



Footprints without Feet

Supplementary Reader in English
for Class X

NBCampus



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NCERT

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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-centred 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 book 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 supplementary reader 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.

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) appreciates the hard work done by the textbook development committee responsible for this book. We wish to thank the Chairperson of the advisory committee for textbooks in languages for the secondary stage, Professor Namwar Singh, and the Chief Advisor for this book, Professor R. Amritavalli for guiding the work of this committee. Several teachers contributed to the development of this supplementary reader; we are grateful to their principals for making this possible. We are indebted to the institutions and organisations which have generously permitted us to draw upon their resources, materials and personnel. We are especially grateful to the members of the National Monitoring Committee, appointed by the Department of Secondary and Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development under the Chairpersonship of Professor Mrinal Miri and Professor G.P. Deshpande for their valuable time and contribution. As an organisation committed to systemic reform and continuous improvement in the quality of its products, NCERT welcomes comments and suggestions which will enable us to undertake further revision and refinements.

New Delhi
20 November 2006

Director
National Council of Educational
Research and Training

A Note to the Teacher

Footprints without Feet, a supplementary reader in English for Class X, is based on the new syllabus prepared as a follow-up to the National Curriculum Framework, 2005. The curriculum envisages language learning opportunities that are rich in comprehensible input, and adopts a language-across-the-curriculum, multilingual perspective on English in the school. Input-rich communicational environments are a prerequisite for language learning. Therefore, learners must be exposed to a variety of texts.

The supplementary reader is meant for students to read on their own; it aims at developing their reading skills. Learners need to develop the habit of reading for information and pleasure, drawing inferences from what they read, and relating texts to their previous knowledge. They need to learn to read critically and to develop the confidence to ask and answer questions.

The selections in the supplementary reader take into account the interests of young learners while making them aware of issues that they need to reflect on: personal relationships, the neighbourhood, and the community. Thematic variety has been taken care of and there is a good representation of a variety of genres as well as of writers from across the world—Indian, British, French, American and Japanese. This supplementary reader has ten pieces including a play and a factual prose piece, as well as science fiction.

Each piece begins with questions under the head 'Read and Find Out' to guide learners in their reading and comprehension of the text, which is divided into two to three sections, each section prefaced with relevant questions. Thus the texts do not need to be read out or explained by the teacher in class. Word glosses have similarly been kept to the minimum so as to encourage inferences about meaning from sentential and discourse contexts. The teacher, after a quick oral comprehension check, if necessary, can progress to the questions





under the head 'Think About It' at the end of each unit. These are meant to take the learner beyond factual comprehension to contemplate on the issues that the texts raise; the questions are open ended and thought provoking.

The questions given under 'Talk About It' are intended to encourage the learners to express their own ideas in a creative and coherent way. It is hoped that the topics suggested for discussion will encourage learners to develop a constructive analysis of the relevant issues, involving critical thinking, reasoning, and previous knowledge as well as new knowledge.

The list of suggested readings given at the end of each story is meant to encourage learners to read further on their own. The idea is to promote the habit of self-learning and reduce dependence on the teacher.

Language learning is essentially a matter of acquiring in an integrated way the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing; and of honing these skills for effective communication in the classroom, and later in real life. This book offers an opportunity for taking learners in that direction.

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Gandhiji's Talisman

I will give you a talisman.
Whenever you are in doubt or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test: Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. Will he gain anything by it? Will it restore him to a control over his own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to Swaraj for the hungry and spiritually starving millions? Then you will find your doubts and your self melting away.

M.K. Gandhi

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