

PROJECT BOOK IN
ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
FOR CLASS VIII



राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING

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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 school. This recommendation has been implemented in the new textbooks published since 2006, in all major subjects. In the context of environment-related awareness, NCF-2005’s vision implies an approach which cuts across the traditional boundaries separating one subject from another. According to this approach, knowledge of environmental concerns and the activities, which might deepen this knowledge and develop a positive attitude, need to be infused in the subject matter of all areas of the school curriculum at different stages. *The National Focus Group on Habitat and Learning*, which amplifies the NCF-2005, perspective, says: “The human habitat displays tremendous variability in space and time and its understanding has to be locale specific albeit in the context of a global vision. A great deal of the knowledge of the environment lies with India’s barefoot ecologists, the people at the grassroots...”

NCF-2005, perceives school children as ecologists in their own right who need to be nurtured by a flexible school routine and teachers who engage with children in the construction of knowledge. In addition to the environment-related subject matter and activities incorporated in the syllabus and textbooks of all the major subjects, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has now decided to bring out project books for students of Classes VI to X. The books comprising this series attempt to build capacity for critical and multi-disciplinary thinking and a positive and problem-solving attitude. They aim at exposing students to the real-life world around them, both in nature and society, in order to enable them to examine, assess and interpret the problems and concerns related to the environment. The ultimate goal is to promote a socio-cultural ethos which facilitates India’s attempt to pursue the path of ethically sound and sustainable development. The activities included in this series of books require extensive and continuous observation and

documentation which would enable students and teachers to notice patterns in phenomena. Uploading of the results of such projects on publicly accessible websites will gradually help the nation to create a transparent and comprehensive database on the environment.

The success of this effort crucially depends on the interest and enthusiasm that school principals, teachers, parents and civil society in general show in encouraging children to carry out the projects and activities outlined in the present series. It is extremely important that students' project work is assessed in a holistic manner, giving due regard to the motivation and enthusiasm of each student rather than through the conventional system of evaluation which ignores individuality and originality.

NCERT appreciates the hard work put in by the Project Book Development Committee in preparing this series and we are especially grateful to Professor Madhav Gadgil for guiding the work of this Committee. Several teachers contributed to the development of this book; 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, material and personnel. NCERT is thankful to Professor Mrinal Miri and Professor G.P. Deshpande who co-chaired the National Monitoring Committee appointed by the Ministry of Human Resource Development to oversee the implementation of NCF-2005. We thank Dr Kiran Chhokar, Programme Director, Centre for Environmental Education, Delhi, for her invaluable inputs during the meeting of the National Monitoring Committee. As an organisation committed to systemic reforms and continuous improvement in the quality of its products, NCERT welcomes comments and suggestions which will enable us to undertake further revision and refinement of this important series.

New Delhi
9 January 2009

Director
National Council of Educational
Research and Training

NOTE TO THE STUDENTS

By now, you must have gained a lot of experience about working on projects on some of the environmental issues of your locality. Yet there remain many other environmental problems that need to be taken care of. So as to enable you to take up such problems, the project book development team has prepared another set of twenty projects.

As in the previous classes, you may have to modify some of the methodologies suggested in the project book to make it suitable to your surroundings. Make the most of these experiences that you have gained in the previous two classes. Modify the methodologies based on such experiences. Bring it to the knowledge of your concerned teacher while making such changes.

Like the previous years, we understand that you will not be able to carry out all the suggested projects. We still recommend you to undertake as many projects as possible. Regarding group projects, we hope by now you would be much comfortable working with your peers with each one of you giving equal contribution. We would like to remind you again that on occasions of visit to officials of different departments, elders, politicians, doctors, scientists, houses, etc. ensure that you obtain prior permission or seek appointment or take an authorisation letter from your school authorities. Be humble, soft spoken and never use coercion while taking an interview or obtaining information and do not hurt the sentiments of others. Take your teacher's help wherever necessary during your project work.

Put in serious effort into your project, as your contribution would be significant in making the environment a better and safer place to live. *'When we heal the earth, we heal ourselves'*.

THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

PREAMBLE

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a **SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC** and to secure to all its citizens :

JUSTICE, social, economic and political;

LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;

EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all

FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation;

IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this twenty-sixth day of November, 1949, do **HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.**

NOTE TO THE TEACHERS

As in the previous classes, during the course of the development of textbooks of different stages, irrespective of the subjects, utmost care was taken to adequately infuse environmental issues and concerns wherever it found its relevance. Adequate opportunities have been provided to students to actively engage themselves in activities pertaining to environmental concerns. This project book has also been prepared to further students' involvement and active participation in environmental issues. This will enable them to understand the environmental problems in their vicinity, work on them to obtain first hand information, and come out with their own solution. This book, contains twenty projects with the headings — title, background, methodology, conclusion and activities that can be taken up as follow up actions. The topics have been chosen keeping in view the environmental concerns that have been discussed in various textbooks for the class. An attempt has been made to make the projects workable in different corners of the country. However, modifications in the methodology or in the title itself are expected to meet the diverse local specific environmental concerns of different regions.

At this stage, the students have become quite familiar on the ways of handling projects. Yet the role of teachers as a facilitator and guide will still be instrumental for the successful completion of the projects. For this, teachers would be required to assign appropriate projects to each student, modify and fine tune the methodologies, keep track of the developments and also help the students wherever necessary to complete the task smoothly. Teachers are expected to ensure that students take up as many projects as possible but with a minimum of two projects by each student.

Evaluation strategy can be prepared independently by the teacher concerned to evaluate the projects. The teacher concerned will decide whether evaluation should be done for every step of the project or on completion of each project. Whether marks or grades are to be allotted is left to the discretion of the teacher or the school authorities. Whatever pattern the teacher or school employs for evaluation, the marks or grades should be shown in the students' report card. There should be no pass or fail grading. Every student should have completed a minimum of two projects at the end of the academic session and thus should be considered pass.

Last, but not the least, this attempt of introducing project book is to bring about attitudinal change in the students towards environmental concerns and nurture them to become a concerned and responsible citizen.

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