

The College of Teachers
Inaugural Lecture: Professor Rosemary Sage
Monday, 16 November, The Palace of Westminster, 6pm



Does education tap only half our brain power?
Unravelling concerns about standards

Are clamours for better academic standards versus claims of them rising confusing you? Dispute rages as to whether education matches society's needs with employers pinpointing problems with both spoken and written communication in workplaces. Reasons for this are uncovered with remedies suggested to review, reflect and refine present practices.

Our story begins in the brain, resembling two halves of a walnut with unlimited power. Knowing how to harness this to think and communicate is crucial. The right-side deals in wholes to give the overview whereas the left deals in parts to provide details. An example of how both work together is a jigsaw task. Unless you have an outline picture in mind you wrestle with the pieces. So, the right-brain *synthesises information* using images whilst the left *analyses facts* using words. The right-brain has its growth spurt from 4-7 years with the left one then kicking in. Learning problems arise from a limited right-brain strategy because an early analytic focus in education hampers growth, resulting in a strong grasp of facts but weak grasp of meaning.

In general, education is structured in left-brain mode. Teaching is sequenced with students progressing in a linear direction. Subject input and output is mainly verbal, targeting facts before feelings and meanings. Time schedules are followed with students seated in rows, converging on answers which are graded. There is little room for the dreamer or artificer. You will not find curricula courses in imagination, visualisation, intuition or inventiveness. Fortunately, this development occurs in spite of the system but our culture is so strongly slanted towards rewarding left-brain abilities that inevitably potential is lost. To remedy this, a *Communication Opportunity Group Strategy* stimulates the *verbal* left-brain and *non-verbal* right-brain for better performances. Studies show how a holistic approach solves learning problems. The question is can you be persuaded to believe this? Experiments will have you racing away with both brains in full throttle! Being whole-brained rather than half-brained is the prize!

Rosemary Sage is a qualified speech and language therapist, psychologist and teacher with experience in health and education fields. She is visiting professor at the elite Nara Women's University, Japan, and until recently Professor of Communication at Liverpool Hope University and visiting professor at the University of Havana. Presently, Rosemary is a Consultant Education Advisor to the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Post-Graduate Medical Deanery. Her research in the area of thinking, communication and learning has led to advisory roles in high achieving countries. Some of her books have been translated into several languages.

The event will be held at 1800 at House of Commons, Portcullis House, Bridge Street, London, SW1A 2LW, and will be followed by a reception. Admission is free of charge, but by ticket only. If you would like to attend, please let Sumaira Paracha know by Friday 6 November, email sparacha@collegeofteachers.ac.uk Telephone (020) 7911 5536.