

Preface

Through the years, from the time of the Kothari Commission, there have been several committees looking at ways of making the school curriculum meaningful and enjoyable for the learners. Based on the understanding developed over the years, a National Curriculum Framework (NCF) was finalised in 2005. As part of this exercise, a National Focus Group on Teaching of Mathematics was formed. Its report, which came in 2005, highlighted a constructivist approach to the teaching and learning of mathematics.

The essence of this approach is that children already know, and do some mathematics very naturally in their surroundings, before they even join school. The syllabus, teaching approach, textbooks etc., should build on this knowledge in a way that allows children to enjoy mathematics, and to realise that mathematics is more about a way of reasoning than about mechanically applying formulae and algorithms. The students and teachers need to perceive mathematics as something natural and linked to the world around us. While teaching mathematics, the focus should be on helping children to develop the ability to particularise and generalise, to solve and pose meaningful problems, to look for patterns and relationships, and to apply the logical thinking behind mathematical proof. And, all this in an environment that the children relate to, without overloading them.

This is the philosophy with which the mathematics syllabus from Class I to Class XII was developed, and which the textbook development committee has tried to realise in the present textbook. More specifically, while creating the textbook, the following broad guidelines have been kept in mind.

- The matter needs to be linked to what the child has studied before, and to her experiences.
- The language used in the book, including that for ‘word problems’, must be clear, simple and unambiguous.
- Concepts/processes should be introduced through situations from the children’s environment.
- For each concept/process give several examples and exercises, but not of the same kind. This ensures that the children use the concept/process again and again, but in varying contexts. Here ‘several’ should be within reason, not overloading the child.
- Encourage the children to see, and come out with, diverse solutions to problems.

- As far as possible, give the children motivation for results used.
- All proofs need to be given in a non-didactic manner, allowing the learner to see the flow of reason. The focus should be on proofs where a short and clear argument reinforces mathematical thinking and reasoning.
- Whenever possible, more than one proof is to be given.
- Proofs and solutions need to be used as vehicles for helping the learner develop a clear and logical way of expressing her arguments.
- All geometric constructions should be accompanied by an analysis of the construction and a proof for the steps taken to do the required construction. Accordingly, the children would be trained to do the same while doing constructions.
- Add such small anecdotes, pictures, cartoons and historical remarks at several places which the children would find interesting.
- Include optional exercises for the more interested learners. These would not be tested in the examinations.
- Give answers to all exercises, and solutions/hints for those that the children may require.
- Whenever possible, propagate constitutional values.

As you will see while studying this textbook, these points have been kept in mind by the Textbook Development Committee. The book has particularly been created with the view to giving children space to explore mathematics and develop the abilities to reason mathematically. Further, two special appendices have been given — Proofs in Mathematics, and Mathematical Modelling. These are placed in the book for interested students to study, and are only optional reading at present. These topics may be considered for inclusion in the main syllabi in due course of time.

As in the past, this textbook is also a team effort. However, what is unusual about the team this time is that teachers from different kinds of schools have been an integral part at each stage of the development. We are also assuming that teachers will contribute continuously to the process in the classroom by formulating examples and exercises contextually suited to the children in their particular classrooms. Finally, we hope that teachers and learners would send comments for improving the textbook to the NCERT.

PARVIN SINCLAIR
G.P. DIKSHIT
Chief Advisors
Textbook Development Committee