

PROJECT BOOK IN

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

FOR CLASS VII



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

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OFFICES OF THE PUBLICATION DEPARTMENT, NCERT

NCERT Campus Sri Aurobindo Marg New Delhi 110 016	Phone : 011-26562708
108, 100 Feet Road Hosdakere Halli Extension Banashankari III Stage Bangalore 560 085	Phone : 080-26725740
Navjivan Trust Building P.O.Navjivan Ahmedabad 380 014	Phone : 079-27541446
CWC Campus Opp. Dhankal Bus Stop Panihati Kolkata 700 114	Phone : 033-25530454
CWC Complex Maligaon Guwahati 781 021	Phone : 0361-2674869

Publication Team

Head, Publication Department	:	<i>Peyyeti Rajakumar</i>
Chief Production Officer	:	<i>Shiv Kumar</i>
Chief Editor	:	<i>Shveta Uppal</i>
Chief Business Manager	:	<i>Gautam Ganguly</i>
Assistant Editor	:	<i>Vijay Kumar</i>
Assistant Production Officer	:	?

Cover and Layout
Shweta Rao

Illustrations
Arvinder Chawla

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

It must have been a new experience to work on the projects in your previous class. We hope that you enjoyed doing them. As in Class VI, the project book development team has prepared another set of twenty projects. You may find that some of the methods suggested here are not exactly applicable for you. You have every freedom to modify them to make it workable for you. But remember to consult your teachers for such changes. It will not be possible for you to take up all the twenty projects in one academic session due to time constrain. But as you already have worked on some of the projects in the previous class, we expect that you will be able to take up more number of projects. However, as in Class VI, the number of projects that you take up should not be less than two.

With the experience that you had in your previous class, it should not be too difficult to take up the projects this year. But you still have to remember those important points that you followed in every step of the project. Like, when working in group projects, give maximum cooperation to your friends. In case you have to visit officials of different departments, elders, politicians, doctors, scientists, houses, etc. make sure that you obtain prior permission or take appointment or take authorisation letter from your school authorities. Be humble, soft spoken and never use force while taking interview or obtaining information and do not hurt the sentiments of others. In case of problems in the course of your study, your teachers are always there to help you. Discuss with them and work towards completing your study successfully.

Work with all sincerity on the projects that you have taken up. Remind yourself that contributions as yours, however, little it may seem, added together is all that it takes to heal our ailing physical as well as social environment. *'Each one of us can make a difference'*.

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.

NOTE TO THE TEACHERS

As in Class VI, the textbooks across different subjects have adequately infused environmental issues and concerns in all relevant places. Ample opportunities have been provided to students to actively engage themselves in activities pertaining to environmental concerns. This project book has 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 also 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.

Though, the students have worked on certain projects in the previous year, it is necessary that they be given the same encouragement and support and help in refining their tasks. As in the previous class, the students will execute the projects by themselves. The role of teachers as a facilitator and guide remains 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 the project book is to bring about an attitudinal change in the students towards environmental concerns and nurture them to become a concerned and responsible citizen.

PROJECT BOOK DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

CHAIRPERSON, ADVISORY GROUP IN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Madhav Gadgil, *Emeritus Professor*, Agharkar Research Institute, Pune

MEMBERS

Jaishree Sharma, *Professor*, Department of Education in Science and Mathematics, NCERT, New Delhi

R. Joshi, *Lecturer (SG)*, Department of Education in Science and Mathematics, NCERT, New Delhi

Sunita L. Varte, *Lecturer*, Department of Education in Science and Mathematics, NCERT, New Delhi

MEMBER-COORDINATOR

Chochong Vareichung Shimray, *Lecturer*, Department of Education in Science and Mathematics, NCERT, New Delhi

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