

EDITORIAL

Charles Dickens once wrote in the context of the French Revolution that, “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.” These words seem to reflect the paradox of education in the 21st century, which is both disturbing and challenging. Disturbing, because there are still many schools where the old routines of teaching are rooted; challenging because mindsets need to be riveted to the constant approach and systemic reforms in education. The success of these efforts now depends on the steps that school teachers and authorities would take to motivate children to musings and imaginative activities. This issue of *The Primary Teacher* attempts to reflect such efforts.

The paper ‘Effectiveness of using Technology Supportive Materials for Developing Listening Skills among School Children’ focuses on Class VIII students to discuss the importance of developing listening skills among learners, highlighting the effectiveness of the use of Technology Supportive Materials over Usual Learning Methods.

‘Improving Social Skills in Children for Effective Team Players’ illuminates the correlation of social behaviour among children and development of social skills. The authors identify negative social behaviour and attitude as factors restricting a child’s social interaction, particularly with other children. The authors have experimented in a classroom, with twenty-five Grade II students, through various activities and engagement processes, and presented their outcomes. Shared experiences across regions and nations would help increase the level of awareness among teachers.

The article ‘Challenges in Understanding and Transacting Contemporary EVS Textbooks’ tries to understand the gaps between intention and transaction of Environmental Studies (EVS) textbooks developed in accordance with the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005, recommending that EVS should be taught as an integration of Science, Social Science and Environmental Education at the primary stage. The author furthermore suggests a number of strategies to bridge them appropriately.

‘Use of Resources in the Teaching-learning of Environment Studies’ discusses the importance and convenient use of resource management for a teacher teaching Environmental Studies for both meaningful and engaging aspects for learning. The author focuses on going beyond the textbook for better learning and suggests few measures to locate and use resources generally available in the classrooms.

The article on ‘*Firkee Bachchon Ki* — A Magazine for Early Grades’ talks about various features of the bilingual children’s magazine brought out by the NCERT. Primarily meant for the children of Classes I and II, the

magazine contains short narratives and poems in English and Hindi, as well as children's creative writings contextualised in their daily life experiences, with relevant and detailed illustrations supporting the text.

'Strategies to Strengthen Understanding of Science Concepts' talks about various strategies used by the Science teachers of Classes VII and VIII, for supporting learning of disparate students. The author suggests a number of strategies which can be used at different stages of planning a lesson and help in scaffolding learning of the students. Such strategies may help students to develop linkages, retrieve information, interact in groups, participate in discussions and present their findings meaningfully in classrooms.

A general belief regarding the high drop-out rate in India is that pressure on children and parents of the backward socio-economic backgrounds are responsible.

A paper titled 'Elementary Education through KGBVs — A Case Study' attempts to assess the achievement level of marginalised section of girls of KGBVs and the physical infrastructure available to them.

In the paper titled 'Educational Process Followed in Street Classrooms', the author strives to assess how educational processes take place in the classrooms of the Mobile School Programmes followed in streets and highlights the importance of such educational interventions to be provided to the children from the deprived sections of society.

'Mainstreaming of Out-of-School Children with Community Support' is based on a study conducted by the All India Primary Teacher's Federation (AIPTF). The study was conducted with the objective of identifying and mainstreaming the out-of-school children in selected districts in the states of Tamil Nadu and Odisha.

School education in India is witnessing a wind of change, though it would be too much perhaps to call it a revolution. It could mean a widespread awareness of the demerits of memorisation without understanding, or even as simple a thing as turning away from the banalities of routine thinking.

— Academic Editors