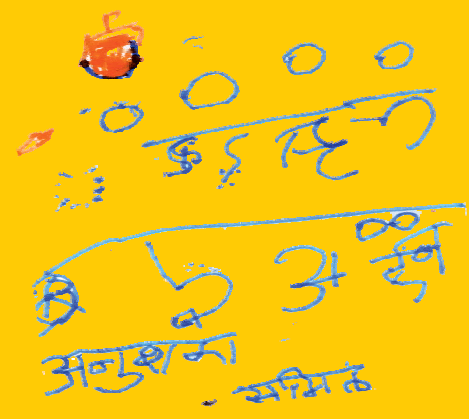


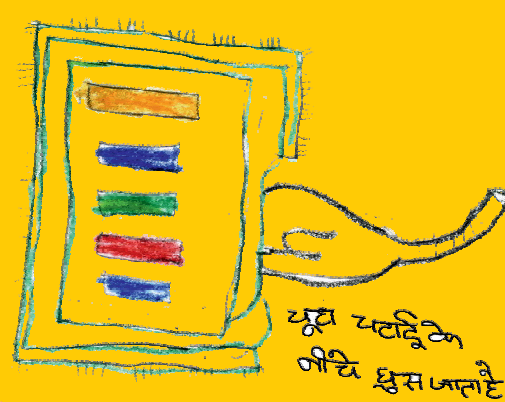


हरीशोम ने हाथी की कडाही सुन्दर पत्र लिखवा है  
 हरीशोम की हाथी बहुत पसंद है

# Early Writing

## A Dialogue

हरीशोम का हाथी का नाम है  
 विजयराज



यहाँ चटखिने  
 नीचे धुस जाता है

हाथी ने पूछा कौ अफनी  
 फी पर बै बसिसा



हरीशोम का हाथी जान  
 रहि कू कडा नयगमना  
 तुम कहि हरे चलीतियो  
 तो तुम शिटीन काट  
 की डरव कर पूजा की बोर  
 र रवन।

विनीता



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# EARLY WRITING: A DIALOGUE

A COMPILATION OF ARTICLES ON WRITING

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विद्यया ऽ मृतमश्नुते



एन सी ई आर टी  
NCERT

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

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## FOREWORD

Reading and writing are an integral part of the initial phase of school education and help learners create meaning based on experiences. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) initiated a dialogue with teachers on various aspects of teaching and learning in 2008 and published a resource book for teachers titled *Padhne ki Samajh*. The resource book discusses various issues related to 'Reading', along with reflections on written language and the nature of classrooms. NCERT tried to facilitate the teachers through a manual on reading and writing in different teacher education programmes. It was felt that there is a need for further dialogue with the teachers on early writing and the different stages of writing. To address this need, the Department of Elementary Education, NCERT, had taken up an initiative to bridge this gap through a book in Hindi, *Likhne ki Shuruat—Ek Samvad*. The present book 'Early Writing: A Dialogue' is a compilation and translation of articles on writing based on that book.

It has been widely felt that the teaching-learning process of reading and writing at the Foundational Stage needs to change. There is a need to have dialogues with teachers to build an understanding and attitude towards meaningful learning in the classroom. According to the National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage 2022, the approach to teach writing must focus on writing with meaning and providing ample opportunities to our learners for meaningful use of language in their learning contexts for reading, writing and oral language development activities. At the Foundational Stage, classrooms can become a space where learners are immersed in such a learning environment filled with varied opportunities to develop writing through drawing, labelling, inventing spellings, writing workbooks, games involve writing and other forms of guided writing, followed by more independent writing of words, phrases and then complete sentences in meaningful and creative contexts.

It has been found that a print-rich environment not just develops an interest in reading, but also gives learners confidence to read the entire book on their own and enjoy reading. However, when it comes to writing, they still lack confidence to express their ideas. It is difficult to instill confidence in learners about writing by exhausting all energy on tasks such as identifying letters, forming letters, good handwriting and correct spellings. As envisioned in the National Education Policy–2020, a space for learner’s needs to be created where they are given the chance to express their ideas, emotions, experiences and imagination through their vocabulary, which incorporates their cultural contexts and what they are learning in their classroom.

The National Education Policy–2020 emphasises the significance of introducing foundational learning, including reading and writing in their own mother tongue or home language. In light of the vision of this policy, an effort has been made through this book to comply with the requirements of foundational literacy in learners.

Classrooms should become a space where the languages of the learners are celebrated, appreciated and encouraged, as it is significant in building confidence in them. The use of home language will ensure that children respect the multilingual reality of India from a very young age in our Indian classrooms.

This book may initiate discussion on several important issues, including how to make beginning of writing at foundational stage in meaningful contexts from the very first day, what the significance of planning in the early grades is, what the nature of assessment is, and how the different stages of writing are important. It is an attempt to begin a meaningful dialogue with teachers to develop their understanding of reading and early writing.

New Delhi  
December 2015

*Director*  
National Council of Educational  
Research and Training

## **PREFACE**

The book 'Early Writing' is divided into three parts. Part one 'The World of Writing' has five articles that deal with the foundations, both theoretical and practical aspects, included in teaching and learning of writing in the early grades.

Even as young children come to school, they are already competent in their home language. As educators or teachers, this prior experience of the children becomes a foreground to develop reading and writing skills. We would all have observed children engaging in pretend reading or using pencil, chalk and other such material to scribble or draw things on paper, slate or walls to express their feelings and imaginations using their own script. As educators, we find these pretend reading, scribbles and drawings as meaningful, as these are expressions of the child's heart, and they form an important aspect in the process of writing. The first chapter of the book, titled 'Early Writing' talks about providing children with adequate space to these experiences of the children in the process of reading and writing to express their inner thoughts. This chapter emphasises the need to move the stress from the mechanical aspects of reading and writing to the meaningfulness and joy associated with them.

The second chapter discusses 'Children's Picture Writing'. A picture is like a mirror through which one can understand the innocent, unaffected use of colours and children's scribbles. A picture is a strong expression of the child's mind and heart. It is a fact that children, and even adults, feel more connected to pictures and use them to express themselves. Children use picture writing to express their understanding, feelings, imagination, and the happenings in their surroundings and daily lives. These pictures may not be appropriate in size, proportion and colour, but they are the reflection of children's experiences and is a significant part of writing development. Teachers can give a direction to the learners' writing and creativity by talking about their pictures, underlining the gradual changes in these pictures and their

gradual inclination to the print and then linking these changes with their multiple life experiences.

In traditional teaching of writing in Classes I and II, instead of focusing on children's language, their game songs and their natural expressions, more emphasis is laid on writing letters and memorising correct spellings, which makes writing unnatural and mechanical to young children. There is also a dearth of familiar and relevant print material (wrapper, poster, TV programme) in classrooms. When children are provided with the opportunity to write what they want to express, the gap between the home language and the school language and other subjects are bridged.

In chapter three, 'Writing in Classes I and II: A Perspective', writing-reading and understanding have been viewed as complementary to one another. It discusses the opportunities and possibilities which allow the children to express themselves freely without the fear of being 'wrong'. In foundational stages, especially while assessing writing, more emphasis is laid on spelling, handwriting and grammar instead of children's understanding and originality of ideas, and mistakes in these are wrongly linked to the child's lack of understanding. The chapter stresses the need for children's literature, textbooks and other print material, along with opportunities to engage in experience-based writing to cater to the process of writing in young children.

The fourth chapter, 'Assessment of Writing', instead of emphasising on mechanical aspects of writing, the emphasis is on creating classroom space for children to express themselves freely. Their writings should have a definite aim and audience, and reflect the individuality they possess. For children, writing or making pictures should be free from any restriction, just like playing games of their own choice or reading whatever they want to read. Assessment is an effective way to map the progress of learning to read and write through the child's daily activities, their engagement and the feedback they receive. The chapter emphasises that assessment should be a space to appreciate children's work and cater to developing confidence in the children rather than a burdensome task.

The fifth chapter is on 'Teacher's Preparation: Work Planning'. It is ironic that for doing petty tasks, we prepare and plan at every stage, but when it comes to teaching, we

think that it will happen naturally. The unit reflects on 'the effects of teacher's plans' and the role of organised planning in making the reading- writing process more interesting and meaningful. Planning helps in bringing balance between activities, completing different tasks properly in adequate time and ensuring holistic development of all children of Classes I and II.

The second part of the book is 'Within the Sphere of Experiences', which includes instances from literature and experiences of teachers to make teachers hopeful and resilient in all circumstances. The third part of the book is titled 'Opportunities of Reading and Writing'. It includes a few activities planned along with poems and stories that can help teachers to plan further activities based on the needs, interests and availability of time and resources of their particular classes.

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National Council of Education  
Research and Training

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# 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 citizen:

**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.**

**THE WORLD OF WRITING**

दि. 16-11-10

तालाव में पानी है।

क रेखा



Karbina, Mathura Pilot Project

## EARLY WRITING

Out of the lakhs of children, who take admission in Class I each year, a majority of students belong to such home environments where that do not provide children with rich and/or sufficient experiences in reading and writing. In such a situation, it is very important for teachers to pay special attention to two things— firstly, to understand the relevance of the children's experience which they underwent before coming to school, and secondly, to use these experiences as the base of school work for children. Daily experiences are a source of invaluable information for the children and these experiences should be taken forward in the class in a positive way. This understanding is necessary and important for the teachers so that they can provide adequate space to the children's limited store of experiences in the classroom and use these in the process of teaching and learning. Are we able to do this?

We believe that reading and writing, basically begin at school, but it is not so. There are a lot of written and printed material available at our homes; we just need to pay attention to these. The house, number plate, folk art (*Mandha*) on the walls of the house, calendar, company's name on the gas stove, name of the family head engraved on the utensils, name tattoos on the arms, page of newspaper, shopping lists, toothpaste box, and others. Written and printed materials are available around every child—yes, the amount of material though, can vary. What is important is the amount of attention paid to that writing or printed material. This helps the children develop an understanding that the written and printed material is meaningful, because, mostly it is the name of that object or description of the thing on which the matter is printed. In this way, children form various opinions about reading and writing even before going to school.

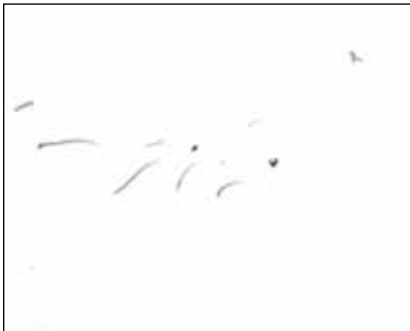
Rahul would often get his four-year-old brother, Raman, to school. Raman used to sit in a corner of the class and watch the work being done in the class. One day, he went to the teacher and asked, “Will you teach me how to write my name?”

The teacher asked him why he wanted to learn to write his name. “If I learn to write my name, I will be able to read story books”, he replied innocently looking towards the books hung in a corner of the class.

Raman felt that if he learnt how to write, he would be able to read books. There is a reason behind his logic. He observed that, in the class, all the children used to try to read books and write something.

Raman’s logical derivation points to the fact that there is a relationship between listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Now, it is obvious that, if a pencil is given to Raman, he will definitely scribble something on the paper, because his logic tells us that he understands the meaningfulness of writing, and knows that spoken words can be written and written words can be read.

When Raman writes on a paper with a pencil it may look like this —



Picture 1  
(Maya)



Picture 2  
(Sahar)

Can we accept it as writing?

If we look at these marks from an adult’s perspective, we will never be able to consider it as writing. It does not

appear like an adult's writing; therefore we are not able to find any meaning in it. But if we look at it from a child's perspective, we shall find meaning hidden in these scribbles. In those early months when a child's relation with paper, colour, and pencil was new, they used these scribbles to express their thoughts and imaginations on paper. Through these dots, circles and lines, children draw and write, everything from sun to grass, and from their names to a story.

As, under a natural process, children first crawl on the ground, then stand with support and finally learn to walk. The process of reading and writing also undergoes similar obvious stages of development. When a child speaks their first word, a wave of excitement spreads throughout the house. Everyone surrounds the child and hopes for them to speak another word. The point to reflect on is— why do we not look at the child with hopefulness and enthusiasm when they hold the pencil for the first time and draws a line and scribbles?. For a child, to derive meaning out of any written symbol or to draw their first line on the floor, wall, or paper is a great achievement— it is the first step taken by the child towards crossing a stage of literacy development.

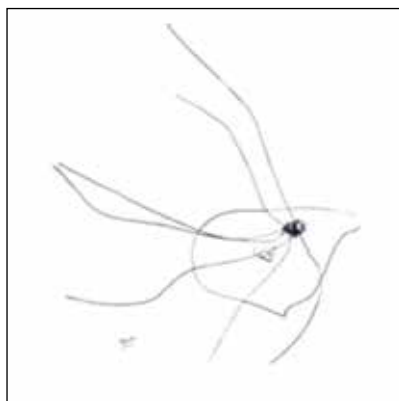
Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are skills which children develop gradually. Expecting a child to open a book and directly start reading fluently or to join grapho-phonics to write words and sentences quickly, is reflective of our belief that the process of reading and writing is a mechanical skill. In reality, reading and writing, should be collaborated with the children's experiences and should be made the medium of expressing imaginations and thoughts, which are initially expressed only through these scribbles (Pictures 3, 4, 5, 6).

Anu has recently started to hold a pencil. She holds the pencil tightly with her four fingers and turns it in whichever way she likes.

Kashvi is 2.5 years' old and enjoys playing with clay. Sometimes, she wets the clay to make balls and sometimes she makes lines using a piece of wood.



Picture 3  
(Najia apple)



Picture 4  
(Vishu bus)



Picture 5  
Sehar Apple



Picture 6  
Sehar tree

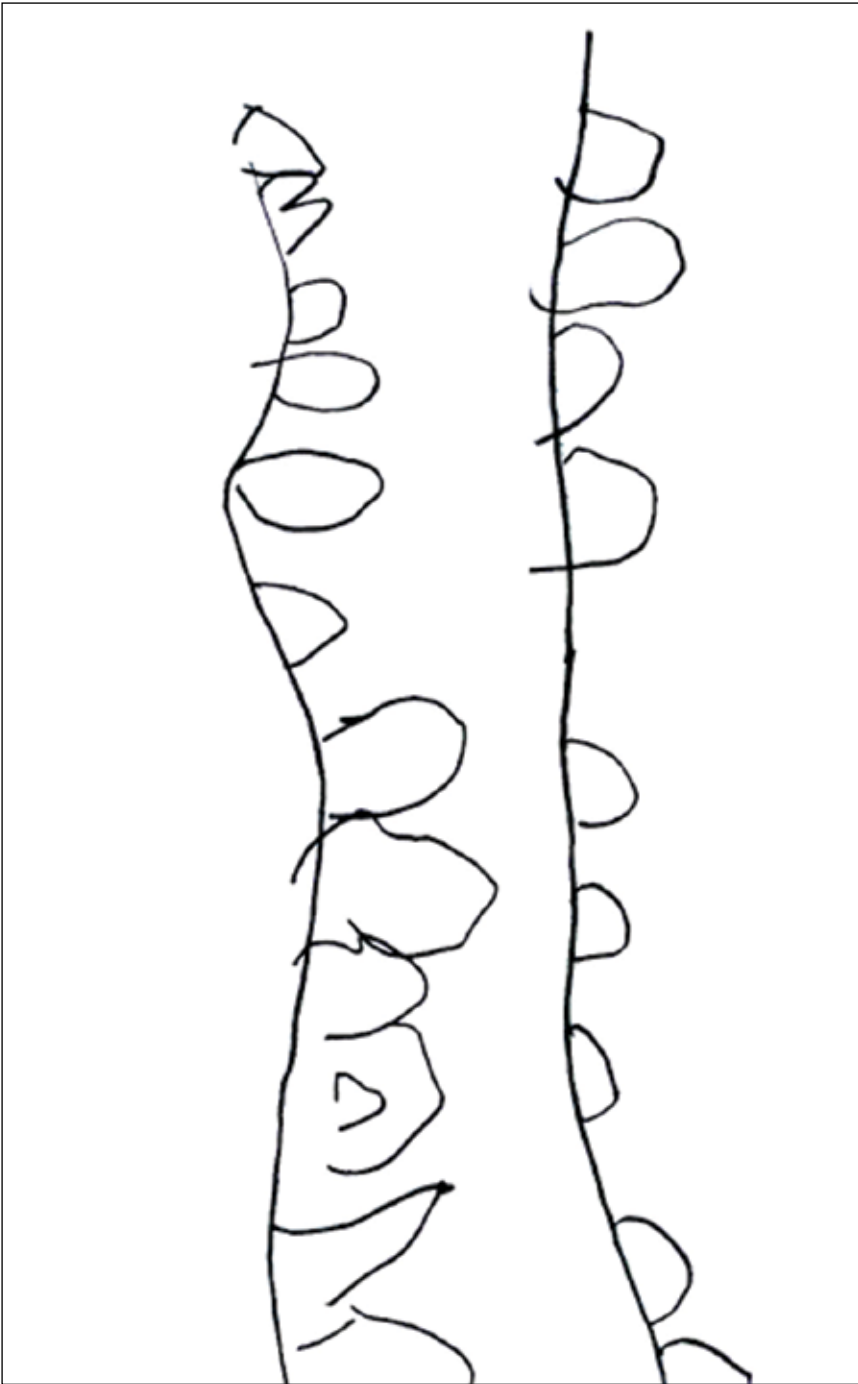
Vishu elder brother has taught him to draw a circle. Now-a-days Vishu draws everything circular— be it a telephone or a bed.

Most of us either consider these attempts of children as meaningless or do not pay any attention to it

considering it as children's imaginative play. Whereas these short, long, circular, zig-zag lines are their expressions. These lines drawn by children express a lot of things, in the same way as the written words or sentences of a book. The only difference is that we can read the printed material in a book, but do not want to understand these lines.

Arjun has made this picture (Picture 7), in which he has drawn clouds and rain. Here, Arjun has a clear mental picture of clouds, and when he shows this picture to others he expects that others should also identify it as clouds and rain. The way he has drawn clouds and rain is not incorrect because this is the way he perceives clouds and rain. The question here is not, what the child is drawing, but how we look at a child's drawing or writing.

For children, expression in this form of scribbles is more satisfying than copying the written boardwork done by the teacher. At some point or the other, we must have also felt a sense of achievement and satisfaction by expressing ourselves in the written form. Then the question arises, why should children be deprived of this sense of achievement and joy. Children should also get opportunities to express themselves in the class. They are anxious to express their feelings. All they look for is an opportunity, where their thoughts are understood and appreciated. In the initial phase, scribbles are the medium of expression for children. These lines have content, meaning, expression and a belief, and the potential to move towards conventional writing. Children's scribbling is a necessary part of the process of reading and writing. If we do not appreciate these scribbling attempts, the children will get stuck in the mechanical process of reading and writing. It is important to accept



Picture 7  
Arjun

these scribbles without any restrictions and discuss them in the classroom, because these scribbles are the first important stages in children's writing, where the child observes and learns the significance of reading and writing. The child understands that inner thoughts can be written and written material can be read.

Now a question arises— how can the children develop further from scribbling?

In the process of writing, children's development in writing depends on the amount of exposure to a meaningful print-rich environment. Here, 'print' does not refer to mere charts of stories and poems stuck on the walls. The print material (stories, poems, charts, other material related to reading and writing used in the class) is considered relevant only when it is used to its full capacity as per the interests and needs of the children.

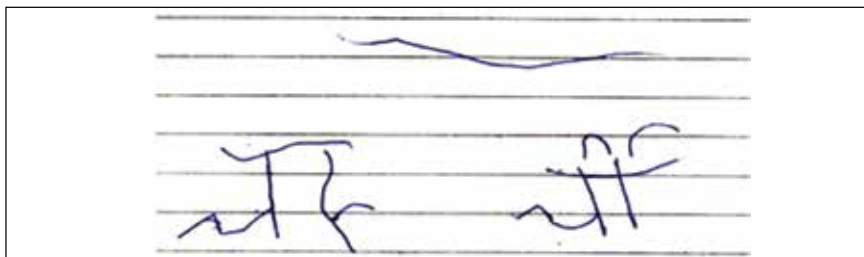
Along with the reading materials, the classroom also provides countless opportunities of relevant writing. As the children write, they observe the print closely and pay attention to the relation between print and sound. They develop an understanding that reading and writing is done from left to right (example – *Devnaagri*), and this understanding reflects in their writing as well. Let's try to look at this in a few samples of children's writing.

This is Priya's writing (Picture 8). When Priya wrote this, she wrote from right to left. If we look at the page carefully, most of the work is done on the right side. This is so because she started from the right hand margins. The figures in her writing also started from the right side. Priya has not developed a concrete understanding that reading and writing are done from left to right. Priya needs to be exposed to story books and relevant print materials, and she should be provided with the opportunities for meaningful reading and writing.



Picture 8  
Priya

In her writing, Priya has also written some letters. After writing, Priya did not tell what she had written. She merely said, “I am writing”. Priya’s drawing of letters indicates that she has an understanding, that writing is a meaningful medium of expressing ourselves.



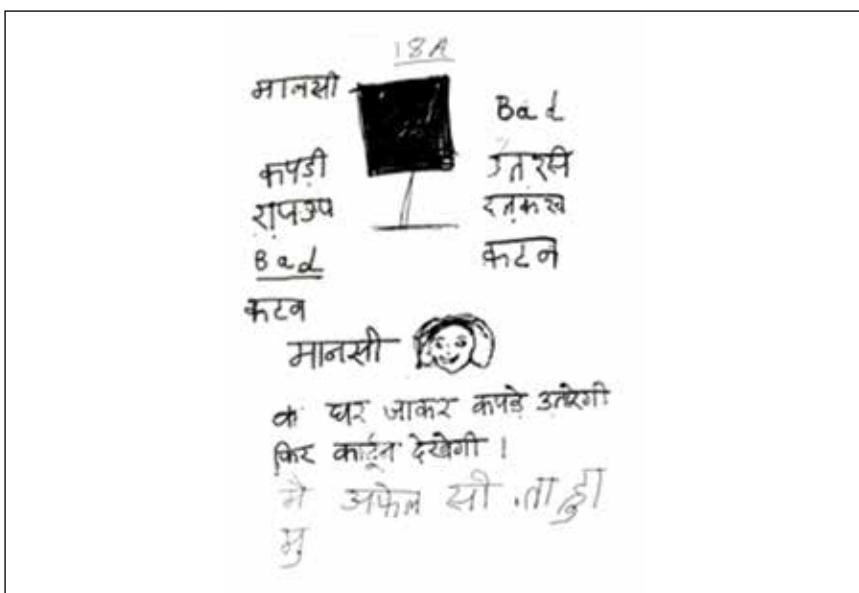
Picture 9  
(Tanishtha)

Tanishtha (Picture 9) wanted to write that ‘the lizard ate the ant’. She wrote the entire thing in two words. She explained that the first word is ‘lizard’ and the second is ‘ant’— these are her two main subjects. Tanishtha’s writing indicates that the development of her cognition of sounds and symbols is in the process. She carefully thought about the sound while writing it. For example, she wrote *chh* for *chah* and *chin* for *cheeti*. Tanishtha’s writing ‘lizard’ and ‘ant’ separately indicates her understanding of word and sentence structure. A few more examples indicating understanding of sound symbols are— writing *dud* for *dudh* and *chahah* for *chuha*.

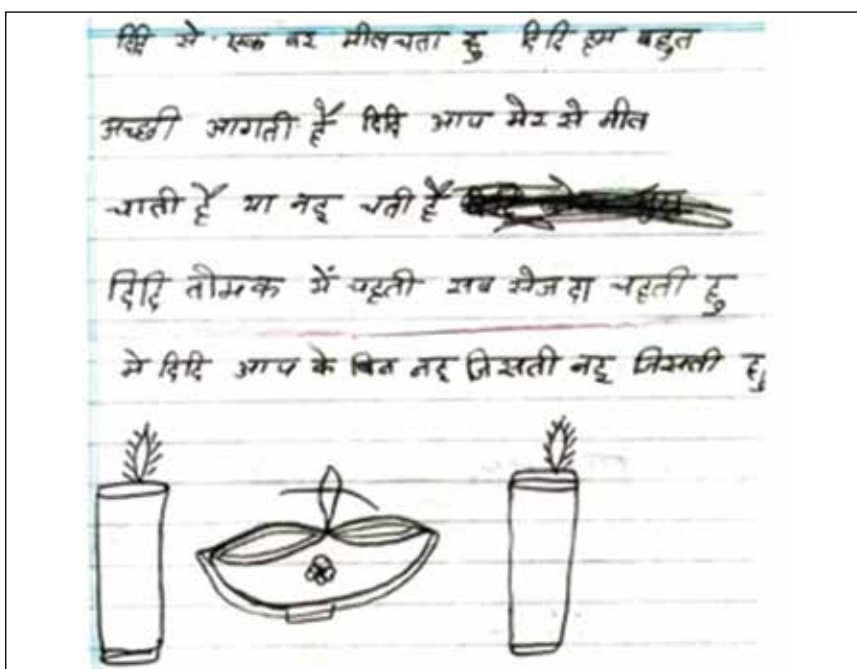
Harsh’s and Mansi’s (Pictures 10 and 11) writings are two examples of invented spellings, where the effort of writing down their thoughts is evident. In these examples, the children have tried to search for the spellings. Both Mansi and Harsh have written interesting things which are related to them. Harsh has made a drawing of a snake and has written ‘*saanp achh*’. When his teacher asked him what he had written, he told her that he had written ‘*saanp achha lagta hai*’ (I like snake), which the teacher



Picture 10  
(Harsh)



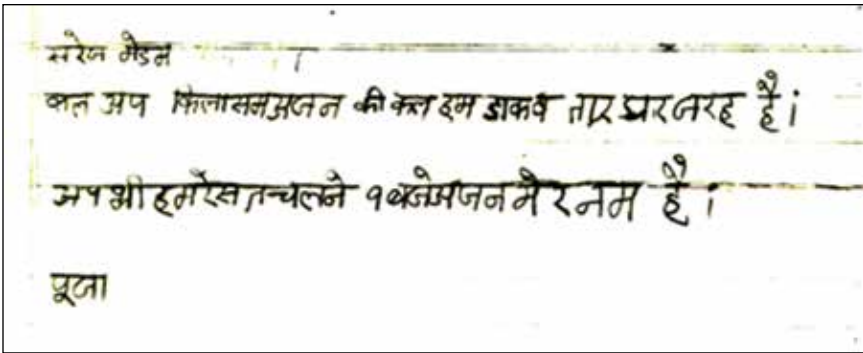
Picture 11  
(Mansi)



Picture 12  
(Poonam)

wrote below his writing. Harsh has tried to write down the main words of his thought. Both Mansi and Harsh are progressing towards conventional writing. Their cognition of sound symbols is also developing. If we look at Mansi's writing carefully, she has written some words like 'kapdi', 'utarsay', 'katan' confidently. On the other hand, the dots around *rajup* and *datkarach* indicate that the writer is in conflict. Uncertainty is reflected in her writing. At this point, some activities need to be done with Mansi so that her attention can be concentrated towards sound-symbols thereby enriching her writing.

Poonam (Picture 12) has beautifully expressed herself in an interesting manner through her writing. 'Didi tomak main chahti sab saij da chahti hu mey didi aap ke bin nai jisti nai jisti hu'. Poonam is also progressing from self-invented spellings to conventional writing. At some



Picture 13  
(Pooja)

places, correct word structure is reflected in her spellings, for example— ‘*Didi, bahut, achhchi, hai, bin*’. She has written only the main sounds of the words at some places, for example, ‘*meel*’ is written in place of ‘*milar*’. She is still developing an understanding of the relation between sounds and symbols. While trying to write down her thoughts in a flow, she has left some words incomplete. This could be because the pen is not able to keep pace with her fast flow of thoughts. The more, Poonam is exposed to relevant print material and gets regular opportunities to read and write, the more matured her writing will be.

Pooja has written a letter to invite her teacher Saroj to visit a post office. Pooja’s feelings reach us through her writing. The language used is simple and clear. Pooja now is at a stage of self-invented spellings, where the understanding of main sounds of words is visible in her writing. There is a need to concentrate her attention towards the vowel sound symbols of the language (*matra*). The fact that Pooja writes many words together indicates that she is still developing the understanding that some space is to be left between two words. But, this has not interrupted the communication of her thoughts on paper.

All these samples of children's writing exhibit the various stages of writing process. For example, the appearance of some figures in scribbles; repetition of sound symbols; writing from left to right; relations between sounds, symbols and others. These are broad stages that help us understand the process of development of writing. It is important to remember that every child has a different learning style, and a different pace of development.

In such a situation, the teacher will have to be patient and link themselves with every child's pace of development. The most important point for the teacher is to believe in and have confidence in their students. Fulfilling the role of a facilitator, one must assess student's writing to understand their stages of development and how they can be assisted for further growth, instead of highlighting the errors in a student's writing.

It is very important to provide children with more and more opportunities to write. Writing can be linked with children's literature, conversations, or with an activity. It is important that the aim of writing should be relevant for the children. The process of writing is not easy, and children's progress cannot be measured in terms of marks, and this is not our objective either. Our aim is to make the reading-writing process relevant and to recognise the capacity of children so that they can get involved in different activities at school, and do not find the process of reading and writing as irrelevant. Our aim is to make the children regular readers, such that reading and writing not only becomes a part of their school, but also of their lives.

## CHILDREN'S PICTURE WRITING



Krishna, Mathura Pilot Project

## CHILDREN'S PICTURE WRITING

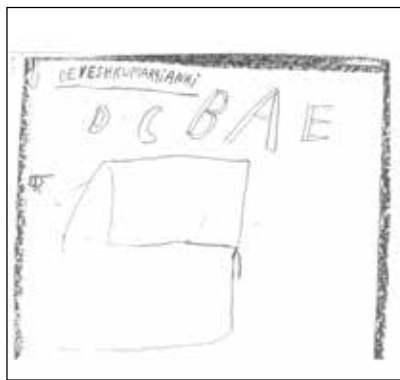
Generally, along with teaching, reading, and writing, drawing is also taught in Classes I and II. Often we find that these drawings are of — hut, flag, rising sun, grass, flower, river scene, flower pot, fruit, vegetables, etc.

The teacher instructed the students of Classes I and II to draw some pictures and they got busy in drawing pictures that had been taught to them. Please note that, no conversation or contextual understanding was established with the students before this activity.

### Scene of a Class



Picture 1  
(Mansi)



Picture 2  
Devesh

Child's language of shapes is unique in its own way. Those shapes are different from the shapes visible only by the eye and the form of those shapes changes with a child's age and experiences. If the child is getting appropriate experiences fit for his age, his shapes will also be developing in their natural speed.

**Shiksha ka Vahan – Kala, Devi Prasad**

Now, let's talk about these pictures. The students have drawn the picture of a 'home' as taught by their teacher. Here, we should pay attention to the fact that this is a taught method, and this picture is of a 'house' and not of a 'home'.

The picture misses the reflection of a lively home environment. This is a drawing of the 'four walls of a home' which can be called a 'house'.

The children did not feel connected with the drawings made in this manner. They are not able to see their reflection in a 'home' made in a prescribed manner. It is possible that the students have never seen a 'house' or the 'rising sun' as drawn by the teacher, and they may have a different visualisation.

After some time, the students were provided with children literature, and were asked to draw pictures of their choice, after reading it. A drawing made by a child is given below—



Picture 3: A painting by a Kendriya Vidyalaya student made during a workshop in 2009

This drawing is the result of the child's understanding and imagination, and it expresses the child's interest and connection with the story.

Children's drawing is an important step in the child's early experiences of reading and writing. The process of speaking includes— expression of one's thoughts and giving hints. If we were to observe games like thief-police, teacher-teacher, kitchen, and doll, we'll find that the children express their ideas naturally and beautifully.

They also reflect their understanding, language proficiency, and originality of thoughts. Along with the games, they start using pictures to express their thoughts. Slowly, this process takes the form of writing. Before the stage of writing their thoughts in words, a stage of expression through pictures begins. Although this stage is considered to be temporary, children do undergo this stage for sure. This phase of writing is called picture writing.

Children use pictures to express themselves individually in their own unique way. This becomes evident when they explain their drawings, or talk about them.

Children feel delighted when they express themselves through pictures. They get an opportunity to express



Picture 4: A picture by a child, drawn during the Mathura Pilot Project

their thoughts in an additional way, a different way other than speaking. But teachers/parents do not pay much attention to picture writing, or are unable to understand that this is also a stage of writing.

Initial picture writing is an essential part of learning to read and write. Teachers and parents need to realise and assess it. This assessment should be done under the criteria of art and also by linking it to early education. The pictures drawn in early years tell a lot about children's understanding and interests.

## **Early years**

- Children draw things in their individual style and colour them as per their own liking. In the picture of a garden, we may see red or yellow coloured grass.
- Pictures size and shape may be longitudinal, thin and less in circumference.
- In the beginning, drawings on the page might not start at the bottom but could be in the middle, in the upper portion or anywhere. Their understanding of the size and proportion of things develop gradually.
- The picturisation of any object is not limited to its external structure. Children depict the internal qualities of that object as well. For example, in a picture of a flute, they also try to draw the sound produced.

The changes in the pictures signify the development in children's writing. Sometimes, no change or movement is evident in children's drawings, and there exists a stage of stagnation. In such a situation, it is advisable to be patient because children soon cross this stage, and their drawings move closer to reality. The more they come in the contact with the world around them, the more they are able to draw the reality. The colour of grass and flowers, the shape of objects and characters get closer to reality.

If we assess the children's drawings from the perspective of arts, we would realise that their sense of aesthetic develops at this stage. Look carefully at the child who is engrossed in drawing pictures. Every child's drawings have their own style and manner. In their pictures, children include everything—

- (i) That is around them.
- (ii) The people who are connected to their life, such as friends, neighbours, family, etc.
- (iii) Characters of the stories heard or read by them.

Gradually, an intense desire to express through paintings, about things they want to say or depict incidents which have affected them deeply, such as a quarrel incident, anger about some issue, a memorable journey or pictures of some experiences, begins to appear.

Generally, during the early years, children use pictures and oral language to express their thoughts and experiences. Through pictures, they express their mental picture that forms after watching something. The process of using and acquiring competence on oral language begins quite early. Teachers and parents do pay some attention to the development and changes in it but they hardly pay any attention to children's scribbles and picture writing.

Imagination plays an important role in the stage of picture writing. Children should be given the opportunity to maintain an active imagination in the class, through picture writing.

When the child's imagination gets activated during picture writing, we see that a ship may get wings of birds, and sometimes children may meet ghosts and fairies. For example— the character of Mohan Das in the story 'Changing the Rainbow', is a five or six-year-old boy who roams around in the village, observes nature closely and weaves a new story everyday. He does not like to go to school. He wonders how the school education, that is limited to cramming alphabets, will help him, seemed uninteresting. His aim is to catch the rainbow some day.

Total absence of creative activities for reading-writing is the bitter truth of classes in the initial school years.

Think, if we do the following to develop children's imagination?

- (i) tell stories that enhance children's imagination
- (ii) give them opportunities to draw pictures based on stories

(iii) assess their creativity while assessing their writing

In fact, picture writing is the reflection of children's own experiences. It is entirely different from drawing, which is only an instructional work. So, it is necessary that we provide ample opportunities for drawing, at home, and in school. By doing so, we will not only provide opportunities for expression, but also make children self-dependent to read and write.

We know that children's world of reading and writing is lively and positive. They are capable of expressing their thoughts through pictures and learn to read pictures/ prints according to their needs and interest. Reading labels on eatables, advertisement of favourite objects, etc., form the practical aspect of their language use.

### **Children's picture— writing in Classes I and II**

In Classes I and II, teachers generally provide children with opportunities of drawing pictures. It is necessary that teachers/parents understand their pictures. The process of writing begins with scribbling lines and

A picture that a child draws, or a painter draws, is based on his inner feelings and experiences—not seen through other's eyes, but by himself, and felt by himself. The way a child perceives this world, the way he experiences it, and the way his inner self reacts, everything unites to form different shapes in his mind. Drawing is the self-expression of the knowledge of the outer world. The child is enlightened through these shapes. This shape is the alphabet of his picture language. So, the picture they draw through their own language is correct, as per the scale of the language. Whether the picture is good or bad, can be judged only by the one who is aware of child's 'picture language'. If a sentence of one language is judged by the expert of another language, on the basis of the grammar of his own language, he would do injustice. Children's language shapes is by the experience of his whole personality. And an adult's language of shapes is often made of the experience of his eye. Both are unique. They can't be compared with one another.

***Shiksha ka Vahan— Kala, Devi Prasad***

dots on the paper. In the second phase of this process, children try to draw pictures. It is possible that children might be hesitant to draw at the start, because it's a new experience for them. There could be several other reasons too for this hesitation—

- (i) children do not get enough opportunities to observe and read books.
- (ii) they might have seen fewer print materials in their surrounding environment.
- (iii) they might have got few opportunities for independent reading and expression in the classroom, and may not have been motivated by their teacher.

Often, children are not satisfied with their drawings. They should be shown examples of good drawing, so that they are motivated to improve their own drawings. We believe that children's drawings should get a respectable place in the class, and the teacher/adults should not be contented by mere, applauding the children. They should understand the developing changes and its connection with the pictures; this assessment should be noted down in the diary. Children should get an opportunity to talk about their pictures. An important activity of early literacy is also to note down major points of conversation during this talk about the pictures. There should also be a 'drawing corner' along with a 'reading corner' in the classroom.

What should we do with the pictures and drawings in Classes I and II?

It is very important to organise contextual activities in Classes I and II. By doing this, children—

- (i) Develop an understanding on a story, incident whether heard or read.
- (ii) Motivated to imagine.

(iii) Able to do creative works like picture-writing.

Children's drawings are based on their capacity to judge things. For this, children should be exposed to the things and characters that they can see and understand. It is very essential that they are exposed to language through stories, poems and conversations.

- (i) Children should not be asked to draw in only one particular style and manner. If we want them to draw pictures of a flower or flower pot, various pictures of flowers and flower pots should be displayed in the classroom.
- (ii) The picture drawn by us is for ourselves, it should not be imposed on the children.
- (iii) One must try to engage children to draw about things related to their context or experiences.
- (iv) Gradually, try to get them to draw pictures based on imaginary stories or incidents.

Pictures may also be based on poems. For this, it is necessary that—

The written poem is available with the children or is displayed on the wall near them, because the pictures related to the poem will emerge only when children can read the poem. This activity is important because it provides the children with opportunity to read with understanding.

Children's picture writing is a part of their writing development. During the phase of picture writing, children also undergo the process of creating meaning. Meanings are based on the children's heard, read or seen experiences. The philosophy of creating meaning is also involved in the act of writing.

## WRITING IN CLASSES I AND II: A PERSPECTIVE



## **WRITING IN CLASSES I AND II: A PERSPECTIVE**

Perhaps, it would not be a new experience for any reader, to observe the children of Classes I or II, skillfully cramming letters, sounds, shapes and the words—beginning with the name of learning to reading, and writing. On the other side, there are certain other experiences like the same children using different game— songs while playing, playing with words, using rhyming words, enacting someone in game and conversing like some person and while playing alone thinking and murmuring about their own activities, etc., which are very meaningful in themselves. We know and also admit that children use language accurately and effectively for conversing, thinking and playing. Then, why does it happen that these behaviours of children which showcase their control over language, as well as their knowledge and understanding of language, remain outside the boundary of class? Why these accomplishments of children related to language are lost in the hue and cry of learning alphabets as talked about in the beginning? Does reading and writing only begin with the learning of alphabets in school? For the answers to these questions, first we need to realise that the understanding of language usage with which children come to school, is deeply connected to reading and writing.

### **What is reading and writing?**

The mutual relation of letter and its sound is generally thought to be the beginning of reading and writing. This thinking is reflected in the sequence of reading and writing of letters, words, sentences and then perhaps in reading and writing a story or a poem. Now, let's pay attention to whether learning to communicate or using

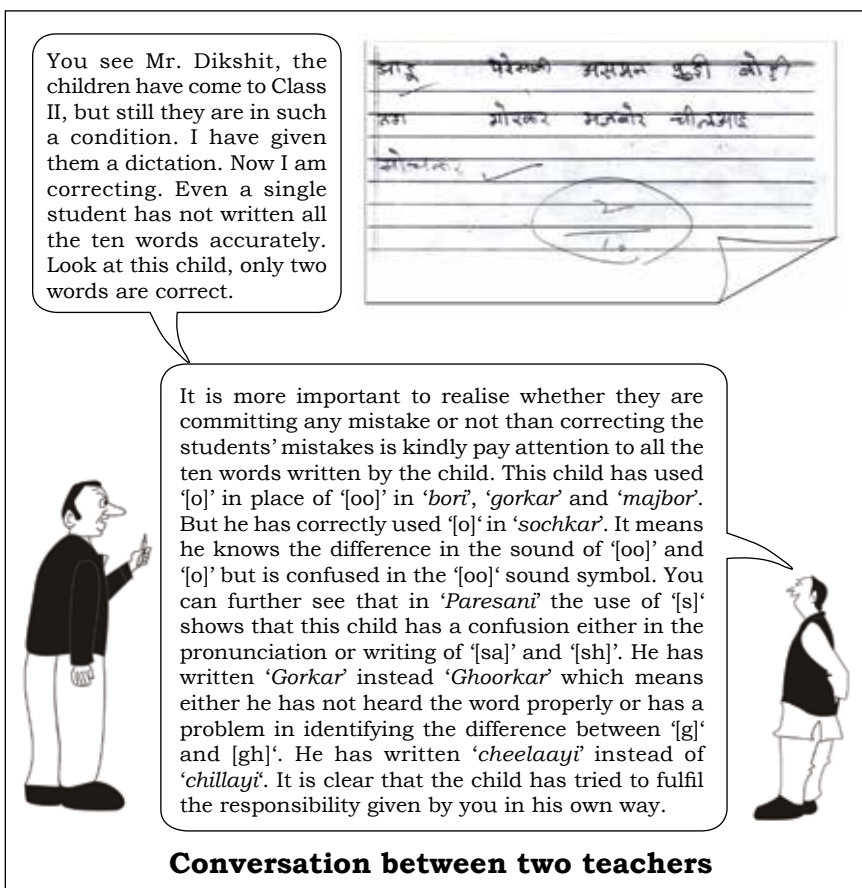
oral language by children is also dependent on such systematic and formal education. Children listen to their elders talking to one another in day-to-day situations. Gradually, children themselves start using similar structures to communicate with others and keep changing these structures according to the reactions of the adults. This skill develops in the natural and meaningful context of communication.

This is the age in which children try to read the written material around them, like on wrappers of biscuits and toffees, instruction boards, direction boards on the roads, posters on the roadside, etc., As soon as children are able to hold a pen, pencil, chalk, etc., they start scribbling and try to add some meaning or message to them — this is also a part of the beginning of writing. These are the signs of their early literacy and natural efforts of shaping meaning, and not the results of any formal education. In fact, the cognition of reading and writing also develops like development of oral language in the day-to-day meaningful and workable contexts.

### **Concept of writing in the class**

Now, it is to be pondered over why the concept of early literacy needs to be understood more comprehensively and deeply, and why it should be given due importance in classroom activities, and how children's learning can be made more meaningful? The learners who come to school are already proficient in the knowledge of conversational language and some important concepts of reading and writing. If the process of teaching is gradually developed by making this proficiency an important base, then learning to read and write will become an interesting and meaningful experience for children.

The zig-zag lines of children's pictures hold meaning. The opportunity to draw motivates them to express their thoughts and experiences. In this phase of writing, if the teacher writes the name given or the message conveyed by learners through their drawing as told by them, and shows acceptance for personal interpretations, the learner instantly realises the functional use of writing, i.e., writing or print is used to say something meaningful. Such acts clarify this concept of literacy. This concept deepens with the increasing opportunities of reading and writing. Along with it, the technical aspects of writing



Picture 1

also emerge like the direction of writing from left to right (in Hindi), from right to left (in Urdu), the shape of symbols, the space between two words, drawing a line over the word in *Devnaagri* script.

The understanding of these concepts slowly becomes visible in the effort of independent writing by children; the only need is to observe them properly.

In this context of writing, the close connection between relation of reading and writing needs to be understood. In fact, by using meaningful activities in the process of reading, it is important to motivate children to understand and think about what they are reading—otherwise producing the sound by combining different letter sounds will be considered as ‘reading’. Just as in writing, in the process of reading, learners start focusing on the process of meaning-making and gradually start realising the minute details of reading skills. For example, the direction of reading, to guess the reading material through context, etc. In this context, the understanding of the relation between sound and letter also starts developing.

The understanding of letter-sound relation continuously reflects in the learner’s writing. Teachers can now observe one more concept in the learner’s writing and process of writing, maturing through the meaningful opportunities, and gradually moving towards conventional writing. In the effort to express through writing, children start inventing spellings using their understanding of sound-letter relationship.

In some examples of invented spellings, children’s desire to express their innermost thoughts in writing reflects clearly. But generally teachers think these mistakes are permanent, therefore, teachers try to improve the same through scolding, just as they do with other mistakes.

### Sound and letter relation

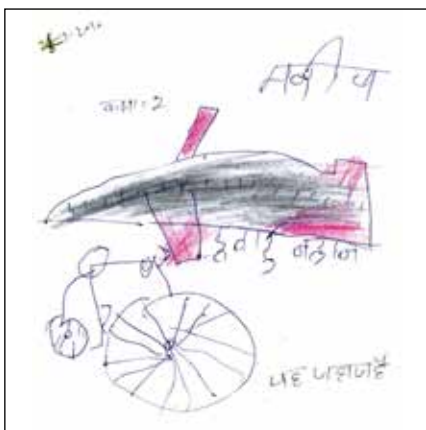
The point on which the above conversation is going on between two teachers really bothers many teachers. But the point to note is that with the continuous opportunity of connecting with print, the children develop the understanding of sound-letter connection along with the concept of writing. Yes, it is possible that the identification of sound of certain letters becomes clear only when the attention is drawn towards it. The children themselves start identifying the sound of commonly used letters as you can see in Picture 1, that the child is confused between the sound symbols of ‘*h*’ and ‘*h*’. But, at the same time, the child is also aware that ‘*h*’ and ‘*h*’ are the symbols of similar sounds. So, according to the need, the teachers can attract the attention towards letter-sound symbols. It is not at all necessary that they will have to repeat this every time. If in any story or context, a particular letter is repeated again and again, this possibility can also be taken care along with the whole class. For example, ‘*Hathi Ki Hichki*’ story can be suitable for the repetition of ‘*h*’ sound. But, at the early level, there is no need to pay special attention to spellings. In comparison to a specific alphabet, children can see the use of ‘*matras*’ in each word. In this way, they themselves develop some understanding of spellings. In Classes I and II, our attention should not be on teaching correct spellings, but on the confident expression of children’s thoughts without any hesitation using the invented spelling. The example given below will help us understand the role of teachers, and that of print rich environment in developing the relation of letter sound in children.

According to today’s work plan, I thought to pay special attention on Reena. When all the children were reading books from the reading corner, I asked Reena to bring her favourite story book. She brought ‘*Lalu Peelu*’ story book. Both of us started reading the story with the help of the pictures. Reena started naming the characters shown in the pictures as I gave details of the events happening in the picture. I used to read a line from the page by keeping my finger on the text after she told her details. In this way, we read manner the whole book. though I asked Reena to read the story by her own. She took the book, sat down on her place and started reading the book with her friends. After a short while, she came to me with the book and said, “Now I can read.” I was happy to see her confidence. I said, “Let’s read”. She started reading from the pictures given on the first page. Then she tried to read the sentences written below. She recognised ‘*Lalu*’ and ‘*hen*’ from the print. On the other page, I drew her attention to the word ‘*Peelu*’, then she started recognising these three words on each page (*An incident based on the experience diary of a teacher*).

Even when the children learn to speak, don't we encourage them when they try to invent new words using familiar vocabulary? Then why do we worry about these examples of invented spellings in the natural process of learning to write? Increasing attempts to write in meaningful context takes invented spellings towards conventional writing; therefore, it is crucial to provide opportunities of reading along with writing. Alongside, increasing the understanding of reading and writing from natural and developmental power of view is essential.

### **Relation between reading and writing**

It is necessary to once again understand the relation between reading and writing with reference to writing. As discussed earlier, both of these processes are complementary to each other. Skills and concepts learnt during reading are used in writing, and those of writing, in reading. Therefore, the written messages of children should be read by them, and written assignments should be based on materials read by them. In this way, the understanding of read materials will help children in the expression of their personal experiences. This process will motivate learners to use writing in meaningful



Picture 2



Picture 3

contexts. Some writers believe that reading expands their personal experiences, and new experiences add to the treasure of experiences as reflected and in their writings. While writing, writers try to trace their thoughts on paper while struggling with them. This process is helpful in developing and understanding a deep connection between reading and writing. This skill is important in developing a skilled reader, and a good writer.

### **Writing opportunities in the class**

Generally, it is thought that understanding of writing in the class is also dependent on alphabets just like reading. The assumption behind it is that, written work is possible only when alphabets are learnt. But even after learning alphabets, learners are not able to express their ideas and experiences. Generally in class, more emphasis is laid on technical aspects such as spellings, and handwriting rather than on children's thoughts and content. As a result, the writing work in the class gets limited only to writing alphabets beautifully, copying questions and answers, dictation, etc. Such exercises disrupt the natural desire of writing in children, and the curiosity to write one's thoughts gets lost somewhere. This method of teaching and learning writing is in contrast to the active discovery by children, and aim of writing, i.e., 'expression'. In class, writing work should be such that it provides opportunities to children to be active writers from the natural and developmental point of view. Writing should be acknowledged as a powerful medium of communication, expression of inner thoughts, imagination, giving information, discovering, searching and expressing emotions. At any age or level, the writing work should be such that it provides opportunity to develop a relation with this functional aspect of writing.

The points given below are helpful in designing such activities—

### **1. Childrens literature and writing**

The theme of writing and the opportunity to express something by writing, should often be related to the story told by the teacher. In accordance with the skills and understanding of writing of the learners, the teacher may ask children to express the similar experience through pictures related to any episode of the story. Teachers can write children's experiences on that picture in the words of the learner, or some mature learners may try to write the thought by themselves. In this effort also, perhaps any child may only write the names of some of the things or persons or a whole sentence in invented spellings. It is necessary for a teacher to record these attempts and assess them and provide suitable opportunity to every child according to their current level of skills. Naming the characters of the story, writing a new title and developing the story further, etc., are some other opportunities of writing. In poems, rhyming words attract learners' attention, and giving importance to this interest, learners may themselves write such rhyming words in the extended lines of the poem, or may add new lines to the poem based on their understanding of the poem.

### **2. Experience-based writing**

For learners, daily experiences of classroom or outside world are important opportunities for writing. Few minutes in the class may be devoted daily to share the experiences of the previous day and to write them down.

### **3. Use of Textbook**

Teachers may use textbook stories and poems to provide opportunities for writing. Careful planning can make a connection between these textbook lessons and children's literature available in the class, and now children can enjoy the material related to one content or subject. If the writing activities related to textbook are made more interesting and meaningful instead of traditional question–answers and fill in the blanks, writing will soon become an interesting medium of expression.

### **4. Print enriched classroom**

The exhibition of names, titles, experiences, stories written by learners also motivates writing in the class. Writing work becomes more meaningful when a learner gets an audience for their writing rather than just displaying the work in the class. The 'morning message' written by the teacher gradually gets transformed into messages written by learners to their teacher and peers. In the same way, writing titles of the read stories and poems every week in the book list is also a relevant use of writing.

It is important to consider writing as the medium of expression for our own thoughts, imagination and experiences. This perspective is the base of early literacy, and this vision of reading and writing is important for a meaningful learning.

## ASSESSMENT OF WRITING



## **ASSESSMENT OF WRITING**

It has been indeed a great achievement for mankind to be able to express themselves and their thoughts through writing. In primitive ages, human beings used to express their thoughts, style of living, experiences, etc., through picture symbols as seen in the pictures of the Bheembetka Caves. But, pictures have a limitation. It is very difficult to express everything through pictures; therefore, pictures gradually take the shape of symbols and thereby developing script. Today, we have the script, which is an appropriate medium to express the incidents happening around us, our experiences, our personal feelings, emotions, desires, etc.

We surely wish to pass on such a significant discovery and useful gift of human history to our coming generation like a treasure. It is important to note that there is a (systematic) chronology of development of the script. Some evidences from ancient period suggest or show that script developed first through pictures, then simple symbols, and then in the contemporary form. In the same way, in writing also, children undergo through many such similar phases. But each child moves at their own pace through these phases. Keeping this in mind, we need to make this process simple, natural and meaningful in the primary classes.

At the primary level also, the main aim of writing is to communicate and express thoughts. During the initial years this should be the central aim of early writing, only then this process would be natural, easy and meaningful. However, usually the aim of writing is limited to the shape of letters, neat hand-writing and use of correct spelling, and the writing process ends up as merely a mechanical process. The use of basic aims of



|    |     |    |     |    |   |
|----|-----|----|-----|----|---|
| 𑀀  | 𑀁   | 𑀂  | 𑀃   | 𑀄  | 𑀅 |
| a  | ā   | i  | ī   | u  | ū |
| 𑀆  | 𑀇   | 𑀈  | 𑀉   | 𑀊  | 𑀋 |
| e  | ai  | o  |     |    |   |
| 𑀌  | 𑀍   | 𑀎  | 𑀏   | 𑀐  | 𑀑 |
| ka | kha | ga | gha | na |   |
| 𑀒  | 𑀓   | 𑀔  | 𑀕   | 𑀖  | 𑀗 |
| ca | cha | ja | jha | ña |   |
| 𑀘  | 𑀙   | 𑀚  | 𑀛   | 𑀜  | 𑀝 |
| ta | tha | da | dha | na |   |
| 𑀞  | 𑀟   | 𑀠  | 𑀡   | 𑀢  | 𑀣 |
| ta | tha | da | dha | na |   |
| 𑀤  | 𑀥   | 𑀦  | 𑀧   | 𑀨  | 𑀩 |
| pa | pha | ba | bha | ma |   |
| 𑀪  | 𑀫   | 𑀬  | 𑀭   | 𑀮  | 𑀯 |
| ya | ra  | la | ja  | va |   |
| 𑀰  | 𑀱   | 𑀲  | 𑀳   | 𑀴  | 𑀵 |
| śa | ṣa  | śa | ha  |    |   |

Brahmi script

|    |     |    |     |    |
|----|-----|----|-----|----|
| 𑀀  | 𑀁   | 𑀂  | 𑀃   | 𑀄  |
| a  | i   | u  | e   | o  |
| 𑀆  | 𑀇   | 𑀈  | 𑀉   | 𑀊  |
| ka | kha | ga | gha | na |
| 𑀌  | 𑀍   | 𑀎  | 𑀏   | 𑀐  |
| ca | cha | ja | jha | ña |
| 𑀒  | 𑀓   | 𑀔  | 𑀕   | 𑀖  |
| ta | tha | da | dha | na |
| 𑀘  | 𑀙   | 𑀚  | 𑀛   | 𑀜  |
| ta | tha | da | dha | na |
| 𑀞  | 𑀟   | 𑀠  | 𑀡   | 𑀢  |
| pa | pha | ba | bha | ma |
| 𑀤  | 𑀥   | 𑀦  | 𑀧   | 𑀨  |
| ya | ra  | la | va  |    |
| 𑀪  | 𑀫   | 𑀬  | 𑀭   | 𑀮  |
| śa | ṣa  | śa | ha  |    |

Kharoshthi script

Picture writings from the Harappa period

|    |     |    |     |    |
|----|-----|----|-----|----|
| 𑀀  | 𑀁   | 𑀂  | 𑀃   | 𑀄  |
| a  | i   | u  | e   |    |
| 𑀆  | 𑀇   | 𑀈  | 𑀉   | 𑀊  |
| ka | kha | ga | gha | na |
| 𑀌  | 𑀍   | 𑀎  | 𑀏   | 𑀐  |
| ca | cha | ja | jha | ña |
| 𑀒  | 𑀓   | 𑀔  | 𑀕   | 𑀖  |
| ta | tha | da | dha | na |
| 𑀘  | 𑀙   | 𑀚  | 𑀛   | 𑀜  |
| ta | tha | da | dha | na |
| 𑀞  | 𑀟   | 𑀠  | 𑀡   | 𑀢  |
| pa | pha | ba | bha | ma |
| 𑀤  | 𑀥   | 𑀦  | 𑀧   | 𑀨  |
| ya | ra  | la | va  |    |
| 𑀪  | 𑀫   | 𑀬  | 𑀭   | 𑀮  |
| śa | ṣa  | śa | ha  |    |

Gupta script



Writing is also a type of communication. While writing, we talk to someone, although the person is not before us, many things are written to secure some information, thought or memory.”

– *Krishan Kumar*

writing, which we have been discussing, has become a rare sight in the classroom. Now, you may say that oral language is always used in classes as the medium of communication and expression of thoughts. There is a need to pay more attention to the other mechanical aspects of written languages. But if we reconsider it, we will find that by doing so, the process of learning to write becomes monotonous and more complicated for the child. If we, from the beginning itself, regard written language as the extension of communication, writing in class, will be more interesting and meaningful. As children express their experiences before others through oral language; in the same way, they will also consider writing as a medium of expression.

Now we will look at how teachers usually perceive children’s efforts to writing in primary classes, and what does it reveal about ours.

How should a teacher respond to the writings of a child? For this, some examples of writing were given to teachers for analysis. While analysing these examples, following comments were given by different group of teachers.

Why are you so small?  
 'No, you are so beautiful!  
 Why are you telling you  
 are not beautiful every  
 one is beautiful

Because I don't get water  
 and I am not beautiful.

you are  
 absolutely  
 right, Nistha  
 I agree.

21/05

एक बार एक जोधराका पेड़ का  
 छा के पौधराका सबक का  
 पौधराका उसका भानी  
 रक्षा कक्षा था वो अरमी  
 हर रोज़ वाली था वो उसी रक्ष  
 ३ शान्त था गावर ज़री हमर  
 आवु सर से हर रक्षी  
 पौधराका, को फनी देका था  
 एक दिन तो घर में था  
 बीजा लाया कुनगा उसी रक्ष  
 मीनी को फलान के जप ५  
 बीजा बीजा रगे

21/05/20

गामी का मोसम

जोब परी बहुत उदास होगई थी ।

गामी से सोज लोना होक गसम

गसम हावा होगई ।

परी इसलस उदास होगई थी

कयुकी उसको बहुत गामी लगरी थी

### Group 1: Teacher Comment

- This work has not been evaluated by any teacher, because there is no tick, cross or date.
- The child's mistakes are not corrected, which is a proof that the teacher has not checked it.
- If we had checked it, we must have given a written comment like 'good; 'very good', etc.
- Perhaps this remark is given by a classmate because words like 'I agree' can be used by a friend only.

## **Group 2**

- It is possible that the teacher has examined it, because it appears the same as we confidently write in big, bold letters in a child's notebook with a sketch pen or any other writing instrument.
- The language also does not appear to be that of a child, so it appears that the comment below the child's writing is by a teacher, and not by a classmate.

In the above discussion, you can see that teacher's own assumptions about their own role are very rigid. All the teachers were united in their opinion that without a tick sign, signature and date, it cannot be proved that the work is evaluated by the teacher. Usually, such marks end up becoming a 'proof' of original/authentic evaluation. They mostly talk about correction of mistakes, as if without it, they will not be considered a teacher. However, besides it, some more issues emerged from this discussion which is very interesting. We need to give a thought to the manner in which teachers comment on the child's written work and see if they themselves take care of these things in their own writing. Often, teachers make separate yardsticks for children and for themselves. Teachers regard themselves as regulators of children's work and check the work accordingly. Most of their attention is on the mechanical aspects of their writing instead of expression of thought. In all this, the child's self-expression is lost.

For example, teacher's commented that, 'writing big-bold letters in any manner, is ironical, because children are expected to write in appropriate form, within lines and neatly; however, we ourselves wanted to be exempted from it. In fact the manner in which

the teachers write in their notebooks is an ideal for the latter.

This is also very surprising that teachers expect themselves to be a moderator/regulator. Teachers' comment that 'I agree' can only be spoken by a classmate, also points out that there is lack of emotional bond in the relation of teachers and children.

### **How should the assessment be?**

The aim of assessment is to become aware of what does the child know or has learnt, and how can the teachers help them in learning. The teachers can improve their work plan and method of teaching on the basis of this information. Assessment also provides information to the teacher about the development and pace of learning of each child in the class.

Often, assessment in Classes I and II is done through exam which is conducted after one or two units or at the year-end, or at the term-end. This exam mainly comprises of questions based on memory, and the subject-wise achievement of children is evaluated by marks or grades. This can be called Summative Assessment. For the fulfilment of the aim of assessment, it is necessary that the assessment in primary classes should be continuous and based on the observation of learners' work and behaviour, and this is possible through Formative Assessment. Formative assessment is the medium of achieving competency in learning. This assessment can be done throughout the year; from the beginning of the classes till the end. It is noteworthy that the teacher needs to plan for formative assessment.

Assessment should not only be limited to reading-writing, but also include listening and speaking skills. Listening means to patiently hear and understand others.

For children, listening is a sound or talk; this could be listening to a story, poem or dialogue between each other. Conversation and dialogue does not mean that it can only be an authoritative sentence for children. Speaking means that children are able to express their thoughts confidently through speech. It requires that learners must get adequate opportunities to talk in the classes. Teachers can perceive this as a form of expression in the learner's speech. In addition to it, teachers can also assess the range and quality of vocabulary of children, and the extent of inclusion of local language words. For example, in their conversation, the teachers can look for inclusion of words related to the environment and discuss in the class.

While we accept writing of children as a form of expression and communication; we also need to keep in mind how we respond to it.

While assessing the writing work of a child, we can keep many things in our mind example—

- (a) originality and lucidity of thought.
- (b) coherence of ideas/thoughts.
- (c) the mechanical aspects of writing.

However, at the initial level it is very necessary that the learners develop confidence to express their thoughts through writing. For this, the teachers have to work with understanding and patience. By writing a comment of one or two sentences on a learner's writing, you can prove that writing is not a mechanical process, but a form of communication.

For example, when a child writes a story or a letter, they want to say or express something. The child also wants the teacher to read their thoughts and comment on them. In such a situation, instead of the child's thoughts, if more attention is directed at the spellings

and sentence structures that might consider that their thoughts are not valued in the class. Gradually, the originality and lucidity of their thoughts wanes and their creativity weakens. So, it is important that teachers give importance to the content and expression. If a child writes a story, the teacher can respond by commenting on what they felt after reading it? Did they recall something after reading it? Did they laugh on anything? Did they feel sad about anything?

In addition to it, we will have to take care that it is not appropriate to look for everything in written work at once. If you correct everything at the same time and focus on identifying the mistakes of the learner, they will be hesitant to write the next time. You can set different goals to look for different things. For example, in the initial few months, more attention can be devoted to the learners' feelings, originality of thoughts, and less attention on the spelling correction. Here also, we will have to keep variation according to the level and pace of each child. You will have to decide yourself what type of improvement, suggestions, encouragement is needed for the learner.

Gradually, you may also consider other areas like cohesion of thoughts, spellings, and handwriting. It is also possible to work on the sequence of a story, and to examine only this in the written work, or identify rhyming words in a poem and compose a new poem using these words rather than just focusing on identification of rhyming words. Then your response, must also give feedback on whether the objectives align to these activities. It is important that the children should believe that they can write, and the teacher is willing to know their ideas.

Appreciating learners' written work can develop confidence in them. For doing this, only commenting

‘good’ or ‘very good’ on children’s work is not enough. The teacher should tell the child what they liked in their writing? Along with this, it is also important that the teacher must suggest how the child can improve their writing. Teachers can also write comments that help children to expand their writing. For example, if a child writes about playing with their pet dog, then the teacher can write, “I felt good to know that you play with your pet. Can you write about what else do you do with your pet?”. When the learner feels that the teacher really wants to know, they will be inspired to write.

While giving feedback reactions, certain points should be kept in mind, example— the response is valuable only when it is given immediately. It should not happen that we get so late in responding that children themselves forgot about what they wrote, or what were their feelings and thoughts while writing. It is not necessary that teachers write detailed feedback in every learner’s notebook daily. What can be the kind of feedback? It should be in the form of a suggestion or a question or mentioning clearly what did you like in that writing? The crux of the whole matter is that you display an interest in learner’s writing, learner will desire to express it through writing. You must remember to give feedback on every learner’s writing every week.

While giving your feedback if you address a child by their name, they feel important and will read your responses very carefully. If the adults want children to be involved in the process of reading and writing, they will have to present the whole sentence, and if there are any suggestions for improvement, or some appreciation, it must be clear, focused and specific. This feedback will help them to progress in their work. Therefore, this type of assessment is surely more difficult than only awarding

marks as it gives the learners opportunities to move ahead at their own pace and level. Each child is different. Each child has some special qualities and a unique style of writing, which cannot be measured in marks.

### **What type should the writing task be and how can the teachers help children develop their writing?**

From the very beginning, we need to pay close attention to the kind of writing opportunities we provide to children, and before assessing in an appropriate way, it is all the more important to note whether we provide opportunities to them to express themselves in writing. Only then, the children will find themselves associated with writing tasks, and there will be variety in their writing. For this, the following points are very important —

- a. there should be a meaningful aim of writing for the learners.
- b. learners should be clear about the audience they are writing for.
- c. learners must have something to say about the given topic.

As we have discussed earlier, we regard writing as an expansion of a conversation. It is very important that there is a desire in the learners for expressing themselves and to associate this desire with writing task. It is the responsibility of the teacher to bring this aspect of writing before the learners. So, the learners should know the aim of writing before the writing task, and this aim should be realistic as well. When they have clear information of why they writing; enthusiasm and originality will continue in their writing. If the learners already know that their work is being done only for the rectification of mistakes and this work will not be promoted in any form after the

activity, how and why should they be interested in the writing tasks? You can create opportunities for realistic writing task in the classroom such as display of written work of children on the bulletin board, to write a letter to the teacher (or anyone else) to express their inner thoughts, to prepare newsletter to share the information collected in the class with others. The teacher will have to search for such new opportunities and new aims along with students, where curiosity is mentioned interest levels.

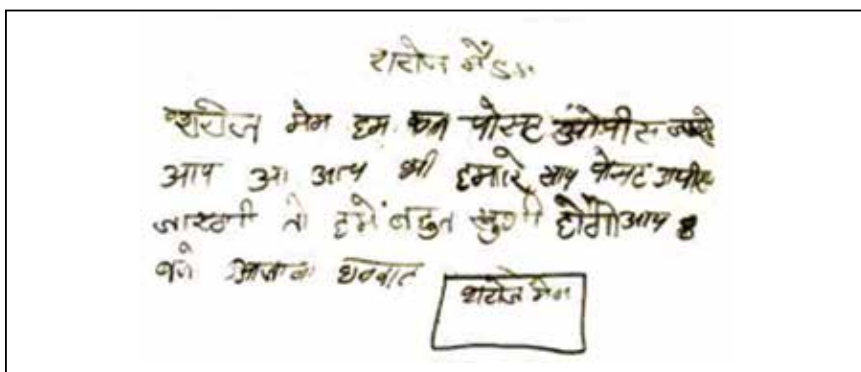
We know that writing is significantly affected by the fact for whom the task is being written and who is the reader. For example, the subject and structure of the letter written for the principal will be very different from the letter written to a friend, or to a government officer for filing a complaint. Children also realise this differences very well. While speaking, they pay attention to what type of words and language are to be used in the class or in aspects in their language whereas their way of talking is very different with friends. We need to use this aspect of different audiences in writing also. We need not tell them these differences very apparently, we need to suggest them different 'readers' for their writing task.

Here, 'readers' means the person whom they are addressing the task and not the virtual 'reader'. This 'reader' can be anybody such as table, chair, a child living in the neighbourhood, cat, etc. Generally, it is seen that learner's writing, whether it is in words, sentences or in the form of short stories, is often written only for the teachers. So, teachers can discuss in class and search for some different 'readers' for the writings of children. Children can be the 'readers' for each others' writings. Moreover, such exhibitions can also be organised where parents or other members of the class, students of other classes, watchman of the school, sweet seller, parents,

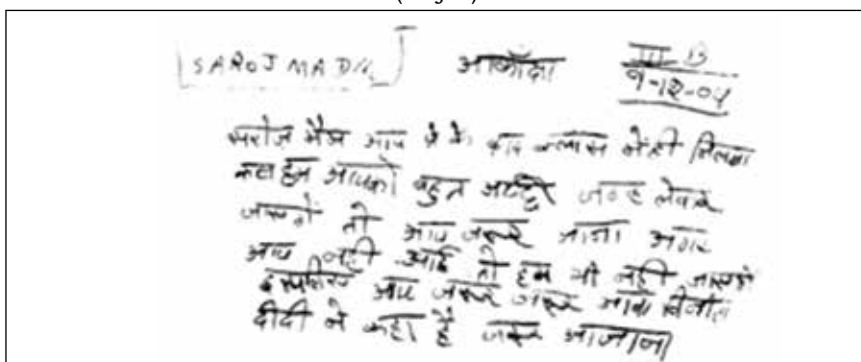
the dog that comes in the recess, bus, cycle, neighbour, children of the city or village, the characters of the story read or heard, etc. Readers are people or objects whom children can address their writing to. These possibilities can put life to writings. Along with it, children will incorporate a vast world in their written communication. These forms of writing are also a means of learning the functional aspect of writing.

In the earlier examples (pictures 2, 3 & 4), we can see that children have written different things in their own way for one objective.

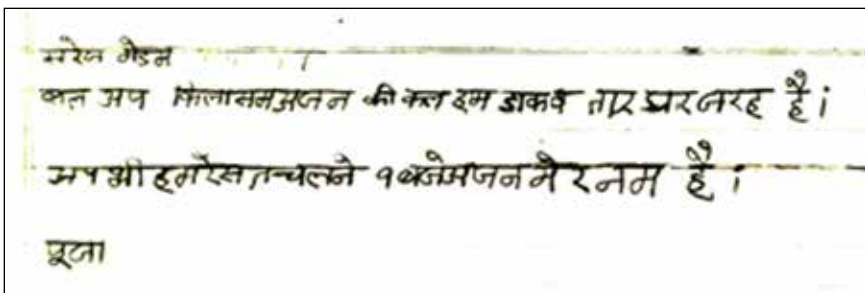
### **Few letters written by the students of Class III for inviting their ex-teacher to go for a local tour:**



Picture 2  
(Rajni)



Picture 3  
(Akanksha)



Picture 4  
(Pooja)

The writers of all these three letters are clear about the audience and purpose of writing this letter because all three of them have written the time of going to post office in their own way so that they can fulfil the real and functional purpose of writing these letters. Many formal aspects are visible in the letter writing of these children because ‘readers’ and ‘aim’ of writing is clear to the learners, which are proof of increasing understanding of writing and the children are too enthusiastic towards this work that they have used self-invented spellings without any hesitation. Besides that, the personal things written in this letter point towards the fact that the children were very attached to the teacher.

A ‘good’ writing is one that reflects writers’ own point of view and is attached to him. Children should also be given the opportunities to develop their own point of view through the activities related to writing. Discussion with children before writing motivates them to incorporate new thoughts and aspects. So, before any writing, discuss with the children what things they might like to include in their writing. It may be possible that some children have plenty for writing on a subject while others have very little. Yet all the children benefitted by this discussion because children’s thought-process develops by listening to each other’s thought. If a learner doesn’t have anything

to say on a particular subject, do not maintain that the learner does not know anything because there may be many reasons they are not interested in the subject, feels hesitated to talk about it, etc. Generally, children are self-judges of their progress. To some extent, they start differentiating between right spelling and self-invented spelling, but they can deny writing due to the fear of not writing correctly or not being able to match up to expectations.

Therefore, the teacher should create an atmosphere in the class in which learners are not afraid of committing mistakes, but they should have the belief that the teacher understands their efforts of writing and their thoughts if the learners are not familiar with any topic, they can face problems in writing because every writer needs many thoughts and experiences related to that topic in order to write about it, because only then the writing becomes effective and can convey point of view of the writer. If the learners do not want to write on any topic and, even after discussion, they do not feel capable of writing on that topic, they should have the freedom of changing their subject. Especially in the primary classes, the writing opportunities of children should be related to the experiences of their personal or daily eager to share life, which gives the children an opportunity to express themselves without any fear & choose what & how they are going to construct their writing. Alongside, they also develop confidence level.

The more, learners develop interest and desire to write, the more teacher will have to search new opportunities and ideas so that this process remains meaningful and the learners can involve three aspects (talked earlier) in their writing. These aspects become the benchmark of quality of writing after the children grow up, so, the

opportunities of writing should be given in the primary classes, keeping these aspects in view.

With the continuously growing opportunities for writing, we will be able to assess that not only learners' understanding of writing is increasing, but there is a positive change in their writing also. vis a vis vocabulary, experiences, sentence construction invented spellings and confidence which will be clearly visible in their writings. Along with these opportunities for writing, it is essential to note this along the reading opportunities along with writing because these are not sequential processes but are inter-connected process which affect each other very deeply.

२०.१.१०

नाना नानी मुझ

हूँ

आपको धन्यवाद करना

चाहूँ हों क्योंकि आप ने मुझ

खिलौने ~~दिए~~ दिलाए

मेरे मेरे

१८५

मंथन,

मुझे बहुत खुशी है कि तुम्हने नाना-नानी को  
खिलौनों के लिए धन्यवाद करने के लिए ज्ञात लिखा।

पिनीता

Picture 5  
(Manthan)

## TEACHER'S PREPARATION: WORK PLANNING



## Objectives Related to Early Literacy for Classes I and II

| Listening                                                                                                             | Speaking                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Reading                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Writing                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>a. To listen carefully to the story or anything that is being told, according to one's own interest and level.</p> | <p>a. Curiosity or desire to share one's experience, thoughts and information with others.<br/> b. Feeling of happiness in reciting poem or story.<br/> c. Telling one's thoughts confidently.<br/> d. Taking care of the sequence, theme while telling the story.</p> | <p>a. To read a story or poem through the medium of picture or context<br/> b. To recognise familiar and often repeated words.<br/> c. To recognise written material available around and to relate the familiar words with other contexts also.<br/> d. To predict reasonably about the incidents in the story.<br/> e. To understand sound-symbols in meaningful contexts and to try to read unfamiliar words also.<br/> f. To understand various aspects of the story as— beginning, end, theme, characters, etc.<br/> g. To differentiate between story and poem.</p> | <p>a. To write one's inner most thoughts independently.<br/> b. Beginning with zig-zag lines to be able to express one's thoughts through the medium of pictures, sentences or words.<br/> c. The curiosity to express one's thoughts or wishes and experiences, etc., by writing.</p> |

## **TEACHER'S PREPARATION: WORK PLANNING**

A teacher knows the best about the situation of their class, facilities, children, children's emotions, and their situation. The aim of elementary literacy is to create print-rich environment in class, provide meaningful opportunities of reading and writing to children, and also to make this process interesting. For the fulfilment of this objective the teacher has to play an active role. A Teacher can understand the value of preparation in the form of work plan. Before organising any programmes, an appropriate planning is required. For example, if you are going on a visit to a cold place and you have not planned anything before that or have not done any preparation, then in the absence of warm clothes, the enthusiasm and enjoyment of your visit will definitely be spoiled.

Any planning is successful only when it is done according to the situation and aim. Hence, work plan is the most important part of this whole programme. Work plan also mean the ways through which the teacher provides various meaningful opportunities of reading and writing to children. How do children learn reading and writing – only this understanding is not enough. It is also necessary to understand how the opportunities of reading and writing processes, operationalise in the class. In this way, the understanding about reading and writing of children is incomplete without work plan. Its main reason is that while planning for work, we think actively about the practical aspects of operationalising various processes such as — what is the purpose of the activity? What material is to be collected for the activity? How will the discussion related to the activity be held? How much time is to be devoted for the activity? etc.

Work plan is made keeping in view all these main points. This work plan is very different from time-table. In time-table, the only thing that is decided is how much time is to be given to each subject and when? But what will you make them do in that stipulated time and how will you arrange it — is the part of work plan. This work plan is to be made of the activities done daily, and not of any particular occasion or process (like exam, etc.)

Many occasions related to early literacy programme are described here; keeping them in view, teachers can organise their daily work plan. A well organised and systematic work plan will definitely contribute to make the reading and writing process meaningful and interesting.

**Do daily**

| Morning message | Time for reading corner | Activities related to story/poem | To share one's thoughts/writings | Opportunities of writing |
|-----------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
|                 |                         |                                  |                                  |                          |

**1. Morning message**

Everyday write ‘morning message’ on the board after discussing with the children on a daily basis. Such topics which are part of our daily life like feast at somebody’s home in the village, marriage, various activities at the time of rain, ploughing in the field, harvesting, sowing, etc.

Till now, we were summing up today's talk in one sentence. At the end of Class I or beginning of Class II, children are totally familiar with morning message. So, this is the time to bring change in the morning message. It is not necessary to sum up morning message in one sentence. If the children are sharing their thoughts in detail, it can be written in 2-3 sentences.

- (i) 'Morning message' can be expanded through a story or a poem and an interesting activity can be made such as 'Milli's cycle'. After telling the story, the children can include their own experiences of learning cycling in today's talk activity such as— Raman was riding on the cycle yesterday and fell down many times but then he was able to do cycling after several attempt. If any such topic comes into discussion, during today's talk, it can be a very good subject of discussion where children will share their experiences own of which they are hesitant of telling about in the public.

We can talk about such experience in Class I and in Class II, we can ask them to write about such experiences. If any such interesting topic comes out during the discussion of morning message. which can be converted into poem, then surely expand them like — teacher's watch does *chum, chum, chum* and it can be expanded—

Teacher's watch does chum, chum, chum

Rahims's box does dum dum dum

Anu's feet does dhum dhum dhum

- (ii) Sometimes, children can themselves be given the opportunity to write morning message on the board. Teachers should help only where students face problems such as — if children want to write 'Rahul, fell down from the swing yesterday' and are unable to write 'swing' or any other word, first allow other

students to help each other. After that, the teacher may ask the students to search this word in the chart pasted in the class, and then in the story book available in front of them. If they are not able to find that word or letter, the teacher will then write that word for them. Through this process of helping, students will be motivated to search solutions for themselves and along with it, attention will be paid to minute details of writing. Such occasions can be repeated with the students of Class II.

## **2. Freedom of reading in reading corner**

The journey of reading starts with the availability of books and according to the interest level of students and providing them the opportunities to read them. To make this process a reality, it is necessary that books and other reading material are made available to the students. Keeping this in view, reading corner is made in Classes I and II. This reading corner is theirs, where they will have the freedom to sit, choose books by themselves, and read. This reading corner may look like a small library, but it is different from the school library.

### **Highlights**

- (i) Reading corner provides an opportunity to children to read independently.
- (ii) Apart from children literature and *Barkha*, pencil, paper, chartpaper, colours, something for drawing, colouring and writing may be provided.
- (iii) Plan to include books having drawings and stories written by children, magazines and other written material in the reading corner. This can enrich your corner.
- (iv) Give liberty to use this corner in the reading-learning programme in the class such as — if you are teaching

the poem 'Sun' from the textbook then any story related to sun or any book of poem related to that poem can be used in the reading corner.

- (v) Teachers can themselves be the reader of that reading corner and be a partner with them while reading the book.
- (vi) A box made of a cardboard can also be kept beside the rack so that children can use that for keeping books.
- (vii) Give the responsibility of maintenance of that corner to children.
- (viii) A name can be given to reading corner to bring novelty in the corner. The arrangement of displaying books can also be changed from time to time.
- (ix) A lot of material of children's interest can be kept in reading corner such as puppets, masks, clay toys, pebbles, marbles, bottle caps, etc. This will make the corner come alive and such things will give them opportunities to communicate, to make something new and to write.

### **3. Story**

Many activities can be done with any story. The activities based on story can be divided into three parts —

- (i) before telling the story.
- (ii) while telling the story.
- (iii) after telling the story.

#### ***Before telling the story***

The aim of doing any activity before telling the story is to develop children's interest in the story, and to familiarise them with the theme of the story so that when children open the book, they have confidence and the curiosity to read.

The activities, which we can do, are as follow —

- (i) Write the title of the story and writer's name on the board before telling the story and read it out for the children.
- (ii) Discuss about the cover page of the story and ask them to predict the story. This work can be done through conversation and the children's thoughts can be written on the board.
- (iii) Talk with the children about the aim of telling the story. Discuss with children which story will they listen and why? Firstly, tell the story only for enjoyment. Secondly, ask the children to pay attention on the main aspects of the story like — listen attentively about the characters of the story, description of the place, etc.

### ***While reading story***

- (i) Teachers can read the story while showing the pictures.
- (ii) Teachers can stop in between, and along with students can predict about the forthcoming events in the story.
- (iii) When the story is being told the second or third time, various events of the story can be written on different pages and given to students to read the story. Students will have to read according to the events of the story. First of all, that student reads who has first event of the story, then second, third, etc. In this way, children will help each other in reading and develop the habit of working together in a group.
- (iv) Story can be given one more interesting form. The teacher will tell the students that he will be committing six mistakes while reading the story and children will have to find out those mistakes. So, the teacher should think six mistakes which they are about to

commit. It can be mixing the names of the characters, events, things, etc. or anything whichever can be done in the story.

### ***After reading the story***

- (i) Give a new title to the story, draw, pictures or write about the story.
- (ii) Enact the story.
- (iii) Leave the story incomplete and give the opportunity to Class II to develop it further.
- (iv) One story can be discussed for two to three days, where the story '*Ghar ki Khoj*' published by NCERT, can be read. Talk about the homes of pet animals around them and provide opportunity to children to think about it. If homes of animals are exchanged, what will happen? Such as if pigeon goes on and stays in the nest of crow then? Bird goes in the hole of mouse? Will earthworm be able to live in the home of ant? If cow comes in our class, then...?
- (v) Second day, ask the students to draw a picture of their house and write names of the household objects.
- (vi) Third day, search some other occasions for writing in the class such as —
  - a. To frame a new story using characters of the story.
  - b. To write about one of the characters in details.
  - c. To make the antonyms of the words used in the story and to note them down.
  - d. If some letters are repeated in the story, to pick and choose those letters from the story and searching new words written with those letters and making new words out of them.
- (vii) Any activity can be repeated and extended For example, after the story from Eklavya Publication '*Tipik Pan Bharr*', the teacher can sit together with the

children and instruct them to listen and feel the voices around them with closed eyes. After that, a list can be made in the classroom as to who had felt what. The same activity can be modified later and repeated, for example, taking the kids out and doing this activity outside.

(viii) In the same way, do not hesitate in repeating any activity. And make rare that interest in the activity is maintained.

#### **4. To share own thoughts and writing**

Have a classroom discussion daily for at least fifteen minutes about the activity done in the class. Give them a vivid sky which they can paint with vibrant colours of their own imagination. Always spare some time in the class in which the child can read and share his written work. If each day, four to five children are given the opportunity of reading their own compositions, then one day, they will positively be able to share their writings with the help of the teacher. When children read their composition, pay full attention to their thoughts and innermost talks, and not on technical aspects.

#### **5. Opportunities of writing**

##### ***Guided writing and independent writing — two types of writing***

To develop writing skills of the students, the children should be given independent opportunities where children write with the help of teachers along with independent writing activities. Teachers' help will assist in enriching children's writing. Such writing can be called guided writing. On elementary level, the opportunities of both types of writing should be given to children. Guided writing gives the opportunity to learn something new,

whether it is with the help of a teacher or a classmate. Whatever understanding children develop about writing, they express it through independent writing. So, both types of opportunities are very useful for us.

### ***Guided writing***

Search any story or poem, in which small sentence structures are repeated, and at least write two sentences or paragraphs on the blackboard or chart in front of the students. Read them interestingly with the children once or twice. After that, ask the students to extend them. For Class I, you yourself write the full sentence on the chart or board and only leave that space blanks where characters are changing, and ask children to think and fill that blank. In it, every child can add anything according to their imagination, which the teacher must acknowledge it. In this way, as many new lines are created, keep on adding them in the poem or story. Teachers should themselves think one or two such examples. But do not force the children to agree on only those examples.

*Example —*

Ant O! ant

Where have you been?

Oh! I was here only

In the search of sugar only

Cow O! cow

Where have you been?

Oh! I was here only

In the search of grass only

..... O! .....

Where have you been?

Oh! I was here only

In the search of mouse only  
..... O! .....  
Where have you been?  
Oh! I was here only  
In the search of ..... only  
(Sushil Shukla)

In the beginning, leave blank space only for one to two words in the poem or story. The sentences in which there is repetition, leave them blanks, so that children can themselves fill in. After discussion, ask children to write the whole poem in their notebook. Give sufficient time to children for this work. The points which comes out of the discussion with the children, write them also on the board or chart.

### ***Independent writing***

‘Independent writing’ is that form of writing in which the child themselves decides what they wants to express and how. In this writing, children are free to write their innermost thoughts through either using only pictures, using pictures and sentences only, or using words or sentences. But, in the beginning, even in this form of writing, the teacher will have to be ready to help the children in creating the environment and opportunities of writing. Slowly with the growing opportunities of reading and writing, children’s dependence on teachers will gradually reduce. As an example of independent writing, one activity can be done by putting the box of letters in the class. The subject of writing letters may be about complaint, favourite work, least liked work and things, for parents, telling their own speciality, shareing the news of their colony, school, etc. In this way, during the week of messages and letters, some students, playing

the role of postman, can deliver the letters to the right child. If the letter is directly written for the teacher or for any such thing that is out of reach of children, then the teacher can themselves write the answers to those letters. If the teachers want, they can make this activity a part of the class in a very interesting way in which teachers can change the context of the letters every week. One more activity can be done based on letters like — to arrange hearing on the complaint letters (missing book of any child, unavailability of drinking water, eating lunch of somebody, to push somebody, etc.). In this way, classroom problems can be solved through discussions with the children. Besides that, children will slowly realise their social responsibility towards others.

## **Early literacy in class — some opportunities**

### **Conversation on pictures**

Talk to the children about the pictures they made by asking them to write their names on those pictures. Write something about the pictures and ask the children to read it. Along with this, you also write something about the picture on their paper and read it to them. Here, children's innermost thoughts can be known through pictures for example: what was so interesting that made the children draw the cat? To understand how the child is attached with the picture is very important. Children's thoughts can be written below the pictures in their own words. In Class II, discuss about the pictures made by the children, and help them in writing sentences about the picture.

### **Writing children's experiences or experience writing**

There can be many contexts for children's experience writing. If any interesting or adventurous incident has

occurred in the class or near the school, such as some frog came to the class, appearance of snake in the rainy season, or any activity done in the class, as preparation of something new, etc. These are some of the experiences with which every student is familiar. Such experiences of students can be talked about in the class. Ask the children to narrate the whole incident. As the children are narrating, the teacher may note them down on the board, chart or on the back of old calendar and hang in the class. With the cooperation of children, put the finger on those words or sentences and read them in class so that children develop an understanding that their spoken words can be written and read. Children can also be motivated to give it an interesting title. Then ask children to copy them in their notebook. An exhibition of this experience writing can also be put up at the end of the year. Next day, again read the experiences as told by the children by keeping your fingers on the words. Till the end of Class II, ask the students to write their own experiences after discussion. At least ten such opportunities of experience writing should be given in a year.

### **Writing related to Local Tour**

Local tour can be organised for the following objectives—

- (i) For any specific activity related to story or poem.
- (ii) To collect the things around, for example — leaves, stones, things made of plastic, etc., based on which any activity is to be done in class.
- (iii) To observe the things around such as different trees and plants, birds, houses, nests, etc. Some important places such as post office, farms, etc., to observe special activities done on special occasions or seasons, or to watch the change in any particular things after a definite period of time, etc.

Take the children out for a walk. Ask them to pick ten different kinds of leaves fallen on the road. After coming back, ask them to observe their leaves. In Class I, ask them to write the object to which their leaf resembles. Children will write its name— like fish, like bird, etc. The teachers should write the whole sentence on the board for children. Only leave the space for word with that their leaf resembles. While writing, ask them to take the help of other kids and the written material around them. The children, who come to seek help from the teacher, should be helped wholeheartedly. While helping, bring the attention of the children towards what they know instead of what they are not able to. After the discussion, the teacher may write one example on the board and asks the children to write one sentence like—My leaf is looking like \_\_\_\_\_.

Ask the students of Class II, to classify the leaves and write about them. Ask the students to first tell the basis of their classification. Then ask them to write the same. As the basis of classification, shape, size, colour, types of tree can be included. And also how they look these shapes and what objects are they relating them. For help in writing, the teacher themselves can write the common things on the blackboard, and in other things give liberty to the children to write, by asking each other or the teacher. Gradually, as the children gain confidence in writing, they will start writing independently. Give at least three opportunities of local tour in a year.

**Pay attention to the following three things while discussing with children before writing—**

- Students should have a meaningful purpose before writing.
- Students should know who is going to be the audience of their writings.

- There should be a pre-writing discussion with the children so that their thoughts for writing are activated.

### **Audience for writing task**

Before any writing activity, please discuss the purpose of writing and the composition of the audience. Generally, only teachers read the writings of children, hence, this writing should be looked at as a conversation and a dialogue. Therefore, it is important that the compositions are written defining the purpose of writing for different audience like other students of the class, friends of school or home, parents or neighbours. Even the dog that comes in recess or an old tree can be the audience of any composition. Addressing them, children can write a letter in which they can write everything which they want to say to them. It will be a meaningful conversation for the children and will create an understanding in the children that for different audience, way of writing will also be different. Later, when the children will write formal and personal letters, they will understand the difference in various methods of writing.

### ***Recipe writing***

Everybody is fond of eatables, so it is such an interesting subject that as it provides that interests both adults and children opportunities of reading and writing. When we talk about the recipes of eatables, our purpose is not to search new recipes, but to provide interesting opportunities of reading-writing. Therefore, such recipes should be chosen which are eaten daily — lemonade, *sharbat*, *bhelpuri*, chapati, *chaat*, etc. Such things can also be chosen which can be prepared in the class and where cooking gas is not needed. Every child brings some

material from home to the class, prepares it in the class and taste. After this process, the teacher can write the whole recipe on the board or chart and read it pointing finger on it. After that, the children will be asked to copy the same in their notebook.

Class II students can be asked to observe the things cooked in their house such as *daal*, tea, *roti*, and other delicacies, etc. The next day, while discussing them in class, they can be asked to write those recipes. Method of writing the activity can be done with other things also like making paper boat, bird, clay toys, etc.

### ***Picture description***

Some pictures can be cut from the newspaper or magazine according to the interest of the children and shown in the class, and discussion can be done about that. Pictures should be attractive and there should be a lot of possibilities for discussion.

While choosing the pictures, the following points should be kept in mind —

- interest
- clarity
- related to children's milieu
- free from any type of violence

If some pictures are not directly related to children's environment, talk about that picture with the children in advance. For example, if the picture is about Delhi's metro rail, explain vividly about it while showing the picture to the children. Besides, you can also discuss about the means of local transport.

Discuss about the picture while sitting together with the children. Write children's description on the board or chart and read it with them. The pictures related to local or regional festivals, local incidents can be the subject of picture description and writing.

**Now, if we talk about Early Literacy Programme, our aim is – developing students’ ability of reading along with writing, for this —**

- first of all, textbook needs to be connected with supplementary material.
- supplementary material can be children’s literature, children’s magazines, local stories, etc.
- for understanding a lesson, it is not enough to read it in the class.
- extend the lesson by giving the opportunity to tell their experiences based on the theme of the lesson.
- discuss the reading material. Share your own experiences, similar to the lesson to the children, and give them to read.
- read the poem in such a way that the children feel its rhythm. Do not emphasise on cramming or repeating after the teacher.
- develop the habit of using pictures to understand the lesson by reading.

### **Picture reading**

The conversation promoting creativity and analysis can be very well done through pictures. Pictures can be based on flowers-leaves, birds-animals, children, school, etc. Advertisements of newspapers and magazines, pictures published with news, on calendars, postal stamps, labels and posters can be used. In this way, the sources of pictures are very wide and these can be searched even in a small village. Teachers can collect and store these pictures to use them year after year.

Sitting among the children, talking with them about any picture without any preparation in an informal way, can be very useful. If we become conscious about various aspects of observation, we can make this conversation more useful from the point of view of

the development of language of children. Every question of the teacher affects the responses of children in a definite way. Through question, students' capacity of extending their views and responses can be developed. The levels of responses, to which we can turn the attention of students with the help of questions, are like —

- **Searching** — At this level, we will only ask the students to search things shown in the picture. We can ask question like—What is there in this picture? Is there a mouse in this picture? Who is sitting on the cycle? How old the child is ?, etc.
- **Reasoning** — This level of reaction is related to the capacity of telling reasons. Whatever reason a child tells of anything shown in the picture, the teacher should accept that. The teacher can themselves tell the reason but only as a possible answer — and not as the ultimate answer. Examples of questions — Why is the little girl weeping? Why are we not able to see the last part of the motor cycle? Why is the mouse hiding?
- **Assuming** — At this level, we ask the child to assume themselves in the picture. So, at this level, the aim of asking questions is to motivate their thinking about assuming themselves in an imaginary situation, thinking, who will say what, imagining how will they feel, etc. Examples of questions —If you were sitting on this tree, what/how would you see? What the mouse must be thinking?, etc.
- **Forecasting** — This level is related to guess the incidents after the situation depicted in the picture. To motivate children to think what will happen next. Examples of questions— Where will this man go now? What the little girl do at home? How will she reach home?, etc.
- **Relating** — Now, we will ask such questions from our children which will motivate them to search something in their life that is similar to the situation shown in the picture. Examples of questions — Have you ever ridden on the motor cycle? How do you feel then? Have you ever been with any stranger? What happened then that day?, etc.

Krishna Kumar – *Bachche ki Bhasha aur Adhyapak*

- if, somewhere, there are less pictures in the lesson, draw yourself.
- teach the lessons in sequence. Such as ‘*Baagh*’, ‘*Sair-Sapata*’ lessons can be taken together. Add stories, experiences, etc., to these lessons.
- seven to ten days can be spent in reading the lesson.
- use blackboard as much as possible.
- write Note the children’s discussion as much as possible.

### **Prior preparation**

- be sure that you come prepared according to this planning such as — read the story or lesson yourself which is part of the planning of the next day. Pay attention to its main characteristics and decide the reading-writing activities.
- think for what purposes, you can use book in the class such as for predicting, for doing a related written activity, for reading something more related to that subject, etc.
- surely read two to three stories or poems daily so that you yourself can relate to them and understand their various aspects.
- before narrating the story or poem, read it yourself for many times so that you get familiarised with it. Otherwise, you will pay more attention to reading it yourself than narrating it to the children.
- choose such extracts, sentences, which can be used for prediction by the children, and for talking about their experiences. Ask such questions for sure which do not have a definite answer. Points and questions should be pre-planned.
- look at the pictures of the book attentively so that you can call for the children’s attention while telling the story.

- if any special activity is included in the work planning like — local tour, inviting some reference person in the class or picture description, etc., do all the special preparation needed. For example, search the pictures in advance and prepare points to talk about it, for meeting the resource person, discuss the objective of the activity and according to the availability of time and resources, set the scope of discussion for local trips. Visit the location in advance, seek permission from the principal and ensure to carry along the writing material and drinking water.

### **Comments**

- Teacher needs to be patient. Children's progress may not be apparent in the beginning but its echo can be heard after some time.
- It is necessary to change the print material in the class according to the activity done.
- Prepare a bag to keep the added resources and also ensure to organise it systematically, and surely use it at the right place in future.
- If there are also students with special needs, talk about them with higher authorities, so that special material can be arranged in the class and full justice can be done with them in the class process.
- Class planning can be made flexible according to the children's interest and circumstances.

## **WITHIN THE SPHERE OF EXPERIENCES**

Nature has made every individual unique and given them some qualities which are only theirs. Because of these qualities, every individual has a different point of view of observing and understanding nature, society, life, etc., and a different feeling arises in their heart because of all these. Therefore, the experience of every individual is also special. This quality of one's experience enriches the other. The reason for this difference in experiences is that every individual lives in a different time, place and circumstances, which gives a different form to their experience.) Every child in a class is differently influenced by the teacher's talk, and different teachers have different opinions about the students of the same class. In this part of the manual, an effort has been made to highlight these qualities of teachers and students, to enrich others from their experiences and, along with it, motivate others to write about their experiences.

Chapter six, titled 'Multi-graded Teaching: An experiment that arose out of circumstances' talks about the experiences of a teacher from a single teacher-led school, who teaches Classes I to V. The teacher shares the challenges in the classroom and highlights how in a situation like that children are prone to learn from one another. The experiences of the teacher can fill the reader with hope to make the learning process meaningful even in adverse circumstances.

Chapters seven to nine, that is, *Striving*, *Little Prince*, and *My Small Personal Library*, are episodes of those who survived difficult circumstances, and wholeheartedly or passionately did what they wanted to do on their own terms. Adverse circumstances give one the opportunity to create something new, and they have the spirit to do

something useful and meaningful; they can become an example for many others.

We talk about early grades, those become good spaces to inspire children to unravel their qualities and channel them accordingly. However, due to various restraints, teachers and children tend to look at the teaching-learning process with a predefined mindset or through a particular frame. These frames become even more rigid with children due to discipline, rules, and the fear of their going astray. The experiences of Mathura also tell us that children can create a lot, given the opportunity. Imagine if every student wrote their experiences, feelings, and thoughts about school and the people at home; the teaching-learning work would become smooth. This is not a wishful imagination; only some efforts are needed to make it a reality. The lessons discussed above, also tell us that looking at the children from the point of view of elders only is only a half vision whether it is the rabbit in the stomach of a python in *Little Prince* or the struggle of the writer of *Striving*.

In this part of the book, we talk about teachers and children being creative, looking at the world from their own point of view, doing new experiments without being chaotic, and sharing their experiences with each other and evaluating them fairly and logically.

## **MULTI-GRADED TEACHING: AN EXPERIMENT THAT AROSE OUT OF CIRCUMSTANCES**

For the last seven years, my school has been a single teacher school. Classes from I to V, and students between 100 to 150! While performing all other non-teaching works, I could manage to find some time to understand these classes of mine and also explain them to others. So, this experience is the result of circumstances and not the advocacy of any teaching.

### **A scene**

Five classes sits in three rooms. I saw, in the beginning there was a separate row for each class, but the students of both the classes used to do the same work together such as— If the students of Class II write numbers, the students of Class I will also start writing the same. If the Class IV students read book, the students of Class III will also open the book and read it, or will act like reading.

While playing, these children neither accept any boundaries of the class nor of age. Whatever activities the bigger child performs, the smaller ones also accept the same challenges. Gradually, this started reflecting in the class also. The students of two classes sitting in one room started, and sitting together, and mingling with each other. I did not stop them from sitting together in this masser. In one session, I shuffled the classes of these rooms again and again. For some time, the students of Class I and Class III would sit together, and sometimes those of Class III and V. This meant, that in one session, every class would have sat with rest of the other classes for some time.

### **Motivation of learning and mutual teaching**

In all these years, I felt that whatever the children are learning, is due to their mutual conversation, their own desire to learn and do something; and this process is

motivated by those students who have learnt more than them. While watching a child of Class IV read their book, the acting of reading the book gives the same pleasure to Class II child as to the one who is reading a book. If such motivation is not there, learning to read or learning anything is almost impossible. To keep this inspiration and will power going, I also made an effort to provide the atmosphere and circumstances of learning.

## **1. To lessen the control and manage**

***To reduce teacher's rule and control*** — It was not possible to control these children while performing all other government works. Therefore, students' freedom was my first compulsion. But, it was also essential that this freedom does not result into anarchy. After observing for some time, I felt that the assignment to be given to students should be pre-decided.

Now, each day, I would decide which work is to be assigned to them and then accordingly gave them work. They used to be informed of small group activities; to seek help from students who have already learnt, to get the monitoring done by grown up kids, etc. In this way, many alternatives came to surface, but children used to come to me with many of their problems and complaints. And my presence in the room became necessary for proper functioning of that task. I had to think over again on how to reduce students' dependence on the teacher.

In my opinion students should learn everything right. So it's my responsibility that they learn right. Due to this wrong thought of teaching right my activity, my control and my rule was increasing in the class. I thought to do away with this idea. When I gave full responsibility of teaching-learning to children, it should become obvious that rights should also be should to children.

First of all, I gave the rights of managing the school to the children—the school assembly, sitting arrangement,

cleanliness, closing of school and ringing the bell would collectively be decided by the students themselves. along with these, the class would also be mutually responsible in solving quarrels among the students. They need not come to me for this. Yes, in the beginning I solved such problems with the children, which included finding out who was at fault and then finding solution to the problem with the group consent.

## **2. Understanding the textbooks**

Other important thing that I understood was to make the textbooks beneficial from the point of view of children's understanding. If children can themselves understand the book after reading it, teachers' work-load can drastically reduce.

**Children, for quite a long time assume that written language is different from that of the spoken one.**

They do not believe that whatever is spoken, can also be written, and perhaps the textbooks weave this disbelief because, the written language that they encounter while learning to read contain very less part of their spoken language. Also, the current method of teaching language does not use children's logic, reasoning and understanding.

I thought why not the children learn reading by relating it to a meaningful context? They would express themselves by writing and understanding written words as their own spoken language.

**For this, my first effort was that I did not promote cramming of the alphabet.** In its place, small poems were written on the card-sheets and were put in the class. I read these poems again and again with the children. While appreciating its rhythm and emotions, gradually the children started recognising lines in the poem and recognising the words, thereafter, they also

started recognising the words before and after that. For example, if the words on the board are '*chupke chupke aati neend ankhon mein bus jati neend*'. Talk to the children about the recognition of these lines. Tell me which line is '*Aankhon main bas jaati neend*'. In the same way, the line '*chupke chupke aati neend*'. Then we recognise words. In these lines, since '*neend*' is the last word, it's not difficult to recognise this word. Through natural reasoning it can be said that since both the lines end on '*neend*' so the last word is '*neend*'. Similarly, what is the word written before '*neend*'— for this, first the child will put their finger on the word which is written before '*neend*', and then think and tell which word it is. The child may repeat the lines silently and then recognise the word.

In this way, using other contexts and poems, writing their words on different cards, many other activities of matching and recognising using rhyming words were developed their words. Collecting the words starting with a particular letter, reading the sound of words, and breaking them in small chunks, the process of teaching-learning was started.

The most important thing in this whole activity was that, the children's own understanding were being used such as — thinking, deciding, reaching on the conclusion, etc. The enthusiasm of the children in such learning process could be observed.

My next effort was with those children who were trying to read or were able to read, but were unable to extract meaning out of the read material. If children express those activities in written form, which they do with friends and parents, then a relation can be made between written and oral language. For this, I thought of some of the real life contexts where the children could express themselves in writing.

**Daily diary** — Every student from Class III to V had to write diary of their daily activities. What they do at school, and at home after school and, whatever they saw, while on their way to school from home they must write them in the diary. After sometime, news about their neighbourhood was also included in this diary such as — what happened in the locality that day, where did guests come, who quarrelled, etc.

In the beginning, the diaries were full of incomplete sentences, spelling mistakes, and were written in one sentence only such as — I went to farm, I went to river, I ate chapatti, etc. Some diaries were illegible, but the whole pages were filled. In some diaries, only few words were legible, so what the child wanted to say could be guessed.

After going through these diaries, I also asked the children to read their diaries. By making them read their diaries, I could understand two or three things. Firstly, students whose diaries were not legible, were able to read their diaries just as the other children who knew reading. Secondly, some students read the misspelled words correctly, and some read the spellings incorrectly, but then manage to correct themselves such as— '*Maine agar silgaya*' was first read like this only and soon after it was read like '*Maine angaar silagya*'. Thirdly, I also realised that the children also felt awkward to read their own writings. They realised that the way they speak and the written form are not alike but broken. In this writing, the words were the same as which the children spoke but their accent, manner of speaking and conjunctions were missing. We discussed about it and felt the need for some new words.

- 1. Giving written instructions** — This activity began with oral instructions. Any student would give instructions to a particular student, or to the whole class. The instructions were like this— *laugh loudly* or bring *neem* leaf from outside. In this way, every child had to give one or the other instruction, others had to follow them. This process was later changed into ‘giving written instructions’. The instruction would be written on the blackboard or in the slip, and this instruction was to be followed orally or in written form. Slowly, the language of these instructions kept on changing from the instructions like ‘Tell your name in writing’ to the instructions like, tell on which page in our book is the lesson ‘Sukhan Ram Ki Mausi’, Understanding these instructions and acting according to them, they developed the belief that written words say something to us.
- 2. Picture writing** — Children would be given the picture from the books of library or from newspapers. First, they would talk about the pictures. They would fly in the imaginary world while talking about them. The pictures proved to be a useful medium for giving written form to their imagination.
- 3. Publishing newspaper** — Since there was a lot of news collected about the locality, the idea of publishing newspaper of the school came to my mind. All news were written on separate sheets. These were pasted on a large cardsheet and put up on the school wall. Since newspaper contained the news written by the children, they had the curiosity to read it. The children who did not know how to read would even try to read, so that they could know, what had been written in the newspaper. They would guess and

give their own words to the written words; in this way these news were becoming useful in learning the art of reading.

- 4. Drawing pictures for the poems** — I copied poems from the children's library on a cardsheet. I read these books for the children. The children who knew how to read, also read them. After that, children were divided into groups. Every group was given one poem written on the cardsheet. They were then asked to draw pictures based upon this poem. We discussed how images, experiences, feelings, and emotions expressed in the poems be depicted in the drawing. The kids from the lower classes also took part in this activity with a lot of enthusiasm.
- 5. Free writing** — Children would be asked to write a page on any subject they are familiar with such as festivals, market, mid-day meal, election, village head, pulse polio, summer vacation, etc. Whatever the children wrote on these subjects was read. This is then followed by discussion on, what else could be written on these subjects. This discussion would be important for further writing on other topics. The children would then think about all the possibilities, discuss amongst themselves and write about it.
- 6. Passage comprehension** — The children would be given some written passages. It would be followed by few questions and their answers would be there in the written passage. To find out the answers, it would be compulsory to read the passage with the understanding of the meaning. With the help of this activity, the effort was made to develop understanding about two important issues. First, what is the meaning of the question asked? What will be the answer of that question after reading the passage. For it, the activities

which were performed in the beginning were loud reading of the passages, asking oral questions, giving oral answers, etc. The questions would be like —

- (i) Questions based on direct information, the answers which would be written in the passage.
- (ii) Questions based on the possibilities and imagination which would demand extension of the scene behind the passage.
- (iii) Questions based on new situations or change in situations.

Emphasis was then laid on the written responses. These written responses would also be discussed, whether these answers were complete or something else could also be written. I feel that for developing understanding about any subject, it is extremely important to organise an apt discussion on it.

I paid attention to the smooth and proper functioning of children's library. Every child was given the freedom to borrow books in the school and take them to their homes. After reading, every child was supposed to narrate them in the class, or sometimes write a page about what they like about the book? Who was talked about in the book? How were the pictures of the book? What was most interesting in the book? Such type of experiences about the book would be written and spoken.

In this way I got some success in developing children's interest towards books. Most part of the books used to be completed by the children themselves or through the discussion. Slowly, they felt less dependent on the teacher for explaining each line. Perhaps, this was my aim when I started.

Here, I will again say not to think that I was very successful. I was only working in a different way with these children, which was different from the traditional

approach with the purpose of reducing my work aloud but gradually, I found it interesting and interest reduces pressure. It is said that for success, we need different children which are not seen till date but these children are like other children. Every child has variety and I cannot say even a single line about them with complete assurance because these children think by themselves, use their own reasoning, they need to be creative like me. After all, this world also belongs to them.

## STRIVING\* (JOOJH)

N.V. Sandalgekar taught us Marathi. While teaching, he would often transport into ecstasy. He specially taught poetry in an exceptionally good way. He had a melodious voice, excellent prosody, and was a master of sentiments. Besides new and old Marathi poems, he had learnt many, English poems as well. He knew the rhythm, pace, and meter of several verses. He would first sing out a few poems, and then he would sit and act in order to help us understand the emotions of the poem. He also used to tell us similar poems by other poets. In between, he would tell us episodes of his meetings with the poets—Yashwant, B. B. Borkar, B. R. Tambe, Girish, Keshav, and Kumar among others. He was a poet himself. If he could recall, he would tell us few of his own creations. While listening to and experiencing all this, I used to forget myself. I would hold my breath, divert all my energy to my eyes and ears, and enjoy my teacher's facial expressions, sound, pace, movement, and melody.

In the mornings and evenings, while watering the farm or grazing the cattle, or in solitude, I would loudly sing out all those poems copying the teacher's facial expressions, pace and pauses, ebb and flow. I used to go about playing with the meaning of those poems. Just like the teacher used to sit and dramatise, I would act out in the same manner while watering the plants. I would forget that the parterre were full of water. It was only then that I realised, that other poems can also be recited in the rhyme and meter taught by my teacher.

I developed two strengths while playing with these poems—earlier I would feel lonely while grazing the

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\* This part has been taken from the autobiographic novel written by the renowned story-teller Dr. Anand Yadav.

cattle, watering the farm and doing other chores. I felt happy talking to someone, cracking jokes while working. I felt the constant need of company while working, but now, I didn't get bored in isolation. I could play by myself. I started feeling that it was better to be alone as I was able to recite the poem at a high pitch and do any kind of dramatisation. It was possible for me to dance while reciting, and I would actually start dancing. I started reciting, many poems at my own pace. I recited Anant Kanekar's poem, whose first line is— "*chaand raat pasrite pandhri gaya dharnivari*", at my own pace which was different from my teacher's. This was based on a cinema song. This particular song was based on a meter named '*Keshav karni jati*'. I used to recite that poem more dramatically than my teacher did — I would try to bring out the emotions of the poem. My teacher liked my efforts so much that he made me recite in front of the students of Classes VII and VIII. I was made to recite it at a school function... this made me feel that I had grown a new set of wings.

## THE LITTLE PRINCE\*

When I was six, I saw a magnificent picture in a book called 'True Stories from Nature', about the primeval forest. It was a picture of a boa constrictor in the act of swallowing an animal. Here is a copy of the drawing.



In the book it said: "Boa constrictors swallow their prey whole, without chewing it. After that they are not able to move, and they sleep through the six months that they need for digestion." I pondered deeply, then, over the adventures of the jungle. And after some work with a coloured pencil I succeeded in making my first drawing. My drawing number one. It looked like this:



I showed my masterpiece to the grown-ups, and asked them whether the drawing frightened them.

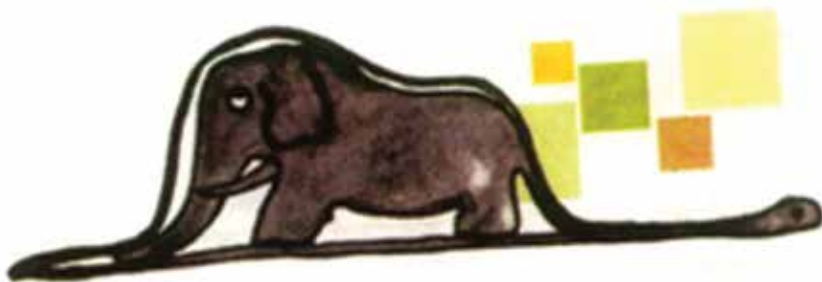
But they answered: "Frighten? Why should anyone be

frightened by a hat?" My drawing was not a picture of a hat. It was a picture of a boa constrictor digesting an

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\* This part has been taken from an article 'Nanha Rajkumar' (translator – Devi Prasad) which appeared in 'Antony the St. Exupery', published by the NCERT.

elephant. But since the grown-ups were not able to understand it, I made another drawing: I drew the inside of the boa constrictor, so that the grown-ups could see it clearly. They always need to have things explained. My drawing number two looked like this:



The grown-ups' response, this time, was to advise me to lay aside my drawings of boa constrictors, whether from the inside or the outside, and devote myself instead to geography, history, arithmetic and grammar. That is why, at the age of six, I gave up what might have been a magnificent career as a painter. I had been disheartened by the failure of my drawing number one and my drawing number two. Grown-ups never understand anything by themselves, and it is tiresome for children to be always and forever explaining things to them.

So then I chose another profession, and learned to pilot air-planes. I have flown a little over all parts of the world; and it is true that geography has been very useful to me. At a glance I can distinguish China from Arizona. If one gets lost in the night, such knowledge is valuable.

In the course of this life, I have had a great many encounters with a great many people who have been concerned with matters of consequence. I have lived a great deal among grown-ups. I have seen them intimately, close at hand. And that hasn't much improved my opinion of them.

Whenever I met one of them who seemed to me at all clear-sighted, I tried the experiment of showing them my drawing number one, which I have always kept. I would try to find out, so, if this was a person of true understanding. But, whoever it was, he, or she, would always say: "That is a hat." Then I would never talk to that person about boa constrictors, or primeval forests, or stars. I would bring myself down to their level. I would talk to them about bridge, and golf, and politics, and neckties. And the grown-ups would be greatly pleased to have met such a sensible man.

So I lived my life all alone, without anyone to talk to, until I had an accident with my plane in the Sahara Desert, six years ago. Something was broken in my engine. And as I had with me neither a mechanic nor any passengers, I set myself to attempt the difficult repairs all alone. It was a question of life or death for me. I had scarcely enough drinking water to last a week.

The first night, I went to sleep on the sand, a thousand miles from any human habitation. I was more isolated than a shipwrecked sailor on a raft in the middle of the ocean. Thus you can imagine my amazement, at sunrise, when I was awakened by an odd little voice. It said: "If you please, draw me a sheep!"

"What!"

"Draw me a sheep!"

I jumped to my feet, completely thunderstruck. I blinked my eyes hard. I looked carefully all around me. And I saw a most extraordinary small person, who stood there examining me with great seriousness. Here you may see the best portrait that, later, I was able to make of him. But my drawing is certainly very much less charming than its model.

That, however, is not my fault. The grown-ups discouraged me in my painting career when I was six years old, and I never learned to draw anything, except boas from the outside and boas from the inside.

Now I stared at this sudden apparition with my eyes fairly starting out of my head in astonishment. Remember and, I had crashed in the desert a thousand miles from



any inhabited region. And yet my little man seemed neither to be straying uncertainly among the sands, nor to be fainting from fatigue or hunger or thirst or fear. Nothing about him gave any suggestion of a child lost in the middle of the desert, a thousand miles from any human habitation.

When at last I was able to speak, I said to him —  
“But, what are you doing here?”

When a mystery is too overpowering, one dare not disobey. Absurd as it might seem to me, a thousand miles from any human habitation and in danger of death, I took out of my pocket a sheet of paper and my fountain pen. But then I remembered how my studies had been concentrated on geography, history, arithmetic, and grammar, and I told the little chap (a little crossly, too) that I did not know how to draw. He answered me:

“That doesn’t matter. Draw me a sheep...”

But I had never drawn a sheep. So I drew for him one of the two pictures I had drawn so often. It was that of the boa constrictor from the outside. And I was astounded to hear the little fellow greet it with —

“No, no, no! I do not want an elephant inside a boa constrictor. A boa constrictor is a very dangerous creature, and an elephant is very cumbersome. Where I live, everything is very small. What I need is a sheep. Draw me a sheep.”



So then I made a drawing. He looked at it carefully, then he said: “No. This sheep is already very sickly. Make me another.”

So I made another drawing. My friend smiled gently and indulgently.

“You see yourself,” he said, “This is not a sheep. This is a ram. It has horns.”

So then I did my drawing over once more. But it was rejected too, just like the others. “This one is too old. I want a sheep that will live a long time.

By this time my patience was exhausted, because I was in a hurry to start taking my engine apart.



So I tossed off this drawing. And I threw out an explanation with it. “This is only his box. The sheep you asked for is inside.”

I was very surprised to see a light break over the face of my young judge:

“That is exactly the way I wanted it! Do you think that this sheep will have to have a great deal of grass?”

“Why?”

“Because where I live everything is very small...”

“There will surely be enough grass for him,” I said.

“It is a very small sheep that I have given you.”

He bent his head over the drawing: “Not so small that, Look! He has gone to sleep...”



## MY SMALL PERSONAL LIBRARY\*

DHARMVIR BHARTI

July 1989! There was no chance of survival. Three severe heart attacks, one after another. One was so dangerous — breath stopped, heart beats stopped. Doctors declared he is no more. But Doctor Borges had not lost his will. He gave the shocks of 9 volts. Horrible experiment! But he said if the body is dead, it will not feel the pain. But, if there is any life left, the heart can revive. Life returned, but in this experiment 60 per cent of the heart damaged forever. Only 40 per cent was left. It also has three blockages; open heart surgery will be needed but the surgeons are hesitant. The heart that is left is only 40 per cent. If it did not survive after the operation, then? It was decided to consult other specialists, after some days, they will think about the operation. Till then, he may be sent home to take rest without any movement.

I was brought back home, half dead. I insisted on not being in the bedroom, but in the room that was full of my books. I am made to lie in that room. Walking, reading, and speaking were restricted the whole day. Lying in bed, I looked at two things — frilled leaves swaying in the window on my left, and inside the room, full length shelves from floor to roof, replete with books. I remember reading a fairy tale in my childhood about a king's life which was not within him but in the parrot; in the same way, it appeared as if my life was hidden in the books, which had been accumulated in the past 40-50 years.

How they were accumulated, from where it began, I will tell you later. First of all, it is necessary to tell you, how my hobby of reading and collecting began. I recall

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*\* This part has been taken from Section-1 of 'Sanchayan', a supplementary textbook for Class IX, published by the NCERT.*

my childhood. At that time, Arya Samaj Improvement Movement was in full swing. My father was the Chief of Arya Samaj Rani Mandi, and my mother had founded a school for women's education.

My father had a good government job. When Burma Road was under construction, he earned a lot of money. But even before my birth, he quit the government job on the call of Gandhi ji. We were undergoing great economical crisis, yet there was regular delivery of newspapers and magazines — '*Aryamitr weekly*', '*Vedodam*', '*Saraswati*', '*Grahini*' at home, and two children's magazines '*Balsakha*' and '*Chamcham*' especially for me. They had stories and drawings of fairies, princes, devils and beautiful royal daughters. I became interested in reading. I used to read all the time. While eating, I used to read keeping the magazines, near my plate. Besides two of my magazines, I tried to read '*Saraswati*' and '*Aryamitr*'.

I also had the *Upanishads* and their Hindi translation '*Satyarth Prakash*'. I could not understand fully the chapters in '*Satyarth Prakash*', but I enjoyed reading them. My favourite book was the life-story of Swami Dayanand. Written in an interesting manner, with pictures. He was the paramount personality to showcase matchless courage against the then prevalent hypocrisy. There were countless thrilling incidents of his life, which impressed me a lot. While looking at the rats eating the food that was devoted to god, I realised that idols are not God. I left home, went on a pilgrimage wandered in the forests, caves, snow-covered peaks, lived among hermits and searched everywhere — What is the truth? And who is God? I learned to oppose whatever is anti-social, Anti-human values, and finally supported and forgave the person who is defeated by self. All this thrilled me a lot. When I was tired of all this, I would switch to the stories of '*Balsakha*' and '*Chamcham*'.

My mother laid emphasis on school education. She was always worried that her son did not read course

books. How will he pass! He might run away from home and become a hermit. My father used to say —“This study will be useful in life. Let him read.” I was not sent to school, home tutors were made available for the elementary education. This was because my father learnt abuses in bad company at a tender age and learnt bad habits. So, I was admitted to school only in Class III. That day, my father took me for a walk holding my finger. Made me drink juice of fresh pomegranates in an earthen glass in the shop of Loknath, put his hand on my head and said, “Promise me, that you will also read your textbooks with great attention and remove your mother’s anxiety.” Whether it was his blessings or my hard labour, I got good marks in Classes III and IV; and in Class V, I stood first. My mother clasped me in her arms with tears in the eyes, and my father stood by smiling. Since I had got highest marks in English, I got two English books as a prize. In one book, two kids wandered in the farm houses gardens in search of nests, and through this, they learnt about classification of birds, their sounds and their habits. The other book was ‘Trustee-The Rung’ which had stories of ships — types, the goods they carry, from where to which place, how is the life of a sailor, types of islands, about whales and sharks, etc.

These two books opened a new world for me; the sky, full of birds, and the sea full of mysteries. My father made some space in his almirah by removing his things, and kept both my books there, and said, “From today, this shelf belongs to your books. This is your own library.”

This was the beginning of that child’s library. The child became a teen. Went to college, and later university, doctorate, taught in the university, left teaching and came to Bombay from Allahabad and also edited books. The library too, expanded accordingly. And extended his library in the ratio.

You may ask, the fondness for reading books is alright, but why the craze for collecting books? Its reason also lies in a childhood experience. Allahabad has been one of the famous centres of education in India. There are many universities and college libraries along with Public Library established by East India, to the Bharati Bhawan setup by Mahamana Madan Mohan Malviya, and one library in almost each locality. There is also a High Court; hence there exist many personal libraries of lawyers and teachers as well. My own library would never be like that, I could never conceive that even in my dream, but my locality has a library called 'Hari Bhawan'. Whenever I got holiday from school, I would stick to that place. When my father passed away, I had no money to pay the library fee, so I used to sit and read books there only. A lot of translation of the world literature especially of novels in Hindi were being undertaken. I felt really happy reading a lot of novels in the small 'Hari Bhawan'. There, I met with Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay's '*Durgesh Nandini*' '*Kapal Kundala*' and '*Ananadmath*'; Tolstoy's '*Anna Karenina*'; Victor Hugo's '*Kubra of Paris*' (*Hunchback of Notre-Dame*); Gorky's '*Mother*'; Alexander Kuprin's '*Gaariwalon ka Katra*' (*Yama: the Pit*) and the most entertaining Sarva Reez's '*Vichitra Veer*' (means *Don Quixote*). It was so fascinating to meet all the strong characters of the world in Hindi language. As soon as the library opened, I would reach there. I used to be there till Shukla would say, "Child, now get up, it's time to close the library." I would get up unwillingly. Whenever any novel was left incomplete, my heart would ache. Had there been money I could have taken a membership in the library and get these books issued in my name, or could have bought the books and keep it in my home, to read it again and again! But, I knew that this would always remain a dream and could not be changed into reality.

After the death of my father, there was an acute economic crisis. Even paying the fees was unmanageable. It was not possible to purchase books which I was fond of. I used to get some money from a trust that donated to differently abled students, at the beginning of the session, to purchase books. I used to purchase second-hand books from that money, the rest I borrowed from my classmates and prepared notes. Those days, students would sell their books at half the original rates after the examinations, and poor new students would purchase them. In this way, everything was managed.

I still remember, how I purchased my first literary book from my own money. That year, I had passed intermediate. To sell old books and purchase books for B.A., I went to a second-hand book shop. Somehow, even after purchasing books, I managed to saved two rupees! The movie '*Devdas*' was being sereened in the cinema halls – New Theaters – just opposite that book shop. The movie was being discussed a lot. But my mother totally disliked watching movies. Children go astray because of that only. But its songs were played outside the cinema hall. There was a Sehgal's song — '*Dukh ke din ab beetat nahi*'. I used to hum that song. Sometimes, tears rolled off my eyes while humming that song. One day, my mother heard that song; she got emotional and said, "My son, terrible days will also pass, why do you get disheartened? Be patient." When she came to know that this was the song of the movie '*Devdas*', movie's total-opponent mother said, "Why do you let your desire die, go and watch the movie, I'll give you the money." I told my mother that I have got two rupees left after selling the books. With my mother's consent, I went to watch the movie with those two rupees. At the cinema hall, there was still time left for conclusion of the first show. Nearby, was the familiar book shop. I started roaming there. Suddenly, I saw a book lying on the counter —

'*Devdas*' —written by Sharatchandra Chattopadhyay. Price only one rupee! When I began to fumble that book, the bookseller said, "You are a student. You sell your books here. You are our old customer. I will give this book in just ten annas". I changed my mind. Who will watch the movie in one-and-a-half rupees? I bought '*Devdas*' in ten annas, got back home quickly and returned one rupee and six annas to my mother that were left from two rupees.

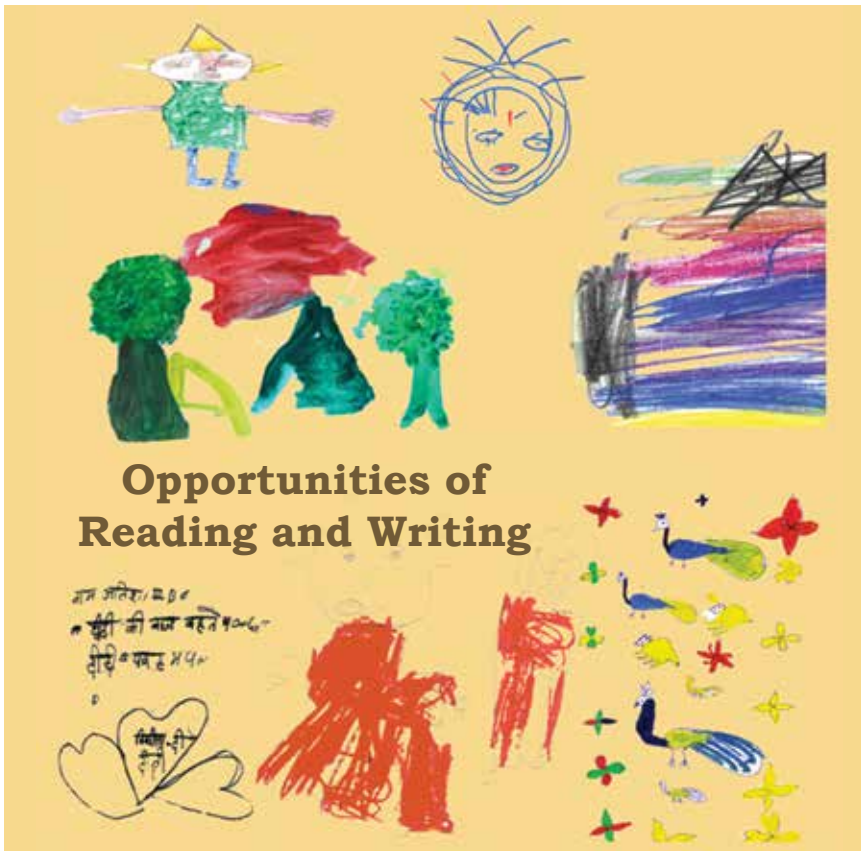
"Oh! How did you return? Didn't watch the movie?" asked my mother.

"No, mother, I brought this book."

Tears rolled from my mother's eyes. I don't know whether those were the tears of happiness or sadness. That was the first book in my personal library, purchased from my own money.

Today, when I look at my book collection which includes thousands of books of— Hindi and English novels, plays, story collection, autobiographies, memoirs, history, art, archaeology, politics, I very fondly recollect the purchase of my first book. How full I feel among the writings of great writers and thinkers— Rainer Maria Rilke, Stefan Zweig, Maupassant, Chekhov, Tolstoy, Dostrovsky, Mikovsky, Solzhenitsyn, Stephen Spender, Auden, Ezra Pound, Eugene O'Neill, Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, Picasso with Ionesco, Bruegel, Rembrandt, Hebbar, Husain and in Hindi Kabir, Tulsi, Sur Raskhan, Jayasi, Premchand, Pant, Nirala, Mahadevi many others.

Marathi's renown poet Vinda Karandikar has rightly said that day. He came to see me after my successful operation and said, "Bharati, you have survived because of the blessings of these hundreds of great men, who stay around you in the form of books. They have given you a second life." I extended my wishes in my mind to Vrinda and to these great people also.



Nobel prize winner, Rabindra Nath Tagore did not like going to school in his childhood. He found the school suffocating like a jail. It was so because in the school he was not free to do what he liked. In the class also, his mind was always wandering in an imaginative world instead of paying attention to the teacher.

These experiences of his school days in Calcutta (Kolkata) helped him form a positive attitude towards education. He was of the opinion that in a school, a student should be free to do his favorite tasks. Children's creative desires get fulfilled only when the schools provide an environment where children can use their imagination, curiosity, and understanding for reading and writing.

## **OPPORTUNITIES OF READING AND WRITING**

This part of the manual book titled 'Opportunities of Reading and Writing' contains activities based on selected compositions from children's literature. Here, an attempt has been made to search for the hidden possibilities in stories, poems, and informative texts. The teacher can search for a wide range of possibilities in children's literature and textbooks, as per the need and interests of the children in their particular class. These possibilities will provide the students with meaningful opportunities for context-based reading and writing activities.

Planning is very important for conducting activities in the classroom. We suggest to teachers of the early grades that after selecting the compositions from children's literature, one should read the text analytically, think about activities, and with the help of their children, plan out a timetable for transacting it. The experiences of two such teachers are included in this part of the book, who planned activities and transacted them in a flexible manner.

It is necessary to do so because we have to take into account the interests and learning levels of children along with the available time and resources. The story named 'Crow' is a picture book. In the activities based on this story, reading a picture story, that is, a story depicted without words, could be a very interesting activity. 'Kite' is a rhythmic poem. Besides the given activities to teach reading and writing, during this lesson, children can be provided with the opportunity to make their favourite object, say, a kite, in this case, using their hands. These hands-on experiences are significant in the development of children in early grades.

Along with the stories and poems, in this part, many possible suggestions for activities have been given. A few of them have been planned in detail as examples for teachers. The teachers can further elaborate on these suggested activities or plan new activities as per their discretion. Such personalised activities will help children become self-reliant in the context of early literacy, and will provide them with the pleasure of reading and expressing their thoughts in writing.

In the initial stage, along with giving opportunities for writing and the development of writing skill, it is also necessary that students are free to express their thoughts and create stories and ideas. A Reading Corner in the class is helpful in building space for this. The freedom of reading essentially attracts children to writing. Children who are engaged in independent writing try to expand their writing. While completing primary education, they also search for opportunities to publish their writings. This reminds us of the words of Ashapoorna Devi, a Hindi writer. While recollecting her pleasant and memorable childhood, Ashapoorna writes: *It was during my childhood that I started writing. At the age of thirteen and with a daring effort. I sent my writing to a publisher's office. It got published immediately. Then the editor also wrote me*

During childhood, my only weakness was ruled notebooks. They cost me one anna per piece. If it was hardbound, it cost one for two annas. As soon as I got the money I would fulfil my desire. For me, the most meaningful use of money was to purchase a notebook.

Once my brother gifted me a thick notebook when I helped him find his lost book. Though my brother was a student at that time, yet he gifted me that notebook by collecting his tiffin money. Ah! that day my brother appeared to be a god, and that ruled notebook a piece of heaven. That memory is still etched in my heart.

**My Childhood — Ashapoorna Devi**

*a letter of appreciation saying, "Very well written. Write more and keep sending us" Now tell me. wasn't it good? Had he not been impressed and thrown that first writing in the dustbin, if he hadn't repeatedly asked me for my creations, there would never have been any Ashapoorna Devi, the writer today.*

Unfortunately, most children are deprived of these achievements in their childhood. Neither the teachers are enthusiastic nor do the students have opportunities, means of development and extension of writing. It is a visible fact that children don't even have available writing papers and other materials. In such circumstances, it is necessary to bring about a change in the attitude of the whole system along with the teachers. Under Mathura Scheme, arrangements were made to provide writing materials, books, children's literature, etc., to the students, and the results of the same have been extremely satisfactory. Children's independent writings and pictures impressed us and left us with unforgettable happy memories. Teachers and other officers related to the classroom supported and played a major role in the programme. Through this part of the book, which incorporates children's literature with activities, the aim is to make teachers facilitate writing opportunities in the classroom effectively and purposefully.

## **ROOPA THE ELEPHANT**

This is an account of the experience of narrating the story, 'Roopa the Elephant', in the class.

The teacher read the story, and drafted the activities. She transacted the activities with the help of the learners. Her planning was flexible. The reading and writing were varied and interesting.

You can also do the same. What is important is that you read the stories, poems and other (children's) literature and prepare a plan. Depending on the class environment, children's interest and your own daily routine, leave a scope to bring about a change in the plan.

'Roopa the Elephant' is the story of an elephant and his friend, a bird. Today, Roopa is very sad because he does not find his body beautiful. He says, "I am like a brown tub". 'Chinchi the bird' thinks of a unique way to cheer him up. She asks the other zoo animals for help. All the animals happily give their colour to Roopa. On becoming colourful, Roopa dances with joy, but the children who come to visit the zoo are afraid of him. Now, he wants to be free of the colour, so, he jumps into the water and washes away all the colour.

Children find this story very interesting. They naturally like stories about birds and animals. Another reason for this is because these stories suggest solutions to the challenges that children might face. While reading the story, the children start to empathise with its characters. 'Friends helping one another selflessly' is an inseparable part of a child's life. Besides that, they can also understand why the children were afraid to see a colourful elephant.

This book contains colourful pictures on each page which make it more attractive. Each page has short

sentences, printed in a big font. The story is dialogue based, and its language is simple. Due to all these reasons, students did not face any difficulty while reading it.

As soon as I entered the class, the commotion died. Everybody was looking at the book in my hand, which they were seeing for the first time. Sensing their curiosity, I held up the book in such a way that everybody could see it comfortably. I told the then, students that I had brought the book for them. I told the title of the book. While reading the title, I pointed towards the name so that they could realise where I was reading the title from. As soon as they realised that I had brought the book for them, they got anxious to take it, but, there was only one book among fifty students. I tried to silence them, and suggested that I should read the story to them, and later everybody would get a chance to read the book.

I started narrating the story with appropriate pace and expressions. I tried to raise my voice in such a way that it was loud enough to reach all the students. I also kept a check on my pace so that the pleasure of listening to the story does not get disturbed. I myself enjoyed the story so much that I didn't realise when I started using my hands and facial expressions to act. Learners were listening to the story with rapt attention. While narrating the story, I also showed pictures to them, and while doing so, I would pause for some time. The students looked at the pictures, and a few others whispered into the neighbour's ear in order to get their attention towards something. It was a magical environment throughout and I reached the last line of the story "then they left to meet other animals of the zoo".

When students like a story, they want to hear it again. I told them, "I'll tell the story again tomorrow, but let's

do something interesting for now”. We will make a picture of a part of the story, which you liked the most. I wanted to maintain the environment made through the story; therefore, I suggested drawing a picture related to the story.

In order to enable them to work easily and in a better way, I suggested that the learners work in groups. Working in groups, students will be able to help one another, carry out discussions, learn from one another the proper ways of group work. Working in this manner, we can also eliminate many practical problems like lack of colour, and other materials.

Soon, the whole class got engrossed in making pictures. I joined them too. I went to each group, one by one, and saw that each child was trying to put their thoughts on to the paper. I helped them label and write names of the pictures.

I didn't have to remind the students the next day. As soon as I entered the class, they demanded for 'Roopa the Elephant'. I had already decided to present the story in a different way. I made them recall the picture they had made in groups the previous day. I called forward a representative from each group, along with their drawings. Now, there were six students along with their six pictures, in front of the class. I asked them to tell other students about the representation in their pictures.

They started telling about their pictures one by one. If they forgot something, their companions would remind them. After all of them had spoken, I suggested them to paste those pictures on the wall in correct sequence of the story. I provided them a tape for this. Some of the pictures depicted several incidents of the story, and it was difficult to decide their sequence. For such pictures, the students were asked to decide their suitable place.

After this, I started retelling the story with the help of the drawn pictures. I stopped in the middle of the story and challenged the children to complete it. I thought of a way by which, each student would get an equal opportunity to say something or the other. I suggested that every student will add one sentence to continue the story. In this manner, by adding sentences one after the other, the story was completed.

This incident happened a week later. I was telling the story from the textbook. The story was named after one of its characters. This reminded me of 'Roopa the Elephant'. I asked the students, "Have you read or heard any story which was named after the name of a person, animal or bird in the story?" As soon as I finished my sentence, the students shouted enthusiastically, "Roopa the Elephant". "Absolutely correct". "Now tell me, why was the elephant named 'Roopa the Elephant'?"

Various answers were received—

- (i) He was very beautiful.
- (ii) He was not beautiful.
- (iii) The person who had caught him, had given him that name.
- (iv) His mother must have named him.

Then I discussed the names of the other characters. Gradually, students started to realise that one can be named after one's appearance, place of living or their nature. Then I asked the students to tabulate the names in this form—

| Based on the name of colours | Based on the name of tastes/ eatables | Based on the name of places | Based on the name of habits |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Hariyal (Greenish)           | Mitthu (Sweet)                        | Bhopali (from Bhopal)       | Akroo (Perky)               |

The whole table got filled with different interesting names. Now, I asked the students to give a different name to the story 'Roopa the Elephant'. Students filled the blackboard with various names.

I am reading the story 'Roopa the Elephant', once again. This story has lots of possibilities, which can be utilised for discussions with the students. Their experiences can be shared; their memories can be revived and recorded in a written form. For example, we can talk about, Why did Chinchu sit on Roopa's ear only? What other place could have been better for her to sit? What did you like about 'Chinchu the bird'? Why did she bid 'Namaste' only to lion and no one else? After becoming colourful, why did 'Roopa the Elephant' compare himself to a marriage canopy? What is a canopy?

Seeing the students' interest in "Roopa the Elephant", I prepared some masks with their help. Tanu asked, "Sir, what will we do with them?" I revealed, "We will enact a play." The students jumped with joy. Everyone wanted to be 'Roopa the Elephant'. One student expressed the desire to be a lion, and one girl wanted to play the role of Chinchu. In order to transact the activity in a smooth manner, I suggested that they write on a piece of paper, their names and the name of the character they want to play. I also asked them to write the reason for their choice. I was carrying a good number of slips but they fell short and I had to make new slips. The students took two minutes to write down their choices. For my convenience, I had already placed some empty boxes on the table with the character names written on them.

|      |
|------|
| Rupa |
|------|

|         |
|---------|
| Chinchu |
|---------|

|      |
|------|
| Raja |
|------|

|        |
|--------|
| Mitthu |
|--------|

The students dropped their slips in the appropriate box. A majority of the slips were dropped in boxes for

Roopa and Chinchu, but everyone couldn't be given the role of Roopa and Chinchu.

I planned to do this activity in groups. I picked out one slip from each box. This was group number one. Some more groups made in the same manner. Almost all the students were getting a chance to play the character of their choice. Some students were confused about their choices; therefore, their roles were assigned by me.

When one group would present its drama, some of the students in the audience played the part of children who had come to visit run on Zoo. The students remembered the story very well, and did not face any major difficulty in playing the roles.

The next day, I put forth another challenge to act. I prepared some slips which had the names of animals or birds on them. The students had to pick a slip and one by one enact the bird or animal written on it. Some slips had the familiar names of "Roopa" and "Mitthu". The rest of the students had to guess what was written on the actor's slip.

This activity can also be carried out in different ways. When I took up this activity again after a few days, I had prepared some slips with the names of non-living things along with the names of birds and animals. I had written 'Hand-pump', 'Car', 'Fan', 'Chair' and others. Imagine the facial expression of the students who had to enact these objects. With this slight change, they got a new challenge and felt refreshed.

### **One day I framed a riddle and read it out to the children—**

It is brown-brown and black-black, and has a long nose.  
Guess who?

The students guessed quickly and said, "Roopa the Elephant!"

"Very good." Now solve one more riddle.

"I am a stick but I walk. I get blunt and then sharpened."

The students took a while, but were able to guess the answer. I asked a few more riddles and gave the students some slips to create their riddles. Then I mixed all the slips and redistributed them in such a way that every child could get an opportunity to solve a new riddle. Now the students were called to the front, one by one, and were asked to solve the riddle written on their slips. If they had a problem, I helped them read it. Even if I could not understand, I would call the child who had made that riddle.

A story is an important link in teaching the children how to read and write. We already know that the students feel connected with a story and are interested in its plot. Listening to a story not just enhances their language skills but also activates their process of thinking and reasoning.

If we show the written script while telling the story, learner's concepts of written language and their confidence of reading independently develop.

Which aspects of a story should be focused on and how to conduct reading and writing activities while narrating a story? This material is a mere example. Other activities can also be framed on the basis of the given activities. The level of activities can be also increased gradually. Keep in mind that other stories may have a flow which differs from the given story, but one needs to discuss the characters, plot and feelings in the story. Try to bring story to the level of your students' reasoning capacity.

Be patient and careful. Conduct reading and writing activities while giving directions to the students' story

related ideas. Modulate your voice according to the incidents in the story. While narrating the story, stay connected with the students so that they feel that you are concentrating on them. While telling a story, we should aim at developing learners' understanding, enabling them to form opinions and helping them connect to the world as described in the story.

## **CHHOTA-SA MOTA-SA LOTA**

This work plan has been made to narrate the story 'Chhota-sa Mota-sa Lota' and conduct the related activities in the class.

You should also choose stories and poems according to the learners' interest, and make work plans to conduct activities.

- (i) First of all, I'll read the story with expressions and intonation. For this, I have read the story carefully beforehand. I enjoyed reading it a lot. I felt that if the entire story is narrated in a flow, without any discussion in between, then regularity, sequence, and connection with the story is maintained.
- (ii) Now I'll narrate the story while showing the corresponding pictures. For this, I'll have to arrange the learners in a circle and sit with them. We can talk a little about the pictures and words in the sentences, but I'll have to be careful that the conversation does not digress away from the story.
- (iii) Next day, I'll again sit with the learners and initiate a discussion about the story, keeping in mind what the learners have retained about the story. I have thought of writing some words from the story on the board. It has interesting characters. I will write on the board — '*lota*', '*khamba*', '*bandar ji*', '*mor*', and '*matka*'.
- (iv) Then, with the help of the words written on the board, we (learners and I) will recall the words that were around that particular word, and write them on the board.

*'Chhota-sa Mota-sa Lota'*

*Lamba-sa khamba*

*Chander ji bandar ji*

*Dor ka chor mor*

*Latka hua atka hua matka*

- (v) I feel that this story can also be enacted like a play because it has dialogues by 'bandar ji' and 'lota ji'. In order to depict a '*khamba*'; a '*matka*' and a '*lota*' can be kept on a table top.
- (vi) In the end of this story, the '*lota*' jumps and '*matka*' shatters into pieces. Did the '*lota*' jump on top of the '*matka*'? This was unclear to me and could be taken up in a discussion with children.
- (vii) However, there is a lot of word play in this story, therefore I think, we can also play a rhyming game with some new words.

For example: for '*makri*' — '*makri sitting on a kakri*', for '*aloo*' — '*chaloo aloo*'.

Similarly, some other words can also be rhymed. This story is indeed interesting. If I ever get some time someday, we would try to create a new interesting story using pictures of '*Chhota-sa Mota-sa Lota*' and '*Lamba-sa Patla-sa Lota*' (a small stout pot and a long slender pot).

# **KITE**

**PRAYAG SHUKLA**

## **Introduction**

Patang, i.e., 'Kite' is an interesting poem. The sentences of the poem have rhyme and hidden pleasure of flying kites. This poem is composed by Prayag Shukla, who writes poems for children. One should read his poetry collection, along with other poets who write for children. Use poems to provide opportunities of reading and writing in the class.



## Possible activities

### Plan

We know that there is some kind of coordination between the emotion and the rhyme in a poem. A poem influences its readers at two levels — music or sound, and the meaning. We should attempt to sing out, listen to and enjoy the rhyme and meter of the poem with the children. We should also understand the implicit meaning in such a way that the children find a reflection of their own life in it. Talk about their experiences of flying a kite.

### First day

- (i) recite the poem with rhyme and expressions.
- (ii) recite the poem with the children, with full enthusiasm and expressions.
- (iii) draw children's attention towards the onomatopoeic words (sound words) in the poem. For example:  
*sar-sar, far-far.....*
- (iv) give some time to the children to feel these sounds.

One may already know that the poems of this type, which emphasise on sounds and rhyme thrill the mind. If you want, you can limit your first day plan till here.

### Second day

One needs to be careful while planning for the second day. While preparing the work plan, it would become clear that —

- (i) you are giving the children opportunities to read and write.
- (ii) you are giving them freedom to write and express their feelings.
- (iii) you can feel through the learners' reading, writing and expressions that they are enjoying themselves. By doing this, in one way or the other, you make them self-reliant for literacy.

## **On the second day, recite the poem with proper rhyme, meter and pace**

- (i) Talk about flying kites and the sport of kite flying.
- (ii) Tell stories about kite flying. Listen to the learners' stories as well.
- (iii) With the help of the learners, frame an outline of a story about kite flying and kite fights.

(Perhaps this should be enough for the second day. This has to be your decision, but while deciding, ensure that the activity has reached a certain level or aim and that there is enthusiasm and curiosity to carry out many more things related to the poem).

## **Third day**

Re-read the poem and revise the activities of the previous day. The lines in the poem give a feel of the windy air. Repetition of the words reinforces this feeling therefore, the poem should be read with proper intonation.

Talk to the children about the objects that fly with the sound as mentioned in the poem (*sar-far*). For example —

- (i) ask the learners to estimate the sound that the airplane makes while flying in the sky — (*shooon....* or others).
- (ii) on the basis of the sounds of a bird's flight, that of the trees swaying in the wind, sound of the wind, etc., a new rhyme based poem can be composed. You too can write such examples.

## **'*Ladne me juti patang...*'**

Talk about these lines.

Now, complete the story outline prepared on the second day. Give names to the kites and get their pictures drawn.

Talk about some other things such as — what are the possible places where a kite may fall after being snapped,

if flown from the ground or from the roof of the house. ask the students for names, for kites caught. 'Prized kite' or 'won kite' could be some examples.

You can return to the poem after a gap of two or three days. Ensure that you revise the poem before carrying out any activity. At this stage, asking the learners to make a kite, can also be done in the class. Make a list of the materials (such as cord, gum, tail, kite paper) required to make a kite. Put up this list on the class wall.

It will not be possible to do this activity with the entire class. Give this opportunity to selected learners. Make a list of the learners involved in this process. Give others an opportunity to watch. Give an opportunity to a different set of learners when carrying out a similar activity in future.

If possible, after the kite has been made, give the same group of learners an opportunity to fly it. Try to find out if the learners want to write something on the kite. Help them to do so.

- (i) if learners make individual kites, they can be asked to write letters to their friends or relatives, on it. (For making the kite, you can take help of the book 'Kite' in the *Barkha* series).
- (ii) a list of the games played by the children can be prepared and put up in the classroom.

To expand this activity, talk about the books '*Peepni aur Patang*' of the *Barkha* series. Ask the learners to narrate the process of making a '*peepni*' (a kind of whistle). If possible, ask them to make it. Try to establish the fact in the learners' minds that they are also learning to make something in the classroom.

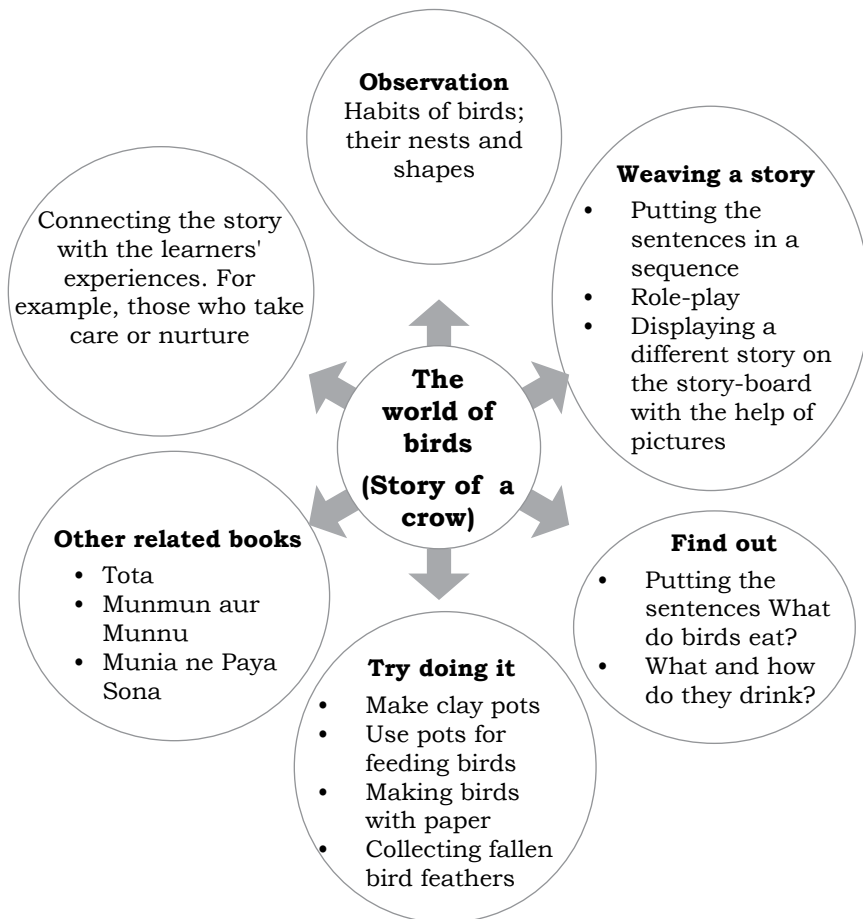
# A CROW'S TALE

JUDHAJIT SEN GUPTA

## Introduction

This is a picture story. The main character in the story is a crow. The crow collected straws and put them together to make a nest, and laid eggs in it. It looked after its young ones till they were able to fly.

## Possible activities



## **Planning**

### **First and second day — weaving a story**

- (i) Teachers should write the name of the story on the board and give opportunities to children to guess what will happen in the story.
- (ii) With the help of the pictures given in the book, try weaving a story with the children —
  - (a) Since it is a picture story and children would be introduced to the pictures for the first time, therefore, accept their various guesses. Also, give them the opportunity to express the reasons behind their predictions.
  - (b) It is important that the teachers do not try to lead the students towards any pre-determined story. Rather, they should encourage the learners and show them their own curiosity to find out the next part of the story.
  - (c) Also, give freedom to the learners to name the characters in the story. As the story progresses, provide the learners with the opportunity to talk about their experiences. These experiences may comprise the following — Do they have pets at their homes? Who looks after them and how? Do children look after their younger siblings and How?
- (iii) Finally, add the name of the book in the list of books written on the bulletin board, and keep the book in the reading corner for children's observation and reading.

### **Third day: story writing and reading**

Write down the woven story on a chart, in learners' own words, and read it to them by putting your finger on the words.

### **Fourth, fifth and sixth day: observation**

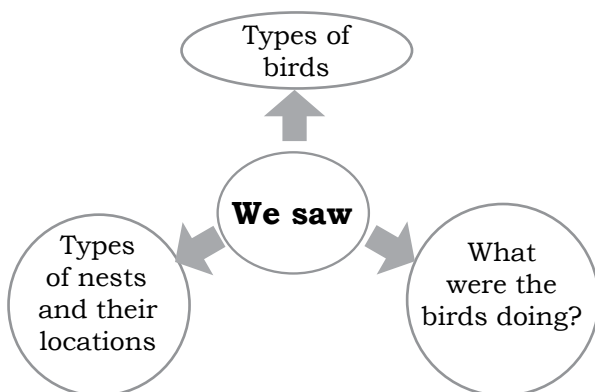
While taking the story further, give learners an opportunity to talk about their experiences of observing the birds. Link them with the story. For example: what do the birds do? where have you seen them? where have you seen their nests? etc. One way of observation could be through a local visit. Plan before you tell this to the learners. Teachers, beforehand, can look for a place in the vicinity, which has several nests and the learners can gather there.

Encourage the children to link their observations (on the basis of similarity and dissimilarity) with the story.

### **Permanent experiences**

Carry out this discussion, a day prior to the local tour.

- (i) *Before the journey* — give instructions about where are they going, why are they going and what will be the points of observation?
- (ii) *During the journey* — children can record their observation using a pen or pencil.
- (iii) *After the journey* — with the help of their learners, the teacher should record the observation on a chart. The recording can be done in the form given below—



**Seventh day: observation chart**

Expanding the recorded observations, the learners can write down what they had learnt about birds and what else would they want to know.

**I learnt**

**I want to learn**

It is necessary to spend some time every week on discussion about the observations, and new information written on the chart.

## TAILS: LET'S LEARN THE MYSTERY OF TAILS

NAME OF THE BOOK

– **TAILS**

WRITER

– **HYDROSE AALUWA**

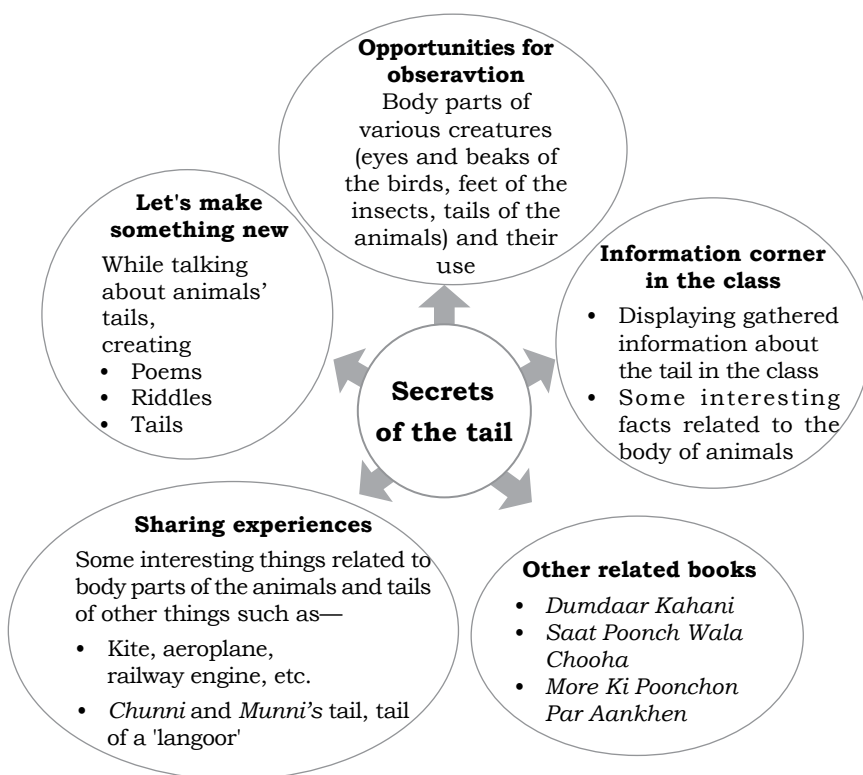
ILLUSTRATION

– **ATANU ROY**

PUBLICATION

– **NATIONAL BOOK TRUST, INDIA**

**Introduction:** This informative text is an interesting picture based description of tails of various animals. Using coloured and detailed illustrations, the book talks about the shapes and sizes of various tails, their specialties and how they are helpful for the animals. Alongside, an interesting story about man's tail is also given at the end. One needs to notice that pictures in this book depict the minute details of the written material. Therefore, teachers should give importance to its pictures while reading or teaching this book, and carrying out other activities.



## **Possible activities**

### **Relation with some other stories**

*More Ki Poonch Par Aankhen*

This folktale from Rajasthan tells us about the belief related to the strange markings on the tail of the peacock. For young children, the story may appear to be a bit lengthy and difficult from the point of view of the language used. Therefore, the teachers can narrate the story in brief, in their own way while showing its pictures only.

*Dumdaar Kahani*

*Saat Poonch Wala Choocha*

### **First and second day — pre-reading preparation**

- (i) Draw tails of different animals on a big chart and show it to the learners. Give them an opportunity to identify the animals by looking at the tails and write down their responses below every tail. Remember, it is important that even if the children do not give correct answers they should be accepted and written down on the chart. It is not the time to give the learners all the information, but to prepare them for the upcoming interesting reading material.
- (ii) During this discussion, give enough time to the children to share their earlier experiences. Discussion on the reasons for identifying a tail of a particular animal will encourage their natural and spontaneous response.
- (iii) Now, ask the children to look carefully at the tails of the animals which they see on their way to school from home.
- (iv) Give them 10–15 minutes to put down their observation on paper, in the form of a picture.

After they've drawn the picture, give the children the opportunity to talk about it. The tail they draw may have a particular colour, shape or any other special feature. The students of Class II can also write down their observations, next to the picture, with the help of the teacher; but for Class I, the teachers should write it themselves. Display the children's pictures in the class, along with their names. Give opportunity to other students of the school to have a look at these pictures. This will bring intensity of expression in the learners' writings.

Teachers should appreciate their learners' efforts at observation. They should also show curiosity for further information, and discovery by the learners.

### **Third and fourth day — reading 'Tails'**

- (i) Starting from the cover page, invite their attention towards the three tails drawn on it. Keep in mind that the title word 'Tails' has been drawn with an image of tail in it.
- (ii) While reading the book and going through the pictures if the learners find that their guesses are correct, their interest in reading is maintained.
- (iii) While reading, provide learners an opportunity to observe and identify the similarity and dissimilarity in different types of tails. Also, let them guess the uses of the tails. For example — after reading the sentence, 'Dogs' tails are never similar'; ask the children to look at the tails closely and find their differences, and then read further. Similarly, after reading the sentence, 'Fish's tail is also very useful'; you may ask them to predict the benefits of a fish tail.

## **Fifth and sixth day — post reading**

By now, the class might have gathered enough information regarding the shapes and sizes of tails and their uses through observation, discussion, reading material ‘tail’, and information corner, etc. So, an activity on making a tail can be carried out. Teachers may help the children in making a tail with the help of clay, broken branches, vine, cloth, coarse paper, etc. Learners can take the entire fourth day for making the tail, but teachers must ensure that the children have gathered all the information needed for making a tail of an animal.

The children can also use the information about tails to write a poem. With the help of the teacher, children may rhyme and add lines as in the given lines. The teachers should write them on a chart and put it on display.

For example —

*Chhipkali ki poonch jaise*

*Hawaldar ki moonchh*

*Kuchh kali-si matmaili*

*Gilhari ki poonchh jhabraili*

.....

Apart from poems, some interesting tail related riddles can also be made. It's not necessary that the lines of the riddle also rhyme.

For example —

I fly flies and mosquitoes. Cow's tail (.....)

My tail is my pillow, my tail is my quilt

Whenever I feel cold, around me I wrap it (Squirrel's tail)

## **DIFFERENT TYPES OF WORK**

This activity is related to the children's daily routine tasks. The learners have to identify and call out only those tasks which are done by them. Therefore, learners' active participation is compulsory here.

### **Pre-preparation**

- (i) The teachers need to make chits and write on them the tasks usually done by the children —
  - (a) before coming to the school.
  - (b) after going home from school.
  - (c) during the lunch break in the school.
  - (d) on the way back home from school.
  - (e) before going to sleep at night.

It is not necessary to limit to the works mentioned above. You can also write different situations related to the learners' activities.

Tell the learners that something is written on the chits kept in the box. Learners have to come up in pairs, pick out a chit and read it silently.

- (ii) They have to mime or act out the activities that they pick up.

### **The activity will proceed in the given manner**

- (i) Ask two students to come up first.
- (ii) Ask them to pick out one chit from the box.
- (iii) Both the learners have to silently read the slip, without telling anyone else about it:
- (iv) (Note : Teachers may help them in reading).
- (v) Tell this pair that they can take five minutes time to think about what all they can do.

- (vi) In order to tell what they are doing, the children will act in pairs (Don't expect them to do more than three or four tasks).
- (vii) Ask the class to guess the works being done by the pair.
- (viii) Write the learners' responses on the board, and write down the incorrect responses as well.

After all the responses have been written on the board, ask the acting pair whether they were acting out the guessed tasks. Put tick marks on the correct responses and cross out the incorrect ones.

## **SOME ACTIVITIES TO ENRICH THE CLASS WITH WRITTEN OR PRINTED MATERIAL**

Reading and writing activities should often be linked to children's school routine. The following activities can be used as a base to create written or printed material for the class. This material will provide the learners with meaningful opportunities for reading and writing.

- Once a week, organise planned games in the classroom.

First of all, select a game with the help of the learners. Prepare a chart, like the one given below, 3–4 days before the game—

| Name of the game | Day | Team A or 1 | Team B or 2 |
|------------------|-----|-------------|-------------|
|------------------|-----|-------------|-------------|

After filling in the columns, paste the chart in the class in such a way that the learners can read it easily. To familiarise the learners with the print, you can ask them to look for their names and their friends' name in the chart.

After the game finishes, a chart to display the results can also be put up in order to enrich the class with printed material. For the activity, ask the learners to read the names of the students in the winning team, the names of the games and days, in the chart.

- Similarly, with the help of learners, decide a day for story reading. Prepare a chart on the given format —

| Title of the story | Writer's Name | Day of reading the story | Time |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------------------|------|
|--------------------|---------------|--------------------------|------|

Fill in all the columns. In the column for time, you can write —

before recess or after recess.

Put up the chart in the class and carry out story based activities, as per the plan. As a different activity, prepare and display a story with the help of the learners. Give learners the time and opportunity to read the new story. Ask the students to role play the characters of the story.

- (i) Write and display, in the class, the information and news gathered by the children. Talk to them about it.
- (ii) The school related information should be displayed in written form in the class. Talk to the learners about them.
- (iii) You can also display the attendance chart and the learners' information about the mid-day meal scheme. Children's likes and dislikes in food can be displayed and used as print material for reading-writing activities.
- (iv) You can also give the learners an opportunity to tell stories, poems, folk songs during the morning assembly. In Classes I and II, such activities can be organised in groups which help in confidence building. While preparing the learners for this task, prepare the given plan chart —

| Name of poem/<br>story/folk song | Names of<br>student | Day | Date |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|-----|------|
|----------------------------------|---------------------|-----|------|

Meaningful print-rich class environment is helpful in conducting reading and writing activities. Learners also develop the habit of working in a planned way when they study under different circumstances. By doing such activities, learners would feel connected to the school and would be able to decide their objectives for coming to school. The suggested activities will ensure that the objective of teacher and student participation in directing classroom activities is successfully met, which would be an accomplishment in itself.

## **GLOSSARY**

1. **CO-OPERATIVE WRITING:** The form of writing where children try to write with the help of teacher try classmates. Filling in the words in the lines of the poem, or adding any new line are the examples of co-operative writing.
2. **CUMULATIVE EVALUATION:** The type of evaluation which is done formally at the end the session. It can be either oral or written. The data obtained from this evolution points towards on which level the children are, in the process of learning and teaching.
3. **ELEMENTARY LITERACY:** As literacy is related to the reading and writing in a meaningful way, Elementary word indicates the beginning of that meaningful process of reading and writing. This elementary literacy includes the time up to Class III where children talk about their experiences, express them in writing through pictures, words sentences. etc., try to understand meaning by reading through guessing. All those writing related experiences of the elementary level, which make the children excited about reading writing are the central point of elementary literacy.
4. **ELEMENTARY READING:** This is the beginning time of reading process when children are conscious and excited towards print and try to obtain meaning by guessing. This is that reading where children may not be able to recognise independent letters, but build meaning at their own level by relating to pictures, etc. Here the most important thing is that reading is not related to words and sentences only, but reading pictures, etc. is also included in it, because, at last, it is associated with meaning.
5. **ELEMENTARY WRITING:** It shows the process in which the children give written expression to their inner most thoughts crossing various steps in a systematic process. This writing helps reaching the step of traditional spelling beginning from the level of zig-zag lines. Here, the most important things is that spoken children start to understand that spoken and heard things can be written.
6. **EVALUATION:** Evaluation is that inseparable part of the teaching, and learning process. In it, the main emphasis is laid on how children learn, what types of problems come in the way of learning, and how teachers can help them. The data obtained from evolution points towards the places where there is a possibility process, and at what place the children are standing in the series of development.
7. **EXPERIENCE WRITING:** Writing independently or with the help of teachers about the experiences related to the incidents happening around is called experience writing . In this process

of Experience writing students tell about their experiences and teachers write them on board or chart. Then these experiences are read and noted down in the note book. Gradually the students themselves start writing.

8. **FORMATIVE EVALUATION:** A type of evaluation which is done formally in and informally in oral and written form in and outside the class so that it can be found out how do children learn and in which areas they need help for the skill-development.
9. **INDEPENDENT WRITING:** The form of writing in which children express themselves according to their understanding of writing. These inner most thoughts are expressed through picture, words, picture and words or through pictures and sentences. In this regard, the most important thing is becoming less dependent on teachers in relation to reading and writing.
10. **INVENTED SPELLING:** Third step of writing where children try to express themselves through words or sentences including picture. In such type of writing children try to write using their own invented spelling instead of correct spelling. The spelling which children use is related to or around the basic sound.
11. **MEANINGFUL CONTEXT:** Meaningful context means to associate children's studies (reading and writing) with their day-to-day experiences, so that they could say— write their opinion or thoughts are a particular reference. The most important thing here is that no language is learnt in a void. Children use the reference of their immediate surrounding to catch the language. The activities of reading and writing (learning) unrelated to reference are meaningfulness and uninteresting.
12. **MUSICAL WORDS:** The words which provide the same feeling when spoken and heard that we feel in our real life. Infected sound or musical words are capable of producing any particular sound effect, and then it may be the rustling sound of the air or the dripping sound of the rain drops.
13. **PICTURE-WRITING:** Second step of writing where a shape starts appearing from the zig-zag lines of the children. Now, children express themselves through pictures.
14. **PRINT OR WRITING ENRICHED ENVIRONMENT:** Such an environment on which a lot of printed or written material has been displayed with a specific aim. This material can be in any form— words written on a chart, a story or a poem. But the most important thing is that— it should be meaningful and helpful in reading and writing and in associating things with their written form. Besides it should be within their reach.
15. **READER OF WRITTEN MATERIAL:** As we know, a reader is a person who reads written or printed material. When we write, there is

always a reader for it, exactly in the same way as there is always a listener or audience before a speaker. Children often write keeping in view a particular reader such as a poem, story, letter, etc., written for grand mother ,younger sister, the reader of the written material is slightly different from the general writing process that here we write keeping in view the targeted reader, and it changer the whole style of writing.

16. **READING CORNER:** The place inside the class where enough children literatures is displayed according to the interest and level of the students, so that children turn them upside down and are excited to read them.
17. **SOUND SYMBOL RELATION:** It strengthens the process of reading and writing there is a letter or alphabet as a symbol for the spoken voice or sound. In saying 'ऋ' for anything, the sound of 'ऋ' is associated with its written symbol 'ऋ' (alphabet 'ऋ'). In a broader from it also means that what is the written symbol of all that we speak or hear.
18. **TODAY'S TALK:** Today's talk is an opportunity to begin the class in an interesting and purposeful manner, where children share their seen and heard experiences with one another. One or two interesting things spoken by the children are written on the board so that, children feel interested in reading the written words and are associated with print.
19. **TRADITIONAL SPELLING WRITING:** Fourth step of children trying to express themselves through sentences. this level, children start using correct means of traditional spellings.
20. **WRITING:** Such purposeful written or printed material which helps children in reading and writing and nourishes the activities like guessing imagination and pondering. For reading and writing, it is very important to be associated with such written or printed material.
21. **ZIG-ZAG LINES:** First step of writing where children express their innermost thoughts by inscribing zig-zag lines on the paper. These zig-zag lines are meaningful and expresses the evolution of writing.

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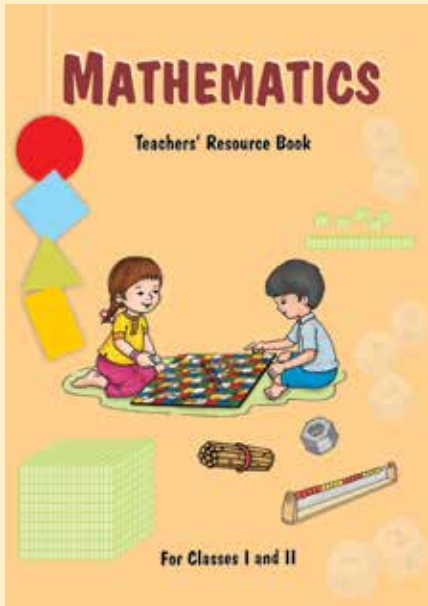
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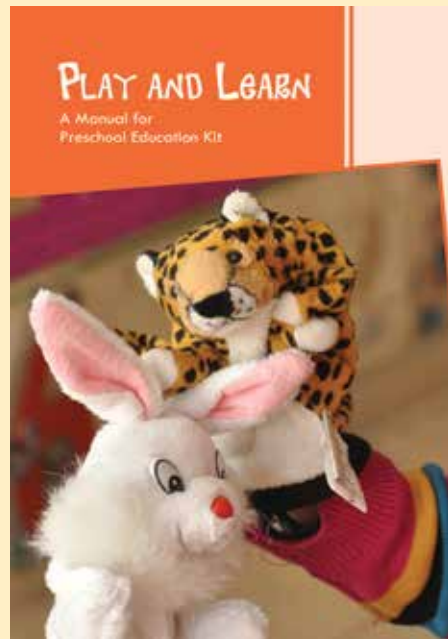
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**The List of Books Described in this Manual in the part  
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|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| 1.           | <i>Roopa the Elephant</i>                                                             | NBT                             | 14/-         |
| 2.           | <i>Ek Tha Chhota sa<br/>Mota sa Lota</i>                                              | NBT                             | 15/-         |
| 3.           | ‘Kalrav’ Part I (Kite)<br>Text Book Pas-Pados<br>‘Kalrav’ Part I Kaun<br>Kaun se Kaam | UP Basic<br>Shiksha<br>Parishad |              |
| 4.           | <i>Kouwe ki Kahani</i>                                                                | NBT                             | 11/-         |
| 5.           | <i>Poonch</i>                                                                         | NBT                             | 13/-         |



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Code - 13210  
ISBN - 978-93-5292-336-6

माधनपुर खादर

1 जन्मलभ

2 नैड दिली प्रिय मंचेंड

3 में मोत खुसी है की कुम कक्षा में पाठम उनीछे

4 में कुमसे मीलन पादी है

5 में कप घर में मीलन ऊरदु

6 दम एक सांत खोलगो

7 दम एक सात मीलर पाडोम

8 दम एक सात इ-कुल जौडो अनिता



हेमा रानी



तभी वहाँ एक कनरीया आया  
उसने हाथों से काँडा है मोटे बाटाट निकल  
आँद वह घर भाग गया

कक्षा - 1



|      |          |      |      |      |
|------|----------|------|------|------|
| हाथी | को       | गुला | आया  | उसने |
| अपकी | सँद      | मे   | पाणी | भरा  |
| और   | जाकर     | उसके | ऊपर  | सारा |
| पाणी | डाल दीया |      |      |      |

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