



CENTRAL BOARD OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

(An Autonomous Organization under the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India)

"Shiksha Sadan", 17-Rouse Avenue, New Delhi-110 002

Circular No. Acad-3/2012

CBSE/ACAD./ DIR (TRG)/ 2012

11. 04. 2012

Promoting Reading Habits

All the Heads of Institutions
affiliated to CBSE

Dear Principal,

Books are considered not only the best friend of a child but are also gifts of learning that can enrich and improve one's lives. Good reading habits are a source of knowledge and learning. No wonder, inculcating good reading and learning habits in children has always been a concern for all stakeholders in the education field world over.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has constantly laid emphasis on making school education meaningful and relevant so that it acts as a powerful tool for human resource development. A conscious attempt to encourage reading habits among school children had been taken up by CBSE way back in 2003 (*vide circular no. 17 dated 16 July, 2003*).

Now with the introduction of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) and grading in Secondary education right from the primary classes, the importance of fostering interest for reading books among children of all ages has increased.

With everything – information, entertainment videos and even books within reach through the internet, it is a challenge to convince students to pick up books and engage with the author, story, character and ideas presented in the reading passage or book.

In order to promote independent/ reading skills specific initiatives introduced over the years are:

- ✓ The guidelines on management and use of library was circulated to all schools (*vide circular no. 23, dated 12 September 2006*).
- ✓ **Reading Projects** emphasizing on the purpose of reading, the skills to be developed and the techniques and procedures that can be adopted to enrich the reading experience of student (*vide circular no. 54, dated 21 October 2009*).
- ✓ **Donate a book** campaign (*vide circular no. 47, dated 10 August 2010*)
- ✓ List of Indian Authors and their books as suggested reading material for classes 5-12 (*vide circular no. 09, dated 15 February, 2011*)

As part of the Formative Assessment in CCE Reading Projects are also taken up in CBSE schools in a systematic manner. Various modes of assessment such as conducting reviews, scripts, reading, discussion, open houses, interact with the authors are considered.

Stories have always been a time-tested way to help children cope with fears and complexes caused by various psychological problems or disasters – both at home and beyond, which can find an outlet in common behavioural problems in schools, like bullying, cheating, absenteeism etc. Books can soothe the traumatized young minds and help children to heal and adjust to adverse situations.

Reading for the sake of pleasure derived through the pages of a book, ensures that the child is aware, articulate, imaginative and well able to express thoughts and feelings. A good reader becomes an independent learner and thinker, capable of critical thinking and taking his own decision in life in a rational way. If inculcated at the primary level the reading habit will create a lifelong advantage for the students and help him/her do well academically.

In fact, it is in the primary school that the foundations of good habits are laid. Schools must ensure that a variety of good, colourful and attractive reading material is made available to children from their earliest years. Books with pictures that attract and stories they enjoy and relate to are sure to create reading interest in the young ones. Colourful picture books, rhymes and short poems, animal and nature stories play an important role in widening horizons, developing emotions and firing the imagination of children apart from reinforcing language and vocabulary, before they embark on reading full length fiction, non-fiction, biographies, plays etc.

Libraries play an important role in developing reading skills and love for books. However, it is not enough just to stack books in libraries. The child should be allowed to pick up, touch, handle and turn the pages as and how he wants to. There must be time and space to let children look at books, choose for themselves and try to read or just look at pictures and texts according to their likes and dislikes. Attractive books will give the same pleasure and joy that toys may give and if allowed to handle them, the child will develop the same love for books as for toys.

Telling stories from books adds to the pleasure derived. A good teacher may read out stories to groups of children, showing them illustrations that go with them. Proper voice modulation, dialogue delivery and bits of action will enhance the effect of the story. Children can be asked to read aloud the dialogues of different characters from the stories. Acting out roles, painting scenes from stories and other activities associated with the story can be undertaken by the teacher and the children. This will help create interest in the book and motivate the child to read. Music, action and movement may be incorporated in poems and rhymes to make them more interesting.

Besides, in order to promote the reading habits among children schools can organize a number of activities like:

- Dramatization of the story
- Debating and defending the actions of characters in the story.
- Making an audio story out of a novel/ text to be read out to children.
- Interacting with the author
- Holding a literature fest where various characters interact with each other
- Symposiums and seminars for introducing a book of an author to the children
- Creating their own stories.
- Critical evaluation of the characters, plot and the storyline
- Book reviews of the book of any genre chosen by a student that can be assessed by the teachers and even displayed on the notice board.
- Refresh the library books as often as is practical. Kids love to discover new things and the easiest things to discover are those closest to hand. Sometimes refresh can simply mean moving the books around.

- If possible, make sure children have a quiet place and a quiet time where they can always find a refuge for reading.
- Schools' participation in the literary fest and other such activities in and around the city.

'**International Children's Book Day**' is celebrated the world over on 2nd April, the day the ever popular writer of stories, Hans Christian Andersen was born. It can be observed as a literary day when the following events can be conducted in the schools:

- Reading competitions intraclass and interclass that can be extended to interschool competitions too. Topics like Cultural Heritage of India, Lives of great philosophers and thinkers like Gandhiji, Ravindranath Tagore, Swami Vivekananda, Ramakrishna Mission etc., relevant to Indian culture and philosophy and traditions can be taken up.
- Lecturers and symposiums with experts to motivate the students on 'reading habits'.
- All prizes should be in the form of books of famous authors and writers.
- If the student/students pen down some book or story, the respective school should come forward to assist the young writer/author in publication, printing or even giving it a nice launch pad.
- Any other relevant activity as per the discretion of the school/institution.

To assist the CBSE schools in this endeavor AWIC (*Association of Writers and Illustrators for Children*) has compiled a list of new books in English and Hindi published recently, for classes I to XII. The List is enclosed with this circular as **Annexure 1**

The List contains a variety of books written by Indian authors, suitable for classes I -5. Since reading interest is created at this stage it is important that books are attractive, entertaining and relate to the child's own life and experiences, making it easy for the child to identify with them. Care has been taken to see that stories are simple and short, with more colour and illustrations than text for the youngest age groups. This will ensure that the pages are attractive to look at and easy to read. The List therefore includes some books for Book Therapy, which may be effectively used by school counselors, librarians and teachers in handling children with problems.

The Board looks forward to the whole-hearted co-operation of all the schools so that together with you we can enrich the reading and learning experience of our young generation.

Yours sincerely,

(Dr. SADHANA PARASHAR)
DIRECTOR (Training)

Copy to the respective Heads of Directorates, Organizations and Institutions as indicated below with a request to disseminate the information to all the schools under their jurisdiction:

1. The Commissioner, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, 18-Institutional Area, Shaheed Jeet Singh Marg, New Delhi- 110016.
2. The Commissioner, Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti, A-28, Kailash Colony, New Delhi.
3. The Director of Education, Directorate of Education, Govt. of NCT of Delhi, Old Secretariat, Delhi-110054.
4. The Director of Public Instructions (Schools), Union Territory Secretariat, Sector-9, Chandigarh-160017.
5. The Director of Education, Govt. of Sikkim, Gangtok, Sikkim- 737101.

6. The Director of School Education, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar-791111
7. The Director of Education, Govt. of A&N Islands, Port Blair- 744101.
8. The Director of Education, S.I.E., CBSE Cell, VIP Road, Junglee Ghat, P.O. 744103, A&N Islands. —
9. The Secretary, Central Tibetan School Administration, ESS ESS Plaza, Community Centre, Sector 3, Rohini, Delhi- 110085
10. All the Regional Officers of CBSE with the request to send this circular to all the Heads of the affiliated schools of the Board in their respective regions.
11. The Education Officers/ AEOs of the Academic Branch, CBSE.
12. The Joint Secretary (IT) with the request to put this circular on the CBSE website.
13. The Library and Information Officer, CBSE.
14. E.O. to Chairman, CBSE
15. DO/ PA to Secretary, CBSE
16. PA to CE, CBSE
17. PA to Director (Acad.)
18. PA to HOD (AIEEE)
19. PA to HOD (Edusat)
20. PRO, CBSE

