

Marigold

Book Four

Textbook in English for Class IV



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

ISBN 81-7450-877-2

First Edition

February 2007 Phalgun 1928

Reprinted

November 2007 Kartika 1929

January 2009 Magha 1930

January 2010 Magha 1931

January 2011 Magha 1932

January 2012 Magha 1933

December 2012 Agrahayana 1934

February 2014 Magha 1935

December 2014 Pausa 1936

October 2015 Asvina 1937

December 2016 Pausa 1938

PD 180T ST

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and Training, 2007

₹ 50.00

Printed on 80 GSM paper with NCERT
watermark

Published at the Publication Division by
the Secretary, National Council of
Educational Research and Training,
Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 110 016
and printed at Jaina Offset Printers,
A-33/2, Sahibabad Industrial Area,
Site IV, Ghaziabad (UP)

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Foreword

The National Curriculum Framework, 2005, recommends that children's life at school must be linked to their life outside the school. This principle marks a departure from the legacy of bookish learning which continues to shape our system and causes a gap between the school, home and community. The syllabi and textbooks developed on the basis of NCF signify an attempt to implement this basic idea. They also attempt to discourage rote learning and the maintenance of sharp boundaries between different subject areas. We hope these measures will take us significantly further in the direction of a child-centred system of education outlined in the National Policy on Education (1986).

The success of this effort depends on the steps that school principals and teachers will take to encourage children to reflect on their own learning and to pursue imaginative activities and questions. We must recognise that given space, time and freedom, children generate new knowledge by engaging with the information passed on to them by adults. Treating the prescribed textbook as the sole basis of examination is one of the key reasons why other resources and sites of learning are ignored. Inculcating creativity and initiative is possible if we perceive and treat children as participants in learning, not as receivers of a fixed body of knowledge.

These aims imply considerable change in school routines and mode of functioning. Flexibility in the daily time-table is as necessary as rigour in implementing the annual calendar so that the required number of teaching days are actually devoted to teaching. The methods used for teaching and evaluation will also determine how effective this textbook proves for making children's life at school a happy experience, rather than a source of stress or boredom. Syllabus designers have tried to address the problem of curricular burden by restructuring and reorienting knowledge at different stages with greater consideration for child psychology and the time available for teaching. The textbook attempts to enhance this endeavour by giving higher priority and space to opportunities for contemplation and wondering, discussion in small groups, and activities requiring hands-on experience.

NCERT appreciates the hard work done by the textbook development committee responsible for this book. We wish to thank the Chairperson of the advisory group at the primary level, Professor Anita Rampal and the Chief Advisor for this book, Professor R. Lalitha Eapen (CIEFL, Hyderabad) for guiding the work of this committee. Several teachers contributed to the

development of this textbook; we are grateful to their principals for making this possible. We are indebted to the institutions and organisations which have generously permitted us to draw upon their resources, material and personnel. We are especially grateful to the members of the National Monitoring Committee, appointed by the Department of Secondary and Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development under the Chairpersonship of Professor Mrinal Miri and Professor G.P. Deshpande, for their valuable time and contribution. As an organisation committed to the systemic reform and continuous improvement in the quality of its products, NCERT welcomes comments and suggestions which will enable us to undertake further revision and refinement.

New Delhi
20 November 2006

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Acknowledgements

National Council of Educational Research and Training is grateful to Smt. Nandana Reddy, *Director*, The Concerned for working children, Bangaluru; R. Amritavalli, *Professor*, Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL), Hyderabad for going through the manuscript and making valuable suggestions.

National Council of Educational Research and Training thanks the following authors and copyright holders for granting permission to use poems and stories included in this book. *Wake up!* by C. Fletcher; *Neha's Alarm Clock* by Girija Rani Asthana, this story was first published as *Neha's Alarm Clock* by Scholastic India Pvt. Ltd; *Noses* by Aileen Fisher; *What is it?* by Marie Louise Allen; *Run* by Mary Daunt from *Adventures into poetry from Primary Schools Junior Book 1*; *Nasruddin's Aim* adapted from *The Mulla's Aim* from *Humorous Tales of Mulla Nasruddin* by Yogesh Joshi, Navneet Publications (India) Limited, Mumbai; *Alice in Wonderland* adapted from Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*; *The Man in an Onion Bed* by John Ciard; *Don't be Afraid of the Dark* by Ruskin Bond from *Poetry Magic*, Book 3, Ratna Sagar P. Ltd. 2006, New Delhi; *Indian sign Language Dictionary*, Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, International Human Resource Development Centre (IHRDC) for the Disabled, Coimbatore, India, 2001; *The Donkey* by Maragret. S. Russell; *The Milkman's Cow* by Vidya Pradhan, Children's Book Trust, New Delhi; *The Cruel Boy* by Shyamala Kumaradas from *Beginning Reading Programme*, 2000, Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL), Hyderabad; *Hiawatha* by H.W. Longfellow; *The Scholar's Mother Tongue* adapted from Akbar and Birbal stories; *A Watering Rhyme* by P.A. Ropes from *Poetry Magic*, Book 3, Ratna Sagar P. Ltd., 2006, New Delhi; *The Giving Tree* adapted from *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein; *Books from Preschool-Appropriate Practices* by Janice J. Beaty, Jovanovich Publishers, Orlando, Florida; *Going to buy a Book* by Rukmini Banerji from Pratham Books, Mumbai; *Chiritha Chettu* from *Beginning Reading Programme*, 2000, CIEFL, Hyderabad; *Say in Chorus* by Mash Goldfish (adapted); *The Naughty Boy* by John Keats; *Pinocchio* adapted from the story of *Pinocchio*.

Special thanks are also due to Vandana Singh, *Consultant Editor*, NCERT for her contribution.

The Council also gratefully acknowledges the contributions of Ritu Sharma, *DTP Operator* and Bhagavathi Ammal, *Copy Editor* in shaping this book.

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Contents

<i>Foreword</i>	iii
Unit-1	1-16
<i>Wake up!</i>	
Neha's Alarm Clock	
Unit-2	17-36
<i>Noses</i>	
The Little Fir Tree	
Unit-3	37-58
<i>Run!</i>	
Nasruddin's Aim	
Unit-4	59-72
<i>Why?</i>	
Alice in Wonderland	
Unit-5	73-90
<i>Don't be Afraid of the Dark</i>	
Helen Keller	





Unit-6

91-106

The Donkey

I had a Little Pony

The Milkman's Cow

Unit-7

107-128

Hiawatha

The Scholar's Mother Tongue

Unit-8

129-146

A Watering Rhyme

The Giving Tree

Unit-9

147-162

Books

Going to buy a Book

Unit-10

163-178

The Naughty Boy

Pinocchio

