, Heart or Hands. Some of the activities may fit into more than one of the categories
- Consider each activity and write a statement beside it stating why it is important

The students discuss which are more important, Head, Heart or Hands activities, using examples from the different activities listed by the students.





Head, Heart and Hands - The Importance of Our Actions Continued

Continuted

Pestalozzi believed in the all-round education of the whole person. This includes an education of the Head, the Heart and the Hands.

The 'Head' includes the academic and mental powers which cause a human to understand the world and to make reasonable judgements. These include perception, memory, imagination, thought and language. These powers of the mind are often described by Pestalozzi as 'mental' or 'intellectual' powers.

The 'Heart' includes: Feelings like happiness and peace that can be felt about but not towards others or the outside world; emotions like love, trust and gratitude that are felt towards others or the outside world; and feelings like 'this is wrong' or 'that is right' in which a judgement is made. So a person can feel happiness about having a friend (first type when emotion is felt about the friend but not towards the friend). This person can also feel love for the friend (second type when the emotion is felt towards the friend), and feel that the friend is trustworthy (third type when a judgement about the friend is made).

The 'Hands' includes a human's practical powers and activities, the social skills and the common sense, physical strength, ability and determination to put these powers to practical use in helping himself or herself and in helping others.

Although Pestalozzi believed that ability in all three areas – head, heart and hands – is important and that ability in all three areas needs to be balanced in each individual, he also recognized that the powers of the heart (our feelings, especially of love) are the most important of all. This is because only if we have positive feelings (of the heart) will we use our heads and hands to help ourselves and others.

