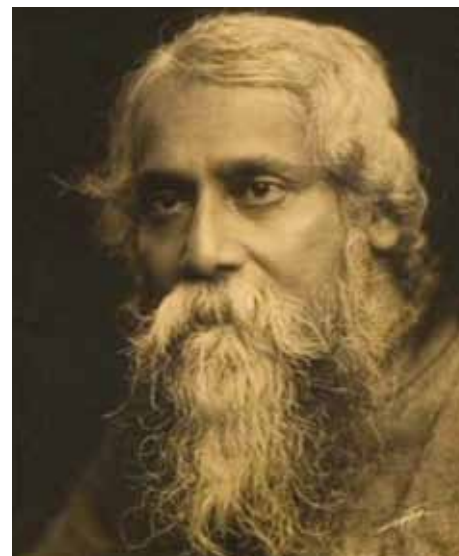




Rabindranath Tagore (1861 - 1941)

INTRODUCTION:

Rabindranath Tagore was born on 7th May, 1861 in the Jorasanko mansion in Calcutta. A Bengali polymath, he reshaped his region's literature and music. He became the first non-European to win the Nobel Prize for Literature for "Gitanjali", his book of poems. As a humanist, universalist internationalist, and strident anti-nationalist he denounced the British Raj and advocated independence from Britain. As an exponent of the Bengal Renaissance, he advanced a vast canon that comprised paintings, sketches and doodles, hundreds of texts, and some two thousand songs; his legacy endures also in the institution he founded, Visvabharati University.



AS AN EDUCATIONIST

Tagore despised rote classroom schooling. Tagore, visiting Santa Barbara in 1917, conceived a new type of university: he sought to "make Santiniketan the connecting thread between India and the world [and] a world center for the study of humanity somewhere beyond the limits of nation and geography.". The school, which he named Visva-Bharati, had teaching often done under trees. He contributed his Nobel Prize money and his duties as steward-mentor at Santiniketan kept him busy.

In general, he envisioned an education that was deeply rooted in one's immediate surroundings but connected to the cultures of the wider world, predicated upon pleasurable learning and individualized to the personality of the child. He felt that a curriculum should revolve organically around nature with classes held in the open air under the trees to provide for a spontaneous appreciation of the fluidity of the plant and animal kingdoms, and seasonal changes. Children sat on hand-woven mats beneath the trees. Nature walks and excursions were a part of the curriculum and students were encouraged to follow the life cycles of insects, birds and plants. Class schedules were made flexible to allow for shifts in the weather or special attention to natural phenomena, and seasonal festivals were created for the children by Tagore.

AIMS OF EDUCATION ACCORDING TO TAGORE:

The aims of education as reflected in educational institution founded by Rabindranath Tagore in Santiniketan are as follows:

- 1. Self Realization:** Spiritualism is the essence of humanism. Manifestation of personality depends upon the self-realization and spiritual knowledge of individual.
- 2. Intellectual Development:** Tagore also greatly emphasized the intellectual development of the child. By intellectual development he means development of imagination, creative free thinking, constant curiosity and alertness of the mind. Child should be free to adopt his own way learning which will lead to all round development.
- 3. Physical Development:** Tagore's educational philosophy also aims at the physical development of the child. He gave much importance to sound and healthy physique. Yoga, games & sports are prescribed in Santiniketan as an integral part of the education system.
- 4. Love for Humanity:** Tagore held that education can teach people to realize oneness of the globe. Education for international understanding and universal brotherhood is another important aim of his educational philosophy.
- 5. Freedom:** Freedom is considered as an integral aspect of human development. Education is a man-making process, it explores the innate power that exists within the man. It is not an imposition rather a liberal process that provides utmost freedom to the individual for his all round development.
- 6. Co-relation of Objects:** Co-relation exists with God, man and nature. A peaceful world is only possible when correlation between man and nature will be established.
- 7. Mother tongue as the medium of Instruction:** Language is the true vehicle of self-expression. Man can freely express his thought in his mother-tongue. Tagore has emphasized mother tongue as the medium of instruction for the child's education.
- 8. Moral and Spiritual Development:** Tagore emphasized moral and spiritual training in his educational thought. Moral and spiritual education is more important than bookish knowledge for an integral development of human personality. There must be an adequate provision for the development of selfless activities, co-operation and love fellow feeling and sharing among the students in educational institutions.
- 9. Social Development:** According to Tagore, "Brahma" the supreme soul manifests himself through men and other creatures. Since He is the source of all human-beings and creatures, so all are equal. Rabindranath Tagore therefore said, "service to man is service to god". All should develop social relationships and fellow-feeling from the beginnings of one's life. Education aims at developing the individual personality as well as social characters which enables him to live as a worthy being.



For further reading please visit:

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rabindranath_Tagore
- <http://www.infed.org/thinkers/tagore.htm>
- <http://www.preservearticles.com/201105066344/contribution-of-rabindranath-tagore-in-education.html>