to readjust to new situations. It represents progressive change in behaviour. It enables him to satisfy interests to attain goal.'

According to F.S.Freeman,' Learning is the process of developing the ability to respond adequately to a situation which may or may not have been properly encountered.'

An analysis of these definitions reveals:

- Learning is the modification of behaviour through experience and training.
- It is a continuous process starts at birth and continues till death.
- It is a process to meet environmental requirements.
- As Crow ands Crow points out learning involves new ways of doing things and it operates in the individual's attempt to overcome obstacles or to adjust new situations.

So, the goal in learning can be classified into two broad categories

a) acquisition of knowledge, and
b) acquisition of skill.

Acquisition of knowledge means the bringing up of an intellectual. Acquisition of skill means emotional modification and control through learning.

Psychologists have studied learning in a variety of ways, from examining the salivation of dogs in response to meat powder, to how rats press a lever in the pursuit of obtaining some kind of reward, to offering children rewards for doing what is asked of them, to examining how people are able to tie their shoe laces.

Learning learns heavily on the concept of ***maturation*** in stages of biological and mental development. It is assumed that a child passes through all stages of development in reaching maturity. The teacher finds out what a child is ready for and then devises appropriate materials and methods. Much of the work on reading skills, for instance, makes use of the readiness concept.



Maturation : It is a natural developmental process. It is the growth which takes place within the individual. The maturational changes are the results of unfolding of inherited traits**.**



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.6. What are the objectives of education for backward children?

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Q.7. How can the physically backward children be educated?

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Q.8. How can the slow learners be educated properly? Explain.

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8.6 PHYSICALLY EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Let us now discuss physically exceptional children. You know that we acqaire knowledge through five sensory organs, viz; eye, ear, nose, tongue and skin. When any one of these organs is impaired, education of the child suffers. Some children have organic disorders and orthopaedic problems, that need special attention.

8.6.1 Visually Impaired Children

Blindness is regarded as the most severe and traumatic physical problems. The blind children can not read the usual text and may need some learning aids such as braille in case of total blindness. Then again, there are partially sighted students. The vision of some students can be corrected. Some students can read only large print. The teacher should identify such children and provide them special help in their study. In order to reduce reading load on the children, we can train them in listening skills. Audio cassette will be very helpful for such children.

8.6.2 Children with Speech Impairment

Listening plays a significant role in academic communication and learning. Hearing problems interfere with learning and performance. Hearing problems may also cause speech problems.

It is desirable to identify such students and take steps to meet their educational needs. The students displaying speech difficulty may be referred for a medical check-up. It is important to identify the degree of speech impairment. The parents also need to be informed.

8.6.3 Crippled or Orthopaedically Handicapped Children

Orthopaedic problems are generally related to muscles and joints of the body which affect mobility of limbs and extremities. The students with such impairment may find difficulty in attempting those learning activities which need physical movement. Though they possess learning capability similar to other children, they may have some specific problems in learning. The teachers can play important role in helping this type of students to overcome physical impairment. Parent's support can be sought in this regard. In case of severe disability, the students may be referred for specialised treatment. All these children need specialised techniques of training and education.

8.7 EMOTIONALLY AND SOCIALLY EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

The emotionally and socially exceptional children are those with behavioural problems and those who are socially mal-adjusted or the delinquents. We have already discussed delinquency as well as delinquants in details in the previous unit (Unit No 7).



8.8 LET US SUM UP

- In the beginning we focused on the meaning of the term 'exceptional children'. Exceptional children are those who deviate, in degree, in regard to physical, intellectual and emotional aspects from normal or average children.
- Exceptional children can be classified as intellectually exceptional i.e. either gifted or mentally retarded, physically impaired and emotionally or socially exceptional, i.e, the delinquent children.
- The objectives of the education for exceptional children, therefore, must be on the principles of equality, the children and adolescents should be motivated and encouraged to participate in group activities.
- The curriculum should include different subjects to cater to the needs of the exceptional children. Evaluation and revaluation of the children's progress must be done from time to time.
- We have also discussed, in detail, the meaning of gifted children, backward children and the slow learner, their characteristics and the

modification of behaviour which gives the learner new ways of doing things. It is an active process. Every organism in this world is engaged in adopting itself to the environment with whatever original endowments it possesses. Original endowments mean instincts, reflex actions etc. which are required to be changed with the changed environment. Learning therefore, means acquiring some new idea or new behaviour. It is a process by which the individual acquires various habits, attitudes and knowledge that are necessary to the demand of life. Broadly speaking, learning stands for all changes and modifications through experiences and activities that an individual undergoes during his life time. Learning is a relatively permanent change in the behaviour or performance of an individual which results from practice. In this way the behaviour of an individual undergoes change and gets modified through direct or indirect experience. But this modification need not always be for the better. Sometimes we should learn things to fulfill the requirement of a particular environment.

9.3.1 Definitions of Learning

It is very difficult to give a universally acceptable definition of learning because various theories developed by psychologists attempt to define the term from different angles. Some of the definitions are:

According to Gates and others, “Learning is modification of behaviour though experience”

According to Webster’s dictionary learning is “The act of experience of one that learns; knowledge of skill acquired by instruction or study, modification of behavioural tendency by experience .’

According to Gardner Murphy ‘The term learning covers every modification in behaviour to meet environmental requirements.’

According to Crow and Crow, ‘Learning is the acquisition of knowledge, habits and attitudes. It involves new ways of doing things and it operates in an individual’s attempts to overcome obstacles or

Learning as used here refers to the concerted activity that increases the capacity and willingness of individuals, groups, organizations and communities to acquire and productively apply new knowledge and skills, to grow and mature and to adapt successfully to changes and challenges. Such learning empowers individuals and organizations to make wise choices, solve problems and break new ground. In particular, it is sustainable; it is a lifelong, renewable process for people and for the institutions that serve people. Learning certainly includes academic studies and occupational training through high school and beyond. But it also encompasses the physical, cognitive, emotional and social development of children in the earliest years of their lives.

In educational psychology, learning is the most essential component. Educational psychology is the study of human behaviour can be modified through learning. The child starts learning as soon as he comes in contact with the environment. We come across this phenomenon in almost every walk of life.

Learning situations are most natural and common in life and everyone of us learn one thing or the other although we may not be aware of it. Actually, learning involves new ways of doing things. For example, a child touches a burning candle and gets burnt and he withdraws. Another time when he faces a burning thing he takes no time to withdraw himself away. He learns to avoid not only burning candle but also all burning things. Then we say that the child has learned that if he touches a flame, he gets burnt.

Learning is a relatively permanent change in behaviour or knowledge that comes from experience or training. Experience and training are found to play a dominant role in moulding and shaping the behaviour of an individual from the very beginning. This unit is intended to provide the concept of learning along with its characteristics and nature, laws of learning and methods of learning.

9.3 MEANING OF LEARNING

When one is stimulated by a new situation one tends to respond and this response is known as learning. Learning leads to a process of

special education programme for them, those are suitable according their needs.



8.9 FURTHER READING

1) Aggarwal, J.C., "Essentials of Educational Psychology", Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi.

2) Safaya R.N., Shulka, C.S. Bhatia B.D., "Modern Educational Psychology", Dhanpat Rai Publishing Company (P) Ltd. New Delhi.



8.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No. 1: An exceptional child is he or she who deviates from normal ones in respect to physical, mental and social characteristics.

Ans to Q. No. 2: The different types of exceptional children are:-

- **The intellectually exceptional-** the gifted children or the mentally retarded and slow learners.
- **The physically exceptional-** visually impaired, hearing and speech impaired or the crippled.
- **The emotionally and socially exceptional-** the delinquent children.

Ans to Q. No. 3: The principles to be followed for the education of exceptional children are:-

- All children must be treated as equal and their needs be identified.
- All children and adolescents must be encouraged to participate in the school activities so that they do not feel neglected and are motivated to learn.
- Parents must cooperate with teachers to make education of the exceptional children effective.

Ans to Q. No. 4: Gifted children are those who have very high I.Q. and are more educable than normal or average children. The characteristics of gifted children are:- (a) They have very high intelligence, (b) have varied interest, (c) have high concentration for a longer period, (d) can adjust better in the environment.

Ans to Q. No. 5: The backward child is one who lags behind the normal children in respect to physical, intellectual and social capabilities. The main characteristics are:- (a) a backward

child cannot learn speedily, (b) learning is mostly through initiations ability of critical thinking is lacking, (c) is not easily motivated to learn; (d) usually suffers from feelings of inferiority and insecurity.

Answer to Q. No. 6:

a) The main objectives of education for backward children is to make them self reliant.

(b) The education programme should make the backward children socially adequate.

(c) Opportunities to develop certain practical skills so that they get employment and earn their livelihood. This will remove their feelings of insecurity and inferiority.

Ans to Q. No. 7: The physically challenged should not be discriminated for their backwardness. Suitable equipments and aids must be provided for their education. Special schools for these children should be set up. Teachers with special training should be appointed to impart education to the physically exceptional children.

Ans to Q. No. 8: The mentally retarded and slow learners need special care. These children must be given short and easy assignments and the specially trained teaching personnel must handle these children with immense patience. The teachers must also appreciate the creativity in these children so that the learners are motivated to learn more.



8.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A)Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q.1. What is meant by 'exceptional children'? What are their characteristics?

Q.2. What are the needs of exceptional children?

Q.3. What are the objectives of education for exceptional children?

Q.4. What types of education is needed for the slow learners?

B) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q.1. How can you identify the gifted children? How should be the suitable education programme for gifted children?

Q.2. What are the characteristics of the backward children? What are the objectives of education for the backward children?

Q.3. What are the characteristics of the slow learners? What types of education should be designed for these learners?

UNIT 9 : LEARNING

UNIT STRUCTURE

9.1 Learning Objectives
9.2 Introduction
9.3 Meaning of Learning
9.3.1 Definition of Learning
9.3.2 Nature of Learning
9.4 Laws of Learning
9.5 Methods of Learning
9.6 Let Us Sum Up
9.7 Further Reading
9.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
9.9 Model Questions

9.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- define the concept of learning
- identify the process of learning
- explain the laws of learning, and
- discuss the methods of learning.

9.2 INTRODUCTION

Learning is a natural and common experience in life. Everyone loves to learn. All living creatures learn. But human alone learns to rationalize. Learning is the key process in the behaviour of human beings. Generally, learning process begins from the birth of a child and continues till death. Learning process begins consciously or unconsciously in the life of every living being from its very infancy. Learning may be described as a form of growth or change in a person, which brings a change or which modifies one's behavioural pattern.