

### ISBN 81-7450-715-9

### First Edition

March 2007 Phalguna 1928

#### Reprinted

February 2008 Magha 1929 February 2009 Magha 1930 January 2010 Magha 1931 January 2011 Magha 1932 January 2012 Magha 1933 January 2013 Pausa 1934 January 2014 Pausa 1935 December 2014 Pausa 1936

#### PD 120T MJ

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₹ 60.00

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 Goyal Stationers, B-36/9, G.T. Karnal Road Industrial Area, Delhi 110 033

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### Foreword

The National Curriculum Framework (NFC) 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 participates 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-tables is as necessary as rigour in implementing the annual calendar so that the required number of teaching days are actually devoting 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 problem. 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 textbook. We wish to thank the Chairperson of the advisory group in Social Sciences, Professor Hari Vasudevan and the Chief Advisor for this textbook, Professor Tapas Majumdar 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 Resources 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 16 February 2007 Director
National Council of Educational
Research and Training

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# Acknowledgement

The National Council of Educational Research and Training acknowledges the invaluable contribution of academicians and practising school teachers for the mukherjee, Professor, JNU, for going through our manuscript and suggesting relevant changes. We thank jhaljit Singh, *Reader*, Department of Economics, University of Manipur for his contribution. We also thank our colleagues Neeraja Rashmi, *Reader*, Curriculum Group; M.V.Srinivasan, Ashita Raveendran, *Lecturers*, Department of Education in Social Sciences and Humanities (DESSH) for their feedback and suggestions.

We would like to place on record the precious advise of (Late) Dipak Majumdar, *Professor* (Retd.), Presidency College, Kolkata. We could have benefited much more of his expertise, had his health permitted.

The practising school teachers have helped in many ways. The council expresses its gratitude to A.K.Singh, PGT (Economics), Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh; Ambika Gulati, Head, Department of Economics, Sanskriti School; B.C. Thakur PGT (Economics), Government Pratibha Vikas Vidyalaya, Surajmal Vihar; Ritu Gupta, Principal, Sneh International School, Shoban Nair, PGT (Economics), Mother's International School Rashmi Sharma, PGT (Economics), Kendriya Vidalaya, Jawaharlal Nehru University Campus, New Delhi.

We thank Savita Sinha, Professor and Head, DESSH for her support.

Special thanks are due to Vandana R.Singh, Consultant Editor for going through the manuscript.

The council also gratefully acknowledges the contributions of Dinesh Kumar, Incharge Computer Station; Amar Kumar Prusty, Copy Editor in shaping this book. The contribution of the Publication Department in bringing out his book is duly acknowledged.

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