**Curiosity leads to growth**

**[Muhammad Omar Iftikhar](https://nation.com.pk/Columnist/muhammad-omar-iftikhar)**

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The essence of education may remain in the concept of classroom learning. However, children must be carriers of awareness by constantly questioning topics they are unaware of.

Children become curious when their environment compels them to become lifelong learners. Most of the time, the adults at home compel children to remain quiet or keep them busy with their toys. Children’s questions must be addressed in a meaningful manner.

Smartphones have become the digital parents of children. Either a child wants to keep looking at the screen or the parents hand their children a smartphone to keep them occupied. In either case, real learning is lost.

Children are curious by birth and so are adults. However, children tend to be more expressive and intuitive. Parents, unfortunately, do not want to get into the hassle of explaining concepts to their children. This is where the smartphone enters.

Children have been observed scrolling YouTube and watching cartoons and animated movies. Their attention should be on their parents or elder siblings from whom they acquire life’s essential values.

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Parents and adults must create an environment at home where learning becomes a lifestyle for children. Any home that gives value to learning does not restrict children from asking questions.

Reading must be encouraged in every household. After the learning acquired from a mother’s lap, the child learns by reading. Elders must give children storybooks, especially the ones with illustrations. However, children do what they observe.

If they watch their elders read, they would want to do the same. This is why certain households have a generation of readers—ranging from seven-year-olds to seventy-year-olds.

Reading broadens the mind and brings to the fore new concepts and theories about life, society, and the world. Associated with reading is storytelling. Both acts compel the readers or the listeners to imagine.

Storytelling must be encouraged at school and home. Teachers must share stories with children, especially those who are in the pre-nursery or primary classes.

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Grandparents have always been the beacons of storytelling at homes. They share life’s stories and fables in a way that children enjoy listening to and retaining in the mind.

Unfortunately, storytelling has been fading with the rise of social media and digital media. Stories are being shared but they may not have the same impact on children.

The attention span of a child is too short to remain focused on one activity. Human contact is essential for children to keep them engaged in a healthy conversation.

Schools across Pakistan must initiate a period of storytelling in their everyday schedule. The teacher should share a story with the students and have a casual discussion about it. Furthermore, children should be encouraged to share their stories. This will instil in them the confidence to speak, train them as public speakers and add value to their creative output. Encouragement from their teacher will have a positive impact on their minds.