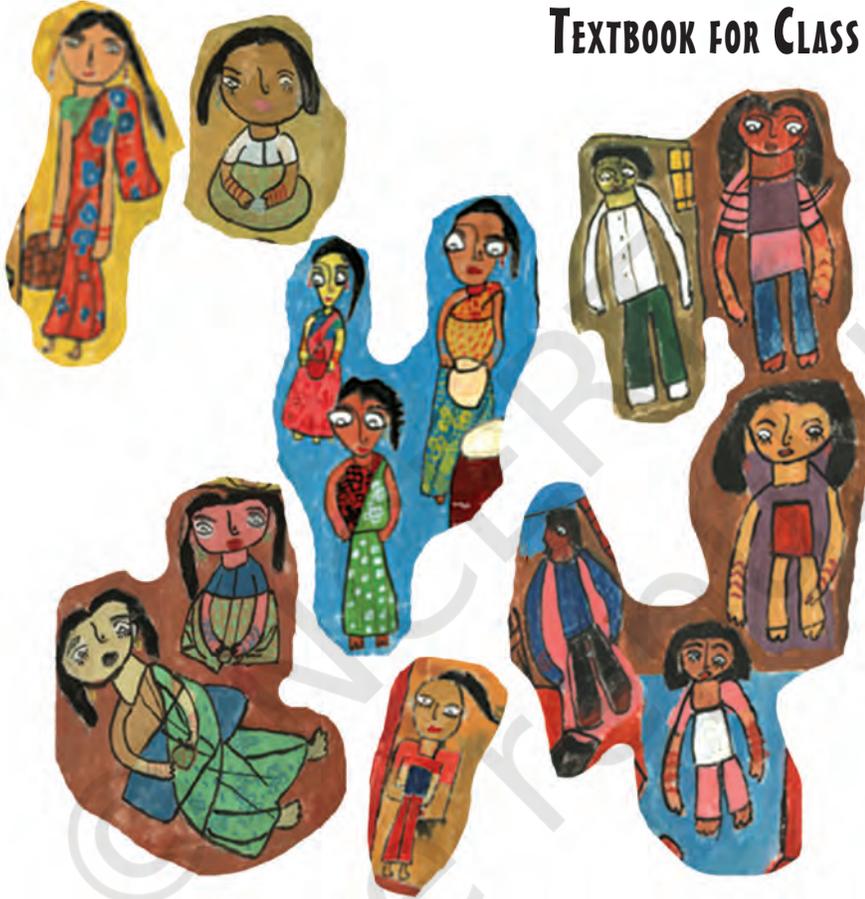


ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

# LOOKING AROUND

TEXTBOOK FOR CLASS IV



0427

शिक्षा 5 प्रथमसूत्रे



एन सी ई आर टी  
NCERT

राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्  
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**OFFICES OF THE PUBLICATION  
DIVISION, NCERT**

NCERT Campus  
Sri Aurobindo Marg  
New Delhi 110 016

Phone : 011-26562708

108, 100 Feet Road  
Hosdakere Halli Extension  
Banashankari III Stage  
Bangalore 560 085

Phone : 080-26725740

Navjivan Trust Building  
P.O. Navjivan  
Ahmedabad 380 014

Phone : 079-27541446

CWC Campus  
Opp. Dhankal Bus Stop  
Panihati  
Kolkata 700 114

Phone : 033-25530454

CWC Complex  
Maligaon  
Guwahati 781 021

Phone : 0361-2674869

**Publication Team**

Head, Publication Division : Anup Kumar Rajput

Chief Editor : Shveta Uppal

Chief Production Officer : Arun Chitkara

Chief Business Manager : Vipin Dewan

Assistant Editor : Hemant Kumar

Production Assistant : Sunil Kumar

**Cover Design and Layout**

Shveta Rao

**Illustrations**

Joel Gill, Alok Hari, Arup Gupta, Manish Raj,  
Deepa Balsavar, Centre for Environment  
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# FOREWORD

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

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

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

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) appreciates the hard work done by the textbook development committee responsible for this book. We wish to thank the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee for Textbooks at the primary level, Anita Rampal, *Professor*, CIE, Delhi University, Delhi, Chief Advisor, Savithri Singh, *Principal*, Acharya Narendra Dev College, University of Delhi, New Delhi, Co-chief Advisor, Farah Farooqi, *Reader*, Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi, 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 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

*Director*  
National Council of Educational  
Research and Training

# A NOTE FOR THE TEACHERS AND PARENTS



The team for the development of this book found it a challenging task to translate the objectives as defined in the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 while preparing this national-level textbook. The writing team would like to share some of the issues that were discussed during the process.

The child looks at the environment around her/him in a holistic manner and does not compartmentalise any topic into 'science' and 'social science', hence, it was thought essential that we too aim for this integration within the book, instead of having two disparate sections. Instead of proceeding with lists of 'topics', the syllabus itself has proposed themes that allowed a connected and inter-related understanding to develop. An attempt has been made in the book to locate every theme in physical, social and cultural contexts critically so that the child can make informed choices.

The challenge, when writing at a national-level, was to reflect the multicultural dimensions of diverse classrooms. It was felt necessary that all children feel important – their community, culture, and their way of life – are all important. While writing the book – *Who is the child we are addressing* – was the big question. Is she/he the child in big schools of the metro, or the school in the slums, a small-town child, one in a village *shala* or the one in the remote mountainous area? How do we address such diverse group? One also needed to tackle the differences of gender, class, culture, religion, language, geographical location, etc. These are some of the issues addressed in the book, which the teacher will also have to handle in her own ways.

Before discussing the concerns/issues related to this area, you go through the syllabus of this subject which is broadly divided into six themes, namely, family and friends, food, water, shelter, travel and things we make and do. It is available on the NCERT website ([www.ncert.nic.in](http://www.ncert.nic.in)). It will help you understand the subject better.

The content in the book is centred on the child, providing her/him a lot of space to explore. There is a conscious effort to discourage rote learning and hence descriptions and definitions were totally avoided. It is always easy to give information; the real challenge was to provide opportunities to a child where she/he can vocalise, build upon her/his curiosity, learn-by-doing, ask questions, experiment, etc. In order that the child is happy to engage with the book, a variety of formats have been used – narratives, poems, stories, puzzles, jigsaw, comic strips, etc. Stories and narratives have been used as a tool for sensitising the child since a child can probably more easily empathise with characters in a story or a narrative. The language used in the book is not 'formal' but is in the 'commonly spoken' form.

Active participation of children is very important in constructing knowledge. Activities in the book that demand that children be taken for observations to the



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