



## Teaching Tales Learning Trails

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### Book Review

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The contribution of this book to the available tomes on education is unique. It presents many of the issues that arise in any school: the expected focus on examinations, methods of correction of student assignments, the inevitable staff meetings, inclusion in the classroom of children with special needs, the Principal's role in mentoring the teachers, supporting the talents and interests of all students and so on. Each theme is handled differently; one of the cases is presented as a teacher's confidential diary entries, another takes the form of email correspondence between the parents of a child, where the father is out of the country and the third is a dialogue between a child and the Counsellor. These strategies help the writers to be candid and to be treated as insiders in the episodes. Understandably, almost all of the narratives are fictionalized, but the ring of real life is a constant.

Comparing children, be they siblings, neighbours or class-fellows on appearance, talents or school performance seems to be so common in our culture, that people are not aware of how comparisons are frequently odious. Sometimes, unfavourable comparisons leave a scar for a lifetime. A stereotype tends to cling.

Children with special needs or special gifts pose a threat to teachers who prefer uniformity in class room performance and behavior. This aspect is also raised and resolved in a couple of narratives.