Answer the following questions in about 500 words each:

1. Discuss the contribution of any two pioneers in the field of Alternative Education from International arena.

Ans: Herbert Kohl (educator)

Herbert R. Kohl (born August 22, 1937) is an educator best known for his advocacy of progressive alternative education and as the author of more than thirty books on education. He founded the 1960s Open School movement and is credited with coining the term “open classroom.” In 1967, 36 Children (New American Library, New York, 1967) was also published, and Kohl was drawn into national debates on the education of African American and other minority student and into conversations on school reform and the nature of teaching and learning. He is still engaged in them now having lived through cycles of reform and reaction, none of which succeeded in creating excellent education for the children of the poor. The problems persist, and he still believes that by hard, imaginative effort, they can be solved.

In 1968, Kohl moved to Berkeley, California, where his family lived for the next nine years. He was a Visiting Associate Professor, half time in the English Department and half in the School of Education, at the University of California, Berkeley during the spring semester of 1968. Then, he received a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York (September 1968 to June 1969) to work with Allan Kaprow, the “happener” who was a Professor of Art at the State University of New York, Stony Brook, on teacher education and the development of creative curriculum that crossed disciplinary and artistic boundaries. Working with Kaprow freed him to cross boundaries, work with students in theater, and experiment with interactive media. The unlikely marriage, made by Margaret Mahoney of Carnegie, had a profound influence on Kohl’s teaching and thinking about learning.

An alternative high school, Other Ways emerged during that collaboration and it was supported, in 1969, by a grant from the Ford Foundation (September 1969 to June 1970). It was one of the first attempts to create a series of alternative educational options within public school systems and part of the free school movement.

In 1972, Kohl became co-director of the teacher education program at the Center for Open Learning and Teaching, and he taught a combined kindergarten–first grade at a Berkeley public elementary school while he was acting as a master teacher for its teacher education students. For ten years (1970 to 1982), he wrote a monthly column for Teacher Magazine, and he contributed many reviews and articles for publications such as The New York Times, The Times, The Times, The Nation, and The New York Review of Books. Kohl also wrote a number of books during that period including The Open Classroom, Golden Boy as Anthony Cool, Reading, How to, A Book of Puzzlements, Mathematical Puzzlements, On Teaching, Growing With Your Children, and Half the House.

Kohl’s writing has had significant influence on other education writers and theorists including John Holt, Jonathan Kozol, Richard Farson, Ivan Illich, Paul Goodman, George Dennison, James Herndon, Charles E. Silberman, John Taylor Gatto, Neil Postman and others.

In 1976, Herbert and Judith Kohl, his wife, wrote The View from the Oak, which won the 1978 National Book Award, Children’s Literature. In 1977, they moved to Point Arena, California, and established the Coastal Ridge Research and Education Center. Over the years, it has sponsored a summer camp, where he taught theater, and hosted a number of seminars on education and social justice. Such seminars have involved educators such as Myles Horton and Septum Clarke of the Highlander Center, Joseph and Helen Featherstone, William Ayers, Len Salt, Ira Glaser, Norm Fruchter, Asa Hilliard, Courtney Cadzson, Phillip Lopate, Cynthia Brown, and Ron Jones. The Center also worked with Amnesty International developing a curriculum on conscience and human rights and with the ACLU developing a Bill of Rights curriculum.

2. Explain the concept Education for All Development Index (EDI)? Discuss the four goals measured in the EDI and their corresponding indicators with examples.

Ans: The Education for All goals represent more than the sum of their individual parts. While each is important by its own, it is also useful to have a means of indicating achievement of Education for All as a whole. The EFA Development Index (EDI), a composite measure of progress across the whole EFA agenda, provides one way of doing so. Ideally, it should reflect all six Education for All goals but, due to data constraints, the standard index currently focuses only on the four most easily quantifiable goals: universal primary education, adult literacy, the quality of education and gender parity and equality. The remaining two goals, early childhood care and education (ECCE) and meeting learning needs of youth and adults are still excluded mainly because of data limitations and conceptual reasons in particular for the latter goal. However, the development of an ECCE index since last year is particularly promising, allowing the EDI to be broadened to five goals in the future if the data coverage is improved. The goal on learning needs of youth and adults remains difficult to grasp and progress towards it is still not easy to measure and monitor.

The EDI captures four goals of the six:

- Universal primary education (Goal 2), measured by the primary adjusted net enrolment ratio (ANER);
- Adult literacy (Part of Goal 4: achieving a 50% improvement in adult literacy by 2015), measured by the literacy rate for those aged 15 and above;
- Gender. Parity and Equality (Goal 5), measured by the gender-specific EFA index (GEI), an average of the gender parity indexes of the primary and secondary gross enrolment ratios and the adult literacy rate;
- Quality of Education (Goal 6), measured by the survival rate to grade 5;

The EDI value for a given country is the arithmetic mean of indicators measuring each of its components. The EDI falls between 0 and 1, with 1 representing full achievement of Education for All across the four goals.

3. Critically examine the role of any education institution from your state in the field of alternative education.

Ans: Home Schooling in India is a form of alternative education in which education is provided to children at home by parents or by tutors rather than in public or private schools. This conforms to the prevalence of similar homeschooling option for parents in many countries. But it does not conform to the same approaches, attitude, practices, and trends found elsewhere in the world. The highlight of this article is as such directed towards home education or home-based learning in India. Home education in India is offered by various agencies enabling an increase in the resources for imparting and promoting education. Some of these are in the form of associations, education providers, support groups forums etc. Most of these are active on the internet and that's why they remain largely unknown to the common people. Moreover, homeschooling is more
prominent in major urban Indian cities, like Bangalore, Chennai, Kolkata, Mumbai, New Delhi and Pune. In other parts of India, homeschooling has only a minimal presence. The estimated number of homeschoolers has been put to 500-1000 children as per the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA), a non-profit advocacy organization working for the education of children.

To begin, homeschooling is initiated when a family decides to teach their child at home and a parent assumes responsibility for the formal instruction of his or her child. Whether they resort to private tutors, later on, is a different matter. Next step is securing funds, choosing curriculum content, and determining the gradation and progress of the child. This practice makes this type of schooling associated with the term 'privatization of education' as parents or guardians provide their children with a learning environment as an alternative to public or private schools outside the home. Before the introduction of compulsory school attendance laws, most childhood education occurred within the family or community. Homeschooling isn’t a recent or a sudden development in India. Indian History itself reveals various such examples wherein Shishyas (students) were taught by Gurus (teachers) conforming to the tradition of Guru-Shishya. Shishyas were taught a wide range of subjects like administration, combat, politics, sports etc. While some of this education was provided by experts, some were also provided by Sages within the premises of the house. Homeschooling in India, in the modern sense, is different. There are fixed rules for home education in India if a candidate appears for examinations. Parents use a curriculum prescribed by NIOS or IGCSE and then appear for the examinations. Children can even take examinations as private candidates at a regular school.

Second way follows a liberal approach; parents may design their own curriculum by referring to syllabi of different boards. It is up to the parents or their children to decide whether they want to register with a board and appear for examinations.

**Main Bodies that are involved in the Academic Study of Homeschoolers in India**

**NIOS**

National Institute of Open Schooling is a board of an open school in India. It provides relevant continuing education at school stage, up to pre-degree level through open learning system. Homeschoolers can directly use NIOS to take the exams for class X and XII. They are only required to register with the body a year before they want to take the exam. Certificates issued by NIOS carry the same recognition as other Boards and are valid for taking competitive exams.

**NIOS offers following Courses/Programmes of Study through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode**

**SANTINIKETAN**

At Santiniketan the environment is always present in one’s consciousness. It becomes a part of one’s being here, more than anywhere else, which is why it grows on you and having lived here once it is difficult to forget. The Santiniketan environment has changed, grown and evolved with its community.

Santiniketan is situated at an elevation of 200 feet above sea-level giving it a slight bulge in an otherwise flat landscape. The ground slopes gradually to 100 feet above sea-level near the Ajay river about 3 miles to the south and the Kopai stream some 2 miles to the north. The southern boundary of Santiniketan merges into a vast plain of rice fields. On its northern fringes were the khoal lands with deeply indented gullies caused by erosion over denuded land. The District Gazetteer of Birbhum records that in pre-British days, Birbhum had an extensive forest cover. Progressive denudation of forests played havoc with the porous laterite soil. During the hot months, fierce dust storms scattered the loose soil far and wide. During the rains heavy erosion took place as after every downpour water rushed through undulating land creating gullies and gorges in its relentless march.

In the middle of the 19th century, Maharshi Devendranath Tagore found solace and serenity in this barren land. He purchased the land and started the construction of a house rightaway. This house, named, Santiniketan, was built in the early 1860s the name later came to denote the entire area. A beautiful garden was laid out on all sides of the house. The top-layer of gritty dry soil was removed and filled with rich soil brought from outside. Trees were planted for fruit and shade.

Change in the environment had begun.

As a child, Rabindranath accompanied his father to Santiniketan and recalled, much later in, Reminiscences, Though I was yet a mere child my father did not place any restriction on my wanderings. In the hollows of the sandy soil the rain water had ploughed deep furrows, carving out miniature mountain ranges full of red gravel and pebbles of various shapes through which ran tiny streams, revealing the geography of Lilliput... I was never tired of roaming about among those miniature hills and dales in hopes of lighting on something never known before.

I was the Livingstone of this undiscovered land which looked as if seen through the wrong end of a telescope. Everything there, the dwarfed date palms, the scruffy wild plums and the stunted jambolans, was in keeping with the miniature mountain ranges, the little rivulet and the tiny fish I had discovered.

When, in 1901, Rabindranath started his Brahmacharyaasrama, he found the asrama "flanked on the south by a sal avenue and an entrance gate covered by a canopy of Madhavi creepers. To the east was an orchard of mango trees. Towards the west were a few palmrya palm, jamun, casuarina and, here and there, some coconut palms. Standing on the north-western outskirt of the old asrama were the two ancient Chhatim trees." Rabindranath’s choice of Santiniketan for his school was definitely because of its environment. In "My School", he has written:

"I selected a beautiful place, far away from the contamination of town life, for I myself, in my young days, was brought up in that town in the heart of India, Calcutta, and all the time I had a sort of homesickness for some distant lane somewhere, where my heart, my soul, could have its true emancipation... I knew that the mind had its hunger for the ministrations of nature, mother-nature, and so I selected this spot where the sky is unobstructed to the verge of the horizon. There the mind could have its fearless freedom to create its own dreams and the seasons could come with all their colours and movements and beauty into the very heart of the human dwelling."

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The celebration of seasons was always a feature in the asrama. These festivals came to be associated with the special culture of this institution and the introduction of traditional Indian forms and rituals in organising these festivals, including the decoration of the site, use of flowers, alpana, chanting of Vedic hymns and blowing of conch-shells gave them a new dimension, aesthetically attractive, intrinsically Indian yet totally secular. Rabindranath felt, it was necessary that an affinity be built between the students’ minds and the flora and fauna of the asrama.

It was always the objective in Santiniketan that learning would be a part of life’s natural growth. The first step towards this objective was to establish in the child a sense of oneness with nature. A child has to be aware of his surroundings - the trees, birds and animals around him. The mind is deprived if one is indifferent to the world outside. Rabindranath said we concentrate on learning from books and neglect the knowledge that is freely available on all sides.

From the beginning, he wanted his students to be aware of their environment, be in communication with it, probe it, make experiments and collect data and specimens. And to guide them he wanted teachers who could go beyond book-learning, who were seekers themselves and who would find joy in the process of learning. In this context one might mention Tejeschandra Sen, who along with Jagadananda Roy, was one of the pioneering teachers of Nature Study in India. They were able to instil in children a love for and curiosity about the natural world. Lord Haldane, visiting Santiniketan in 1954 was much impressed with Tejeschandra’s method of teaching.

In the mid-fifties, to prevent further erosion by the khoai, soil embankments were raised which thereby created little lakes of moderate size. The bunding of the Mayurakshi river some distance on the north-west brought Santiniketan a branch of an irrigation canal which forms its northern boundary. Thus started, the greening of khoai brought about significant changes in the environment. An extensive forest has been created where deer graze.

However, Santiniketan today is a veritable botanists’ paradise. Plants, trees, creepers and orchids from various parts of India and abroad have been made to flourish in this once semi-desert. Rabindranath himself took a deep interest in planting trees. He introduced the Vriksharopana, or tree-planting ceremony in 1928, popularising the concept. His son, Rathindranath, was a horticulturist by training and introduced a number of new trees and plants into Santiniketan. Fortunately, the Santiniketan community in general shares this interest in trees and gardening. The seasons are clearly marked in Santiniketan; one knows the end of one season and the beginning of the other with the sights and smell of blossoms in bloom.

One cannot write of the Santiniketan environment without mentioning Ramkinkar Baiz. His outdoor sculpture is a part of our environment, not meant to be exhibited in museums. Children grow up with them, treating them as much a part of the environment as the trees and sky. Made of locally available material, these sculptural pieces depict life in and around Santiniketan. The Santhal Family or the Call of the Mill are so integral to Santiniketan that they do not evoke the same emotions when seen in its bronze cast in the capital of India! When Sujata was placed in Sangit Bhavana by Ramkinkar, walking towards the Buddha, Nandalal Bose planted eucalyptus trees around it to accentuate its height and blend it in a natural scene.

In the paintings of Nandalal Bose and Binodebihari Mukhpadhyay, the Santiniketan landscape has been captured for posterity. Surendranath Kar, Nandalal Bose and Rathindranath Tagore were acutely aware of the environment and took great pains to design buildings and houses that would merge with its surroundings.

However, although the outskirts have developed and altered, the main campus or core area of the asrama has undergone comparatively lesser change and retains the quiet, picturesque, sylvan atmosphere that gave Santiniketan its distinctive charm.

The same joyous atmosphere is evident and the children look as happy and free as ever. Classes even to this day are held under the trees. The first day of rains is still celebrated with an outing, barefoot and sans umbrellas. The spirit of Rabindranath lives on in Santiniketan; one needs to be conscious of it and tread gently, lest one should disturb it.