

Honeydew

Textbook in English for Class VIII



0849

विद्यया ऽ मृतमश्नुते



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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-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.

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 in languages, 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 textbook; 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.

Director

New Delhi
30 November 2007

National Council of Educational
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❖ Rationalisation of Content in ❖ the Textbooks

In view of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative to reduce content load on students. The National Education Policy 2020, also emphasises reducing the content load and providing opportunities for experiential learning with creative mindset. In this background, the NCERT has undertaken the exercise to rationalise the textbooks across all classes. Learning Outcomes already developed by the NCERT across classes have been taken into consideration in this exercise.

Contents of the textbooks have been rationalised in view of the following:

- Content based on genres of literature in the textbooks and supplementary readers at different stages of school education
- Content that is meant for achieving Learning Outcomes for developing language proficiency and is accessible at different stages
- For reducing the curriculum load and examination stress in view of the prevailing condition of the Pandemic
- Content, which is easily accessible to students without much interventions from teachers and can be learned by children through self-learning or peer-learning
- Content, which is irrelevant in the present context

This present edition, is a reformatted version after carrying out the changes given above.

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For permission to reproduce copyright material in this book, NCERT would like to thank the following: Michael Morpurgo for 'The Best Christmas Present in the World' from *The Guardian*, UK; Publications Division Government of India, New Delhi for 'Glimpses of the Past' from *Our Freedom Movement* by S.D. Sawant; Katha, New Delhi for 'Bepin Choudhury's Lapse of Memory' from *The Nose Doctor*; Firdaus Kanga for 'A visit to Cambridge from *Heaven on Wheels*, Bloomsbury; and to Ruskin Bond for 'A Short Monsoon Diary' from Ruskin Bond's *Book of Nature*, Penguin Books, New Delhi.

Every effort has been made to trace all copyright holders. We apologise for some omissions, and will gratefully acknowledge them as soon as they can be traced.

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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.)

The Ant and the Cricket

-  Spend about 15 minutes eliciting, and listening to, fables or fable-like stories from children, preferably in their own language(s). Help them retell one or two in English by providing appropriate words and phrases.
-  The story about the Sun and the Wind at the end of 'Glimpses of the Past' may be used here. Ask them if it's a fable, though there are no animals in it.
-  Try the following writing task.

Rearrange the following sentences to construct a story. Start with sentence 4.

 1. One cold day, a hungry grasshopper came to the anthill and begged for a little something to eat.
 2. He replied, "Alas! I spent all my time singing and playing and dancing, and never thought about winter."
 3. One ant asked him how he had spent his time during summer and whether he had saved anything for winter.
 4. A nest of ants had been occupied all through the summer and autumn collecting food for winter.
 5. They carefully stored it in the underground chambers of their home.
 6. Then we have nothing to give you.
 7. Thus, when winter came, they had plenty to eat.
 8. People who play and sing all summer should only dance in winter.
 9. The ant answered.
-  Find three adjectives in the first stanza associated with summer and spring.
-  Find four phrases/lines in the same stanza associated with the onset of winter.
-  Suppose the last line of the first stanza were to be rewritten as 'Oh! What will become of me? Says the cricket.' Would you find it acceptable in the poem? If not, why not?
-  Speak the words given below. Ask children to write the word, and against it two new words that rhyme.

sing _____
crumb _____
through _____
wished _____

(Last sound in 'crumb' is 'm'. In 'wished' it is 't'.)

- Activity 4 under **working with language** needs patience and time. Punctuation in writing sentences is an important teaching point. Since the activity is to be taken up in groups, there will be several versions of each sentence to begin with. Encourage children to discuss why only one version is grammatically acceptable and not the other.

The Tsunami

- A natural calamity causing huge destruction and loss of life and property. Alongside the story of deep sorrow are reassuring details of courage, survival and resilience.
- While covering sections and sub sections of the text, focus on situations in which children realise the importance of doing whatever possible to save human and animal life, to participate in relief work and to understand the concept of disaster management.
- Elicit their comments on, and reactions to, the stories of Meghna and Almas. Focus on values such as courage, care and compassion in the bitter struggle for survival and rehabilitation.
- The activity under **Before you read** is like an elementary geography lesson. Map reading along with language work (asking/answering questions, spotting location/ direction and describing them with precision) is a good example of softening subject boundaries and conforming to the idea of language across the curriculum. Use other maps from the geography/ history textbook for further practice.
- While dealing with 'Active/Passive voice' (working with language: Activity 3), provide samples of texts exemplifying the use of passive voice such as short newspaper reports and descriptions of processes/experiments. As far as possible, avoid a mechanical transformation exercise confined to isolated sentences. Try a simple exercise given here.

Complete the passage using passive forms of the verbs given in brackets.

Olive oil _____ (use) for cooking, salad dressing, etc. Olives _____ (pick) in autumn when they are ripe. They _____ (shake) from the trees and _____ (gather) up, usually by hand. Then they _____ (grind) to a thick paste which _____ (spread) onto special mats. The mats then _____ (layer) up on the pressing machine which will gently squeeze them to produce olive oil.

- ❏ The last activity under **speaking and writing** is a step towards reducing the gap between children's life at school and their life outside the school.

📖 Geography Lesson 📖

- ❏ Children already know words like 'aeroplane, airport', etc. Draw their attention to words like 'jetliner', 'jet engine' and 'jetlag' in the following activity.

(i) Match items under A with those under B

A

B

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| Jetliner | • fatigue/tiredness after a long flight |
| Jetlag | • rich social group flying around the world for business or pleasure |
| Jet engine | • aircraft powered by a jet engine |
| (the) jet set | • engine that emits high-speed hot gases at the back when it moves forward. |

(ii) Check the meaning of 'jet black' and 'jetsam' in the dictionary. Complete the idiom : jetsam and _____

- ❏ Today, if there is a border dispute or any other contentious issue between two countries, an organisation called the United Nations acts as a mediator to keep peace and order in the world. Encourage children to gather information about the UN and its constituent bodies.
- ❏ Peace Memorial Park is the only park of its kind in the world. It is in Hiroshima, Japan, and marks the spot where the first atomic bomb was dropped on _____ (Children will remember the date and event if they recall the activity under

Before you read in *The Best Christmas Present in the World*.
A mini project could be planned on this.

- Ask children to draw a map of their locality/village depicting its physical features and distances between places, etc.
- Recite and write on the blackboard the following poem and discuss the items given at the end of the poem.

*Wake
gently this morning
to a different day.*

*Listen
There is no bray
of buses,
no horns blow.*

*There is only
the silence
of a city
hushed
with snow.*

- Name a few cities in India which the poem reminds you of.
- Which words/phrases in the poem evoke images different from those suggested by 'the silence of the city'?

Glimpses of the Past

- 'Glimpses' of the history of our country to be understood through pictures with strips of text for support. Children have a natural enthusiasm for this kind of material in the textbook.
- Children may read the comic strip aloud. Then they break up into small groups, discuss what they have read and write a summary. Each group presents its summary one by one. The whole class then enters into a general discussion, and a consolidated draft of the composition is prepared with the active support of the teacher.
- Conversely, divide the class into small groups. Let each group look at and describe a set of pictures (assigned to them) and construct their own text. Texts thus produced can be put together to form a coherent story, to be edited for accuracy.



- ❏ If necessary, texts may first be produced in the child's own language and the teacher can help them to reformulate these in English. For children fluent in English, this may be an opportunity to formulate equivalent texts in their own languages.
- ❏ Some details of each 'glimpse' of the past may be had from the history textbook of the same class. The history teacher may be invited to facilitate the activity.
- ❏ Picture reading under **speaking** and **writing** to be attempted in the same manner.
- ❏ Creating a comic (Activity 5) will be great fun if children can be persuaded to draw/learn to draw matchstick figures. Enlist the help of the art teacher.