

CENTRAL BOARD OF SECONDARY EDUCATION
"Shiksha Kendra", 2, Community Center,
Preet Vihar, Delhi-110092

CBSE/ACAD/EO (L)/RPr/2009

October 21, 2009
Circular No.54

**All the Heads of Independent Schools
Affiliated to the CBSE**

**Subject: Promoting Reading Habits as part of CCE in English
Language**

Dear Principal

Inculcating good reading habits in children has always been a concern for all stakeholders in education. Now with the introduction of CCE and grading in secondary education there has been a paradigm shift from getting marks at an end of the term summative examination to the process of learning and acquiring better language skills.

With everything – information, entertainment, videos and even books within reach through the internet, it is indeed 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. It is not enough to offer children what is considered a good selection of reading text as merely presenting a good selection of reading texts will not ensure that the child will read a passage and become a good reader. A conscious attempt needs to be made to help children to relate to the text in a meaningful way. Reading any text should be done with the purpose of:-

1. reading silently at varying speeds depending on the purpose of reading:
2. adopting different strategies for different types of texts, both literary and non-literary:
3. recognising the organisation of a text:
4. identifying the main points of a text;
5. understanding relations between different parts of a text through lexical and grammatical cohesion devices.
6. anticipating and predicting what will come next.
7. deducing the meaning of unfamiliar lexical items in a given context:
8. consulting a dictionary to obtain information on the meaning and use of lexical items:
9. analysing, interpreting, inferring (and evaluating) the ideas in the text:
10. selecting and extracting from text information required for a specific purpose.
11. retrieving and synthesising information from a range of reference material using study skills such as skimming and scanning:

12. interpreting texts by relating them to other material on the same theme (and to their own experience and knowledge): and
13. reading extensively on their own for pleasure.

A good reader is most often an independent learner and consequently an independent thinker capable of taking his/her own decisions in life rationally. Such a learner will most assuredly also be capable of critical thinking. To bring books and children together is indeed a challenge, especially in today's environment of overexposure to media.

The purpose of inculcating the habit of reading among children is to create independent thinking individuals with the ability to not only create their own knowledge but also critically interpret, analyze and evaluate it with objectivity and fairness.

Creating learners for the 21st century involves making them independent learners who can '*learn, unlearn and relearn*' and if our children are in the habit of reading they will learn to reinvent themselves and deal with the many challenges that lie ahead of them.

Reading is not merely decoding information or pronouncing words correctly, it is interactive dialogue between the author and the reader in which the reader and author share their experiences and knowledge with each other which helps them to understand the text and impart meaning to the text other than what the author himself may have implied. Good readers are critical readers with an ability to arrive at a deeper understanding of not only the world presented in the book but also of the real world around them. They not only recall what they read but comprehend it too. Their critical reading and understanding of the text helps them create new understanding, solve problems, infer and make connections to other texts and experiences. Reading does not mean reading for leisure only but also reading for information. The child may be encouraged to read on topics as diverse as science and technology, politics and history. This will improve his critical thinking skills and also help in improving his concentration.

The library in the school should be kept updated and a reasonable sum of the annual budget should be made use of in buying books, CDs and reference material for the library. The library, by strengthening its resources should be developed as not merely a repository of books and information but a centre of knowledge creation. Children should be encouraged to visit the library as and when they wish to, a number of notices can be put up encouraging children to read books, informing them of the various types of books available in the library, even vocabulary building games can be a part of the library collection. In short a welcoming and inviting atmosphere in the library will be the first step towards motivating the children to visit the library and pick up a book to read. Children will be encouraged to read if they see their role model i.e. teachers and principals

reading themselves hence before a book is introduced in a classroom it ought to have been read by the teachers.

It is often seen that reading book projects are assigned to children in which children are expected to read a book and write a report on it. Though the spirit behind the assigning of the project is commendable, the project does not often interest the students nor does it fulfill the objective which is to inculcate in students the habit of reading.

Reading a book should lead to creative and individual response to the author's ideas presented in the book in the form of a:-

- short review
- dramatization of the story
- commentary on the characters
- critical evaluation of the plot, story line and characters
- comparing and contrasting the characters within the story and with other characters in stories by the same author or by the other authors
- extrapolating about the story's ending or life of characters after the story ends
- defending characters' actions in the story.
- making an audio story out of the novel/text to be read out to younger children.
- Interacting with the author
- Holding a literature fest where various characters interact with each other
- Acting like authors/poets/dramatists, to defend their works and characters.
- Symposiums and seminars for introducing a book, an author, or a theme
- Finding similar text in other languages, native or otherwise and looking at differences and similarities.
- Creating graphic novels out of novels/short stories read
- Dramatising incidents from a novel or a story
- Creating their own stories

Reading Project in schools

- 1. The CBSE is planning to introduce a Reading Project for upper Primary and Secondary classes. The list of books recommended for the Project is enclosed at Annexure I.**
- 2. Schools may choose to use some of these books or others of their own choice.**
- 3. Schools can vary the level but at least one book per term is to be read by every child.**

Teachers may opt for:-

- One book;
- Books by one author; or
- Books of one genre; to be read by the whole class.

The Project should lead to independent learning/ reading skills, hence the chosen book/selection should **not be taught** in class, but may be introduced through activities and be left for the students to read at their own pace. Teachers may, however, choose to assess a child's progress or success in reading the book by asking for verbal or written progress reports, looking at the diary entries of students, engaging in a discussion about the book, giving a short quiz or a worksheet about the book/ short story. The mode of intermittent assessment may be decided by the teacher as she/he sees fit.

These may be used for Formative Assessment (F1, F2, F3 and F4) only. Various modes of assessment such as conducting Reviews, Scripts, Reading, Discussions, Open Houses, Exchanges, Interact with the Author can be considered.

This may be brought to the notice of all teachers and students involved in teaching and learning of English.

Yours sincerely,

Menaxi Jain
(Assistant Education Officer)

Enclosure: Annexure-I

Copy with a request to respective Heads of Directorates/KVS/NVS/CTSA as indicated below to also disseminate the information to all concerned schools under their jurisdiction:

1. The Commissioner, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, 18-Institutional Area, Shaheed Jeet Singh Marg, New Delhi-110 016.
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-110 054.
4. The Director of Public Instructions (Schools), Union Territory Secretariat, Sector 9, Chandigarh-160 017.
5. The Director of Education, Govt. of Sikkim, Gangtok, Sikkim – 737 101.
6. The Director of School Education, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar- 791111
7. The Director of Education, Govt. of A&N Islands, Port Blair-744 101.

8. The Secretary, Central Tibetan School Administration, ESS ESS Plaza, community Centre, Sector 3, Rohini, Delhi-110 085.
9. 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.
10. The Education Officers/AEOs of the Academic Branch, CBSE.
11. The Joint Secretary (IT) with the request to put this circular on the CBSE website.
12. The Library and Information Officer, CBSE
13. E.O. to Chairman, CBSE
14. DO / PA to Secretary, CBSE
15. PA to CE, CBSE
16. PA to Director (Acad.)
17. PA to HOD (AIEEE)
18. PA to HOD (Edusat)
19. PRO, CBSE

Menaxi Jain

Annexure-I

List of Suggested Books for Reading

For classes V and VI:

1. **The Noddy Series** – *Enid Blyton*
2. **Tales from Panchtantra**
3. **Karadi Tales**
4. **The Young Visitors-** *Daisy Ashford*
5. **The wind in the Willows-***Kenneth Graham*
6. **The Tale of Mr. Tod-** *Beatrix Potter*
7. **Gulliver’s Travels-** *Jonathan Swift*
8. **The Famous Five Series** - *Enid Blyton*
9. **The Happy Prince** – *Oscar Wilde*
10. **Charlie and the Chocolate Factory-** *Roald Dahl*

For classes VII and VIII:

1. **The Adventures of Tom Sawyer** – *Mark Twain*
2. **The Adventures of Hucklebury Finn** – *Mark Twain*
3. **Treasure Island** – *Robert Louis Stevenson*
4. **Around the World in 80 Days** – *Jules Verne*
5. **The Time Machine** – *H.G. Wells*
6. **Harry Potter – The Series** – *J K Rowling*
7. **Twenty Thousand Leagues under the sea** – *H.G. Wells*
8. Books by **George Herriott**
9. **The Curious Case of a Dog in the Nighttime** – *Alexander McCall Smith*
10. Stories by **Roald Dahl**

For classes IX and X

1. Books by **Agatha Christie**
2. Books by **Arthur Conan Doyle**
3. **The Room on the Roof** – *Ruskin Bond*
4. **Little Women** – *Louisa May Alcott*
5. **The Call of the Wild** – *Jack London*
6. **Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm** – *Kate Douglas Wiggin*
7. **The Canterville Ghost** – *Oscar Wilde*
8. **The Great Grammatizator and other Stories** – *Roald Dahl*
9. **Snappy Surprises** – *Ruskin Bond*

10. **Moby Dick** – *Herman Melville*
11. **Artemis Fowl series** - *Eoin Colfer*
12. **Daddy Long Legs** - *Jean Webster*
13. School Stories by **P.G. Wodehouse**

For classes XI and XII

1. **Father Brown** – *GK Chesterton*
2. **Pay It Forward**
3. **Uncle Tom’s cabin** – *Harriet Beecher Stowe*
4. **To kill a Mocking Bird** – *Harper Lee*
5. **Animal Farm** – *George Orwell*
6. **Nineteen eighty four**-*George Orwell*
7. **Short Story Collections By Indian Authors**
8. Books by *Jane Austen*
9. Books by *George Elliot*
10. Books by *Charlotte Bronte*
11. Books by *Emily Bronte*
12. **Pickwick Papers** - *Charles Dickens*
13. **The Diary of a Young Girl** - *Anne Frank*
14. **Three men in a Boat** - *Jerome K Jerome*
15. **My Family and Other Animals** - *Gerald Durrell*
16. **Rosie is my Relative** - *Gerald Durrell*
17. **One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest**

Other Books and Authors suggested by the Committee:

1. *Satyajeet Ray*
2. *RK Narayan*
3. *Sudha Murthy*
4. *Ismat Chughtai*
5. *Vikas Swaroop*
6. *APJ Abdul Kalam*
7. *Mark Twain*
8. *Guy de Maupassant*
9. *O’Henry*