

Honeydew

Textbook in English for Class VIII



0849




Foreword

THE National Curriculum Framework (NCF), 2005, recommends that children's life at school must be linked to their life outside the school. This principle marks a departure from the legacy of bookish learning which continues to shape our system and causes a gap between the school, home and community. The syllabi and textbooks developed on the basis of NCF signify an attempt to implement this basic idea. They also attempt to discourage rote learning and the maintenance of sharp boundaries between different subject areas. We hope these measures will take us significantly further in the direction of a child-centered system of education outlined in the National Policy of Education (1986).

The success of this effort depends on the steps that school principals and teachers will take to encourage children to reflect on their own learning and to pursue imaginative activities and questions. We must recognise that, given space, time and freedom, children generate new knowledge by engaging with the information passed on to them by adults. Treating the prescribed textbook as the sole basis of examination is one of the key reasons why other resources and sites of learning are ignored. Inculcating creativity and initiative is possible if we perceive and treat children as participants in learning, not as receivers of a fixed body of knowledge.

These aims imply considerable change in school routines and mode of functioning. Flexibility in the daily time-table is as necessary as rigour in implementing the annual calendar so that the required number of teaching days are actually devoted to teaching. The methods used for teaching and evaluation will also determine how effective this textbook proves for making children's life at school a happy experience, rather than



a source of stress or boredom. Syllabus designers have tried to address the problem of curricular burden by restructuring and reorienting knowledge at different stages with greater consideration for child psychology and the time available for teaching. The textbook attempts to enhance this endeavour by giving higher priority and space to opportunities for contemplation and wondering, discussion in small groups, and activities requiring hands-on experience.

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New Delhi
30 November 2007

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CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

Part IV A (Article 51 A)

Fundamental Duties

Fundamental Duties – It shall be the duty of every citizen of India —

- (a) to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag and the National Anthem;
- (b) to cherish and follow the noble ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom;
- (c) to uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India;
- (d) to defend the country and render national service when called upon to do so;
- (e) to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women;
- (f) to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture;
- (g) to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers, wildlife and to have compassion for living creatures;
- (h) to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform;
- (i) to safeguard public property and to abjure violence;
- (j) to strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of endeavour and achievement;
- (k) who is a parent or guardian, to provide opportunities for education to his child or, as the case may be, ward between the age of six and fourteen years.





Notes for the Teacher



General

- ❖ Learning a language means using it for a wide variety of purposes. Language is best acquired when attention is focused on meaning, not on form.
- ❖ Words and phrases not closely related to objects and action remain empty and lifeless to young learners. Language comes alive when presented in meaning-making contexts.
- ❖ Words/phrases that are used to accomplish many useful purposes follow a certain system inherent in the language itself.
- ❖ Learners become familiar with the system through continuous exposure to the language in meaning-focused situations.
- ❖ Interaction, discussion and sharing of ideas among learners provide opportunities that elicit 'real' information about them and their experiences and opinions.
- ❖ Encourage learners to work in pairs and small groups and let them go beyond the textbook by providing a variety of language inputs for spontaneous and natural use of language.
- ❖ Build on the exercises given in the textbook and design more tasks/activities in keeping with learners' interests, needs and surroundings. Employ free-response exercises (with more than one possible response).
- ❖ Promote reading habits through story reading (not merely teaching stories as texts), story retelling, choral reading, shared reading, etc.
- ❖ Create class libraries for exchange of books and shared reading. The library may also move with children to the next higher class.
- ❖ Poems need not be taught line by line, word by word. You may give a model reading but let every child read the poem on her/his own to feel the richness of language, rhythm and music of words. Exercises accompanying the poem are more for understanding the poem as a whole than for teaching language items.
- ❖ Advertisement is also literary genre. You will find that some advertisements have been given on the inner covers of the textbook. Have a discussion in the class on these concerns. You



may ask them to do a project on these social issues and concerns. Such as educating the girlchild, environment protection.

- ❖ Encourage learners to tell new stories, narrate anecdotes, compose short poems in English or their own language, talk about pictures, illustrations in the book and cartoons in newspapers/magazines. Don't get anxious about the errors they will make. Constant exposure, practice and correction in the form of feedback will help them improve themselves by and by.
- ❖ Every page has a column for words and meanings. Encourage children to write down other words they find difficult, along with their meanings, in this column.



UNITS 1-3



The Best Christmas Present in the World

Some suggestions given below are applicable to all prose lessons in the book.

- ❖ A war story against the backdrop of Christmas, a festival marked by family reunion, exchange of presents and universal bonhomie. Connie, aged 101, receives a present from a stranger whom she mistakes for her long-awaited husband. What is the present — the letter or the mistaken identity of the visitor?
- ❖ Spend about 20 minutes discussing the dates and events given under **Before you read**. Since the answers are given later in the book, the focus should be on the nature of each event — whether, in human terms, the event recalls defeat and destruction or endeavour and success. Let children express their own views. Even if their observations do not reveal any understanding of the nature of events, the discussion session will provide an excellent base for initiating work on the story under reference.
- ❖ The story is sectioned into three parts. Parts II and III may be sectioned further according to convenience and time available.
- ❖ Discuss each illustration with reference to the story. Illustrations are given for better comprehension and sharper visual appeal.
- ❖ **Comprehension Check** at the end of each section is a recall of what children have read so far. Design while-reading comprehension exercises in the form of factual comprehension questions, multiple choice questions and/or completion of sentences, etc.

Here is one example in three formats:

Factual or inferential comprehension (Answer the question in your own words.)

Why is Jim 'ashamed to say' that Fritz 'began it'?

Multiple choice (Mark the right answer.)

Jim is 'ashamed to say' that Fritz 'began it' because

- (i) he didn't know how to do it.
- (ii) he wishes he had done it first.
- (iii) he didn't want to do it.

Sentence completion : (Choose the right item and complete the sentence.)

But it is true, _____, that Fritz began it.
(much to my delight / shame / dismay)

A related item here is the use of 'begin' and 'start' in appropriate contexts.

Use 'begin' or 'start' appropriately in the following sentences.

- (i) What time do you _____ work in the morning?
- (ii) If we want to get there, we should _____ now.
- (iii) The film _____ at 7 pm.
- (iv) No matter how you try, the car won't _____.

Very often 'begin' and 'start' can be used in the same way, though 'start' is more common in informal speech. [See sentences (i) and (iii)]

In some constructions only 'start' can be used. [See sentences (ii) and (iv)].

Questions under **working with the text** to be answered orally, later to be written in the copy book.

At the end of the lesson, draw children's attention to the two quotations given in the box. Let them discuss how the story illustrates the same ideas. Then, ask them to find sentences in the story which appeal to them most. Here are some examples:

- We agreed about everything and he was my enemy.
- No one dies in a football match. No children are orphaned. No wives become widows.
- I know from all that happened today how much both armies long for peace. We shall be together again, I'm sure of it. (It's a good example of the use of 'irony' in the story.)