



**From Agenda to Action:
Interpreting and Implementing
the NCF Peace Education Guidelines**

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FOREWORD

The **Educational Policy Research Series** is intended to document and disseminate our research into a wider community of educators and educationists.

The **Education for Peace Initiative (EPI)** hosts Prajnya's pedagogically oriented projects. The mandate of the Education for Peace Initiative is to teach peace by fostering the learning of skills conducive to communication, healing, reconciliation and interaction between people with divergent interests and creating capacity for the resolution of conflict and the creation of a sustainable peace. But educational interventions, however perfectly planned, will not work unless they are informed by an understanding of the structure, functioning, culture, specific needs and context of a given school system. Educational policy research is also essential to ensure that our peace work is not isolated from other educational challenges and that we can engage in a sustained way with issues and debates in the field.

About this project

Starting in August 2008, with grant support from the Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Prajnya commissioned three studies, preparatory to the launch of its Education for Peace Initiative. These studies were intended to prepare the ground for its cornerstone project, Teaching Peace and to form the basis for its future engagement with educational policy issues in specific contexts. Three questions form the terms of reference for the studies:

1. Who makes educational policy and how is it implemented in Tamil Nadu?
2. Who engages with education and in particular, with peace and conflict resolution education?
3. How do we implement the peace education guidelines in the National Curriculum Framework prepared by NCERT?

The first study from this project was published in this series in April 2009, *Mapping Educational Policy Structures and Processes in Tamil Nadu*. The second study, *A Survey of Civil Society Peace Education Programmes in South Asia*, was published in August 2009.

About this study

Crafting the perfect pedagogical intervention is futile without a clear understanding of the structure, methods, contexts and specific needs of a given system. This study by Priyadarshini Rajagopalan takes the National Curriculum Framework and its guidelines on peace education as its point of departure, reads the textbooks currently in use in a majority of Tamil Nadu schools as its lens on what is being taught to children, and articulates the ideas behind Prajnya's Education for Peace Initiative, outlining a plan for Prajnya's own interventions in this area.

Education for Peace @ Prajnya

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Prajnya views peace education as the learning of skills and building of attitudes that support the development of a peace-seeking mindset. Innately accepting, children learn to judge and to fear as they grow older. Therefore, the seeds of peace must be sown in early childhood.

But what should a peace education programme look like and by what should it be informed?

This study interprets the peace education guidelines laid down by India's National Curriculum Framework (NCF) (2005) as five facets of peace education, and assesses how each facet is being implemented in school textbooks prescribed for language and social sciences across grades. Based on the findings of this textbook review, the study identifies action areas and makes suggestions and recommendations for activities and practices. Finally, it draws together these different elements to propose a framework for Prajnya's Education for Peace Initiative (EPI).

The NCF recommends that peace education be integrated across the curriculum, in lessons as well as activities. Accordingly, teacher training, the content of social sciences in particular and learning through work and activity are three areas it indicates as warranting attention.

Integrating peace education essentially means integrating its five facets wherever possible. The five facets are: the values embedded in lessons and activities; cultural and social awareness; sensitivity to differences; a pro-active approach and effective, developmentally appropriate follow-up activities.

To what extent are these facets found in the way lessons are taught today? A review of National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation (TTC) was undertaken, given the importance of the printed textbook in most classroom settings. The textbooks surveyed present a few pleasant surprises. Even well-intentioned lessons do not however live up to their pedagogical potential with perfunctory follow-up exercises. Teaching on particular topics is not integrated across the curriculum but each lesson and subject is treated as if isolated from the rest of the learning process.

Following from this, Prajnya too identifies three intervention areas--teacher training, content development and student activities—in each of which its activities will reflect the five facets of peace education. The Education for Peace Initiative will design a variety of modules for use in multiple settings as well as create platforms and spaces for students, teachers, parents and other members of the community to use for peace work.

I

MAKING PEACE EDUCATION WORK

*Peace is not an absence of war;
it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, and justice.*

Baruch Spinoza

The National Council for Education Research and Training's revised National Curriculum Framework (NCF), published in 2005, includes guidelines for introducing peace education into the school system. This study interprets these guidelines as five facets of peace education, and assesses how each facet is being implemented in school textbooks prescribed for language and social sciences across grades. Based on the findings of this textbook review, the study identifies action areas and makes suggestions and recommendations for activities and practices. Finally, it draws together these different elements to propose a framework for Prajnya's Education for Peace Initiative (EPI).

WHAT IS PEACE EDUCATION?

Peace education is the learning of skills and building of attitudes that support the development of a peace-seeking mindset. Sensitivity to diversity and a focus on inclusion are values promoted by peace education. The aim is to educate students in the language and culture of peaceful co-existence in their daily interactions while working towards addressing larger issues. There is a strong argument for including the skills of prevention, cohesion and resolution in the education offered to children. Translating this premise into action will depend on integrating skills, attitudes and values into the existing curriculum. This can be done by isolating specific skills such as learning to have a respectful dialogue using non-threatening language, altering attitudes to transcend biases and imbibing values that build a more accepting personality.

WHY PEACE EDUCATION?

Peace education is often described as a valuable tool for resolving issues and repairing the damage done to a society torn by war or strife. However, many supporters of peace education also recognise it as a process to prevent conflict. If peace education is to be the building block of a civil society, it must focus on more than the negative. If the idea of peace is to precede the idea of war then it has to be nurtured from the very birth of independent thought. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi "if we are to teach real peace in this world and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with the children."

Children are born with an innate sense of acceptance, inclusion and cooperation. They begin their lives without biases and are not judgmental. These characteristics are developed later in response to their interactions with society and its inherent biases. Maria Montessori refers to this divide between a child and an adult-driven society by talking of the "childman's pure and natural characteristics before they are sidetracked and spoiled by the influence of society." (Montessori 2002: 14)

Theorising about psychosocial developmental stages right up to adulthood, Erik Erikson suggests that the very first year of life, from birth to the first birthday, is the stage of moral development, where the individual chooses trust over mistrust with regard to their view of people and the environment.¹ This stage is critical to further develop the moral conscience. An unsuccessful completion of this stage can have long-term consequences for the individual's sense of fear and mistrust of others. This fear can take many forms, including the fear of losing something or being subject to unpleasantness in the form of bullying, ridicule or segregation.

According to Erikson, each stage acts as scaffolding for the next. The child learns to exercise self-control and will in the subsequent stage, begin to imitate adults and develop a self-image by the time s/he is 12 years old. Therefore, the successful completion of each stage determines the quality of the interaction between an individual and society.²

The early years of life are, thus, critical for an individual's moral development; it is during the school years that a child learns to define his/her own personality and character. Accordingly, the seeds for peace should be sown early, at the primary school level. This then allows for a process of germination and consolidation through the remaining years at school.

To begin this peace conversation, we must first understand the specific context of India's education system. The next chapter of this study reviews the NCF guidelines for implementing peace education in schools. The third chapter interprets these guidelines and identifies five facets of peace education that can serve as criteria to measure its implementation. Chapter four outlines the findings of the textbook review process. Drawing on these findings, chapter five suggests a blueprint for peace education interventions. Finally, chapter six sketches the beginning of Prajnya's action plan to introduce peace education in schools.

¹ As we will see, the NCF subscribes to a similar view, advocating the interdependent role of personality development and living in harmony with nature and society. In their words: "Sound development of an individual's personality can take place only in an ethos of peace. A disturbed natural and psycho-social environment often leads to stress in human relations, triggering intolerance and conflict." (NCF 2005:6)

² Arlene F. Harder, "The Developmental Stages of Erik Erikson," Learning Place Online, 2009. Accessed at <http://www.learningplaceonline.com/stages/organize/Erikson.htm>.

II

THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK (2005) AND PEACE EDUCATION

*Preventing conflicts is the work of politics;
establishing peace is the work of education.*
Maria Montessori

This chapter reviews the NCF guidelines on peace education. Key suggestions regarding peace education practices and processes to be included in the national curriculum are highlighted and discussed.

THE NCF VIEW OF PEACE EDUCATION³

Moral education has always been viewed as an important subject to be included in the curriculum, to help children make the right choices. The NCF takes this a step further; the goal is now to consciously give the child an environment that builds sensitivity to others' cultures, perspectives and rights. The NCF speaks of the compelling need for peace education, clearly stating that education must be oriented towards values associated with "peaceful and harmonious coexistence." (NCF 2005: 9).

According to the NCF, only education has the capacity for building long-term peace through inter-cultural conversations. School-aged children are endowed with a special sensitivity to constructing their moral character. The NCF echoes this thought and describes the various stages of ethical development and how they occur. According to the NCF, at the primary stage, children become conscious of both themselves and their immediate environment and begin to form notions of right and wrong. At the next stage, they develop reasoning abilities and learn to question, discuss and reflect upon ethical dilemmas. The result, an independent individual who can make well-reasoned judgments.

It is through this complex process — dialogue, sensitisation to issues, learning skills for resolution and imitating good role models — that children will learn to construct their value systems, and proactively choose peace over violence. Peace education is, thus, a teaching of skills and values that supports respect for all humans and calls for a change in attitudes.

GUIDELINES ACROSS THE NCF

Peace education is clearly a priority; besides the comprehensive section on peace education, the NCF also refers to it in two other sections - work and social sciences. A summary of the key points from each section follows.

³ Unless otherwise specified, this section is a summary discussion of the chapter, "Education for Peace" from the National Curriculum Framework, published by the National Council for Educational Research and Training, New Delhi, 2005, pages 61-64.

Peace education

The NCF proposes that the values of peace education must be integrated into all aspects of education, including teacher training, curriculum, student- teacher relationships, and examinations. In other words, as stated in the NCF, peace education is not an add-on subject per se but a way of making all the subjects in the curriculum peace-oriented.

There is also a strong emphasis on reorienting education, so that it does not merely lay down the rules for ethical conduct but also nurtures the need to reason, understand and make informed choices.

In this context, disadvantages in education arising from inequalities of gender, caste, language, culture, religion or disabilities need to be addressed directly, not only through policies and schemes but also through the design and selection of learning tasks and pedagogic practices, right from the period of early childhood (NCF 2005: 5).

Non-biased texts and other curricular content should form the basis of quality conversations that explore alternatives; the idea is that children should learn how to communicate respectfully. Texts should be screened for gender-sensitive language and stereotyping. Such a curriculum nurtures a more accepting child who is well-disposed towards the resolution of conflicts, and can take conscious decisions to build and promote peace. How teachers act, react and handle situations forms an important component of this learning process; as no educational reform can be implemented without the support of the teachers.

Work ⁴

Age-appropriate work is a concept that has been well-integrated into the educational systems, such as the Montessori system, for over a century now. The NCF also proposes the inclusion of work in the school curriculum. Work is regarded as not just a token chore but as a productive and collaborative effort that will eventually help a child understand the critical interdependence of people. Work helps students build skills and generic competencies for communication and creative exchange and also fosters accountability. Participating in work that affects the community helps children feel involved and teaches them to appreciate the efforts of others and understand how individuals can contribute to society. These are some of the same skills that are associated with a peaceful way of being.

Work as a part of school life has an inbuilt potential for inclusion, the foundation of any form of peace education. If students are able to see and work with their own strengths and weaknesses, they are more likely to appreciate differences and accept them.

⁴ This section is a summary discussion of the chapter, “Work And Education” from the National Curriculum Framework, published by the National Council for Educational Research and Training, New Delhi, 2005, pages 59-60

Social science education ⁵

The section on social science education in the NCF also refers to similar values and skills. The true aim of social science education is to make children more aware of their social responsibilities and “to provide the social, cultural and analytical skills required to adjust to an increasingly interdependent world, and to deal with political and economic realities.” (NCF 2005: 50) Social science has always been the subject of choice for educating individuals about the core human values of freedom, trust and mutual respect. So far social science has focused on issues of regional and national importance. However, the NCF recommends that it also integrate issues of global significance including universal human rights (NCF 2005: 9, 51).

From this perspective, the NCF suggests that social science learning must go beyond memorising facts and learning rules. Students must be encouraged to explore the reasoning behind political and social choices — why people choose democracy, for instance. This can be achieved by designing lessons and activities to include discussions and debates. If issues in both the general and specific subject areas are dealt with through open discussions and dialogues, children will be able to identify with the larger human community in a far more empathetic way.

At present, social science lessons are written from one perspective and need to be rewritten to allow for exploring alternatives. The same can be said for rules, norms, duties and constraints that are associated with our understanding of how society functions. Very often children are expected to adhere to a particular norm without any independent thought regarding its validity. Instead, they should be allowed to voice their opinion and arrive at conclusions. It is important that they are aware of the process by which laws and norms are determined for the collective good. This awareness can only be achieved through dialogue.

The NCF suggests that encouraging children to make choices will also ensure that they keep in mind the potential impact of their actions. Children need opportunities to practice this skill — making choices — and thereby face the natural, logical or social consequences of their actions. Being able to choose between what is right, just, fair or kind will help them decide what is essential for a cohesive society, and if specific aspects can be included to make it better.

SUMMARY OF THE SUGGESTIONS

The NCF guidelines for integrating peace education in the curriculum have three main areas of focus: teacher training, content and peace activities for students.

⁵ This section is a summary discussion of the chapter, “Social Sciences” from the National Curriculum Framework, published by the National Council for Educational Research and Training, New Delhi, 2005, pages 50-52

Teacher training

Suggestions for teacher training include sensitising teachers to their own biases so that they can set aside judgments while dealing with students. The emphasis is on how teachers can create a non-threatening environment by treating students with respect and thereby help them feel confident and comfortable. Teachers need intensive training so that they can address issues in a fair and unbiased way and become good role models of peace. One cannot advocate a way of tolerance to children without embodying the same.

Another suggestion is to include discussions and dialogues in everyday processes, thereby setting the stage for respectful communication between students and teachers. Historically, value education has focused on encouraging desirable behaviour; here, the emphasis is on creating an environment that will also offer an opportunity to discuss undesirable feelings and thoughts. This will ensure that children and teachers can engage in constructive dialogue to find positive solutions.

Differences between students should be used constructively to support peer learning. A true society is made up of individuals with varied levels of skills and strengths; classrooms and school community should reflect this diversity and value each person's contributions. The NCF emphasises on interdependence and the need for children to be aware of it.

Teachers should also be encouraged to contextualise lessons to suit the current situations in the child's immediate environment. While doing so, care must be taken to include a gradation to the suggested activities so that younger children experience the issues in a way that they understand. Similarly, with older children the conversations and activities can be more realistic and in-depth. This will also ensure that peace conversations are held across different grades, to complement the intellectual capacity of that age.

Content

Throughout the NCF, there is a strong focus on the content a child is exposed to. The language used in texts and other media should be checked to determine age appropriateness and relevant context. The idea is to select appropriate texts or films that convey positive values and do not subscribe to any bias or misrepresentation. This is recommended across subjects and can be used both in the classroom and in extra-curricular activities like book or science clubs. An allied activity is meeting people who work towards promoting peace or organising discussion groups based on the chosen media.

Peace activities for students

The NCF guidelines also suggest activities that call for cooperation and team work as opposed to individual assignments that only foster competition. Projects that require group effort will allow children to work towards a common goal while retaining their individuality through their unique contributions.

Suggested peace activities in the NCF can be broadly categorised into three major themes. The first deals with awareness of issues and the impact of actions at a universal level. For

example, helping children realize the impact of wear and tear on a leaf that is passed around the classroom, representing the damage to the environment. The second encourages children to express their own views, be open to other perspectives and build empathy through discussions. The third category gives space for reflecting on issues and organising events and forums to debate or change policies at their level. For instance, thinking of laws that they might put into action if they were peace lawyers of the country. All of these can be achieved by structuring activities with a purpose and providing space for choice.

III

FIVE FACETS OF PEACE EDUCATION

The previous chapter reviewed the suggestions made by the NCF on how to integrate peace education across the curriculum. This chapter interprets those guidelines as five distinct facets; the presence or absence of these allows us to assess the extent to which the guidelines are being applied.

EMBEDDED VALUES

Values are embedded, tacitly or explicitly, in all texts—literal, performative and behavioural. Curricula, textbooks, pedagogical materials and classroom practices are no exception. For peace educators, the challenge is to ascertain if the values embedded in a lesson are ones that support peace and to see if they are presented in a thought-provoking manner (NCF 2005: 51, 63).

Honesty, courage, compassion and trust are some core peace values, which may be found in lessons in references to integrity, empathy and acceptance or through examples of dialogue and cooperation.

Integrity

Integrity refers to that quality which is visible in a person who speaks the truth, keeps their word, has self-discipline, is reliable, just and operates from his/her conscience. Thus, the lessons need to speak about honesty, loyalty and self-discipline as desirable values; the characters in the lessons should embody these qualities. For example, the story of King Harishchandra who underwent many trials to keep his word.⁶

Compassion

A person who is able to empathise with and support a person in need is truly compassionate. When one can open his/her heart and go the extra mile to accommodate another, it epitomises caring. If lessons cite examples of people who care for one another through simple acts of kindness, the student is introduced to the idea of feeling for another and acting upon it. It is also important to highlight the fact that not all actions are motivated by an expectation of reward or returns.

Acceptance

We can broadly define acceptance as a quality where a person is able to peacefully coexist with another regardless of any differences in their viewpoints or behaviour. Therefore, lessons must present facts objectively and in context, helping the student realise that varied

⁶ Harishchandra was a king known for keeping his word under all circumstances. He is often referred to as the epitome of justice and honesty. He went to the extent of giving up his position and taking on the responsibility of cremating the dead, in order to keep his word.

ideas and cultures, which may be very different from his/her own, exist and should be respected. We need to look for incidents or examples in the lessons that highlight how being 'accepting' of differences is the peaceful way of being. For instance, in a lesson about interracial groups, characters must be genuinely interested in and supportive of the other person.

Dialogue

Having a dialogue means sharing ideas, viewpoints or feelings, irrespective of whether they are similar or opposing. It is a process that allows people to share their ideas without fear of ridicule, resentment or reprimand and is therefore a powerful tool for resolution. Thus, if lessons portray instances of issues and conflicts that are addressed by dialogue, it highlights the importance of sharing ideas and views. The dialogues in the text also need to model mutual respect through the language that is used.

Cooperation

All societies and cultures exist on the interdependent relationship of its members. This ability to give and take and complement each others' work is the crux of a cooperative alliance. To help students understand this, lessons should illuminate the contributions of different people towards solving a problem or making things happen. For example, a lesson on where we get our food from, should not just name the primary source, i.e. the farmer, but also refer to the intricate web of people needed to stock the produce, transport it, and market it. Lessons that offer examples of people working together towards a common goal will help students appreciate and understand the contributions of others and encourage reciprocation. The story of the hunter and the doves, where the latter collaborate and fly to safety is an example.⁷

CULTURAL AND SOCIAL AWARENESS

One of the foundations of peace resides in being aware of similarities and differences. We will look through the content of lessons to ascertain whether students are exposed to a variety of ideas and inputs, thereby making them more aware of peoples and customs of different cultures.

Diversity

Ideally, lessons must incorporate a range of facts, stories, activities and happenings from different regions of a country or from around the world, thus introducing the reader to other cultures, communities and customs (NCF 2005: 52). It is important that these representations of everyday life in different places are realistic, so that students can find common ground. If there are references to the uniqueness of a culture or community, there must also be some

⁷ The Hunter and the Doves is a story from the Panchatantra, of a flock of doves that are caught in a large net when they settle down to eat the seeds that a hunter has scattered. Initially all the doves struggle individually and are forced to give up; but a leader emerges and asks them all to try and lift off simultaneously. This coordinated effort helps them shake off the net and escape.

mention of similarities, so that the student can relate to these other cultures. For example, a lesson on Egypt could begin by introducing the student to its location on the map. It could then go on to speak about schools in Egypt, popular games, local cuisine or ancient burial rituals. Students can then begin to understand Egypt's grand history as well as the many shared commonalities.

Perspectives

This refers to how the information has been presented – does it only reflect the writer's point of view or has the information been presented objectively, allowing for different interpretations? Lessons must give students an opportunity to reason for themselves, and reach conclusions about a particular topic, instead of merely offering one point of view. This helps them open their mind to other perspectives.

There should be opportunities for students to find out about and understand the different circumstances and constraints in other times and spaces. This will ensure that the information is digested in context and not measured against current reality; for example, the depiction of the British rule in India (NCF 2005: 11).

Issues

Globally, there are many problems that need to be solved for the betterment of particular communities, as well as for all of humankind. Both require the involvement of committed people to resolve it. Lessons must therefore sensitise students to issues from their immediate environment as well as across the globe. The spectrum of issues in the text should include, among others, the impact of environmental damage, civic consciousness and human rights concerns. Moreover, the scope of these lessons should provide opportunities to explore the subject further (NCF 2005: 51, 61).

SENSITIVITY TO DIFFERENCES

Here we will look for examples that showcase what the lessons have been designed to include – do they stop at attempting to create awareness about gender, socio-economic backgrounds, race and abilities or go on to also model an inclusive approach? Sensitivity in this context refers to being able to interact with others based on their individuality and not based on superficial criteria.

Equal representation

Here, we will specifically look for evidence of inclusion of people of different heritage, backgrounds, abilities or gender in the text – this can sensitise the student to the fact that society is comprised of a variety of individuals, who are not necessarily grouped together due to similarities. Thus we need to look for evidence of representation of different individuals in various roles and occupations. Lessons about historical, political or other famous personalities must include examples of famous female rulers like Rani Laxmibai, people of different abilities like Thomas Jefferson or Helen Keller, or pioneers like Stephen Hawking. Some sections should aim to sensitise the reader to rights and inclusion issues; for

example, the question of making public spaces wheelchair accessible is simple enough for a child of any age to understand. Examples should also depict characters of various backgrounds sharing a common space; in a story about a group of friends, the characters must not always be of the same gender, race or ability.

Non-stereotypical depiction

We hope to find examples of people depicted in realistic non-stereotypical roles - women pilots, male nurses or teachers in wheelchairs. The representation should be realistic and showcase people with varying abilities as contributing to society and as belonging to regular family structures. There should also be examples that illustrate equal opportunity and dignity of labour for people from various socio-economic backgrounds. Lessons can refer to those who perform vital jobs such as sweeping the street, but are rarely acknowledged in the public domain.

Appropriate language

Here we will look at the way in which texts refer to different people. We hope to find that the language used in the lessons suggests sensitivity to gender, race, social status and abilities. Here the evidence may be as much an absence of judgmental depiction as a presence of positive remarks. For instance, the absence of commonly used phrases such as *girls are weak* or *boys don't cry*. It is also important to see if people with differing abilities are referred to respectfully. Students will then be able to accept certain conditions as just another problem instead of grouping people based on assumptions - for example, referring to a person who is in a wheelchair as someone who *cannot walk* due to a condition rather than saying *he/she is lame*. This is a better representation as not everyone in a wheelchair is unable to walk, nor are they all suffering from the same condition (NCF 2005: 9, 11, 51, 52).

A PROACTIVE APPROACH

While acknowledging and creating awareness of issues the text must also be able to discuss proactive measures to solve them. Texts must look beyond merely identifying and stating a problem and also adopt a solution-based approach. Students must learn of proactive actions that have paved the way for change or proven to be solutions. This offers them possibilities for taking action.

Hope

It is important that issues and conflicts be looked at as temporary situations awaiting resolution. If students are exposed to a problem in isolation, they may feel helpless or apathetic. However, if there are examples of action that have produced positive results it may spur them on to expect change and explore possibilities. For instance, the poaching issue in Kenya was handled by educating and rehabilitating the poachers and employing them as guides in the same national forests that they were once poaching from.⁸ Lessons

⁸ Leo Odera Omolo, Tanzania is using the rehabilitated former wild animal poachers now turned efficient tour guides to attract tourists, African Press International, October 21, 2008, accessed at

should thus inspire action or encourage commitment to regional and global issues through the inclusion of success stories, and accounts of hope.

How to

Strategies that have been used to manage crises or conflict situations and have resulted in a positive change should be documented. Real-life examples of ongoing work can help students explore the idea of becoming agents of change. Any information provided about a specific movement or plan must be clear, and wherever possible, help the student learn the techniques him/herself. Comparisons between similar situations will facilitate learning of proven techniques. For example, that potable water is a diminishing resource in the coastal towns of Tamil Nadu due to salt water intrusion has been discussed in lessons for decades. Including success stories about desalination efforts in Oman or rainwater harvesting techniques across the country will help students adopt a problem-solving perspective and encourage participation (NCF 2005: 10, 11).

Heroes

Many difficult situations have taken a positive turn thanks to the efforts of individuals. It is often one inspiring idea and the hard work of a few that changes a situation for the better, for many. Therefore a mention of efforts, both big and small, that have helped solve problems affecting the population at large should be included. These inspiring portrayals of people are needed for the student to envision him/herself as making an impact. These need not necessarily be examples at the Nelson Mandela or Mother Teresa level but also local heroes like Mr. Vidyakar of Udavum Karangal⁹.

EFFECTIVE & DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

While many of the recommendations for peace education revolve around concepts and content that a child must be made aware of, it is clear that there are also specific skills that a child must be taught, to learn to act upon an issue.

Here we are looking for what the students can and are asked to do based on what they have learnt in the lesson. The suggestions need to be age and ability-appropriate and allow for the following -

Active participation

Doing something practically is a proven technique for deeper understanding. Follow-up activities must give students opportunities to engage in meaningful work, based on the contents of the lesson. Meaningful work in this context implies having to think, plan, reason and create; for instance, if the lesson speaks of depleting forests, there should be inbuilt

<http://africanpress.wordpress.com/2008/10/21/tanzania-is-using-the-rehabilitated-former-wild-animal-poachers-now-turned-efficient-tour-guide-to-attract-tourists/> on August 15, 2009.

⁹ Mr. Vidyakar is a socially conscious man in Chennai who began rescuing abandoned children more than a decade ago and now successfully runs Udavum Karangal homes for abandoned/orphaned children, taking care of their living and educational needs.

opportunities to take the learning beyond the text and bring in connections from the outside, such as taking part in tree planting campaigns or contributing to awareness efforts (NCF 2005: 11, 58-59).

Choice

Making informed choices is a skill that has a tremendous impact on choosing peace later in life. Like any skill, it requires practice, wherein the person can gather and understand information and then discern the appropriate action. Thus, the activities should foster and build this skill by offering choices to the student. This not only means having more than one task to choose from but also suggesting different ways for a student to demonstrate his/her understanding. Students must have the opportunity to explore the subject or aspects of it based on their individual interests. The choices should link the knowledge gained to other areas of study and work as well. If the project was to find solutions to minimise wastage of water, students must be allowed to discuss alternatives. Some may choose to do further academic research on the subject; others may brainstorm ideas and create models for water conserving cisterns or water storage devices (NCF 2005: 11,62).

Group work

The basic foundation of peaceful coexistence is to be able to engage with one another and recognise and learn from each others' strengths and challenges. Thus the projects should require and support teamwork while providing individual roles for each student. The suggested activities need to be open enough to engage students with varying interests and skills. The activities will call for students to cooperate, support and learn from one another to complete the task. For example, a monthly school newspaper which will require students to collect stories, write, edit, gather pictures and do interviews (NCF 2005: 63).

Open-ended questions and projects

Recall-based questions can only ascertain a student's capacity to memorise data. Since the topic in question is peace, it is clear that it calls for creating a well thought-out, reasonable and personalised point of view. If questions based on the lesson are meant to gauge comprehension, this can only be achieved by posing ones that cannot and do not have only "one answer". Then the student will be able to apply his/her knowledge and critical thinking to come up with an answer. Giving students opportunities to interact and discuss specific topics will help them share ideas and find their own unique answers rather than turn to a stock answer. The questions should be probing and encourage the airing of different viewpoints. To make a lasting impression, knowledge has to be applied; activities should offer suggestions for continued involvement with the subject matter.

Teacher involvement

Just as the follow-up becomes more meaningful by collaborating with others, another factor that enhances the experience is the involvement of the teacher. If the tasks require the teacher to be proactive and engage with the subject along with the students, the content can assume a seriousness that is necessary for true learning. For this there should be guidelines

for follow-up work that require the teacher to structure activities or guide conversations based on the lesson. For example, creating a skit based on the judicial system in India would require the involvement of the teacher.

While lessons are mostly fact-based, there should be elements that the teacher can contextualise to suit the students. Ideally, the teacher must be able to create follow-up activities that will call for a deeper understanding of the subject. For instance, if the subject of study is economics and the specific lesson is on production and profit and loss, the activity could suggest that students interview local merchants or do a project where the whole system comes alive, from manufacture to marketing. This then calls for the teacher's active involvement – s/he can suggest relevant projects including setting up a vegetable garden, selling the produce and thereby calculating cost vs. returns (NCF 2005: 63 -64, 10-11).

TO RECAPITULATE

The five facets that we have isolated and that will form our analytical criteria in the next part of this study can be broadly categorised thus – the presence of desirable values, inclusion of social, economic, ethnic and physical diversity , engagement with issues and scope for individualised thought and action. Based on these the following chapter reviews existing textbooks to ascertain the presence of these elements.

IV

**READING BETWEEN THE LINES:
A STUDY OF NCERT AND TAMIL NADU TEXTBOOKS**

CHOICES AND METHODS

The NCF advocates introducing peace education in a broader sense, beyond merely changing the curriculum and methodology. Therefore, ideally, a study of this kind should interview teachers; carry out student surveys; review the content in current textbooks and teacher training curriculum; and evaluate the overall school system. However, in reality, the learning process, including most student-teacher interaction, is heavily dependent on textbook content. For this reason, we will assess the implementation of the NCF guidelines through a textbook review process, keeping in mind that text and teacher methodology are strongly intertwined, and neither can be assessed in isolation.

In the previous chapter, we interpreted the NCF guidelines as five facets of peace education: the values that are embedded in a lesson; cultural and social awareness; sensitivity to differences; providing examples of proactive role models; and the suggestion of developmentally appropriate follow-up activities for students. In this chapter, we review select textbooks using the presence or absence of these features as a filter.

Although a thorough review of all textbooks of different boards and publishers is necessary, we have, for the purposes of this study, chosen to review textbooks published by the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT) and the Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation (TTC). These are being used in the current academic year (2009-10)¹⁰ and represent the CBSE and Tamil Nadu State Board curriculum respectively. We have elected to focus on English and Social Science textbooks for classes 1-10, published by NCERT. In addition, we have chosen review the Tamil language texts and Environmental Sciences texts (written in Tamil) for classes 1-5. We chose Tamil texts since the Tamil Nadu State Board uses Tamil as the first language. Moreover, many of the suggestions made by the NCF relate to the use of appropriate language and exposure to differences, both of which are intrinsic parts of Environmental Sciences courses.

In this review process, we have looked at all the lessons and follow-up activities, identifying those that adhere to any of the given criteria. Based on this, we have identified patterns, suggested generalisations and proposed an appropriate intervention.

From the review process, it is evident that there is a significant difference between the texts belonging to the two boards, each with their own strengths and challenges. For instance, the NCERT books call for a lot more teacher and student involvement while the TTC texts present information in a neutral way with no judgments attached.

¹⁰ Please note that the publication dates of the textbooks, as listed in the references, may not match the year of issue, which is 2009-10.

EMBEDDED VALUES

What are the values embedded in textbook lessons across school years? In general, both the TTC and the NCERT have chosen lessons that highlight certain core values (for example see TTC SSc X: 324). Although the values are not specifically highlighted in language texts and stories, they are usually included in books geared towards value and moral education. Social Science texts too use real heroes like Helen Keller or Stephen Hawking to illustrate these values. However, even where such examples are included, the impact is limited; students may feel awe and wonder for these heroes but the follow-up activities do not encourage them to effectively utilise these examples to explore and apply these core values.

For example, the lesson about Helen Keller talks about how she, with the help of her teacher, overcame what many would have considered insurmountable difficulties to become a literate, active member of society. This lesson presents an opportunity for many qualitative, inspirational, practical and deep discussions about topics as varied as what it means to have multi-sensorial impairment, the role of teaching or the importance of standing up for one's principles. However, the follow-up activities merely require the students to fill in blanks in a statement drawn from the text or to answer text-based comprehension questions (TTC Eng X: 188-193). The creative teacher is left on her/his own to explore other possibilities.

In the NCERT texts, the notes to teachers at the end of lessons sensitise them to these values, asking them to be accepting and compassionate; in other words, to be a model for the children (see NCERT Eng V: 109). After a lesson called "I want" about a monkey who wants to imbibe the special features of other animals before finally accepting himself as a monkey, the note to teachers says:

Unit 2 is an opportunity to share with children feelings that we can all be happy being what we are. Little children feel joyous when they are told how good they are, so use this unit to make every child in your class feel special (NCERT Eng II :37).

In many of the lessons, the story or the language used signals acceptance of differences (NCERT Eng Prose, VI: 74). Character traits like integrity are showcased more in the choice of people mentioned rather than specifically through a story, event or incident. In the case of TTC books, these values are exemplified in Tamil lessons about real life heroes (TTC Tamil V: 72-74) and in poetry related to acceptance (TTC Tamil VII: 63).

CULTURAL AND SOCIAL AWARENESS

As we have stated before, peace is predicated on an awareness of similarities and differences. It is heartening to see that the content in textbooks spans various cultures and regions. This is not only true of Social Science textbooks where care has been taken to expose children to areas other than the one discussed in the lessons but also in English texts where stories from around the world have been chosen showcasing a variety of literature and poetry (TTC Eng VI, NCERT Eng V).

Social and environmental issues are discussed; follow-up questions engage the students in discussions and open-ended debates about alternate outcomes, drawing their attention to

the possibility of many different perspectives (NCERT Eng IV:136, 146 and NCERT Hist VIII: 43). Students and teachers are encouraged to go beyond the text and explore events in other parts of the world through activities like “Choose another region of India and do a similar study.” (NCERT PSc, VI: 12)

This is also done well through the use of specific boxes titled ‘Elsewhere’ which gives students information on what was taking place in other parts of the world at the same time. For instance, in the lesson about the Harappa civilisation, the ‘Elsewhere’ column discusses events in Egypt during the same period (NCERT Hist VI: 41). Here the idea is to broaden perspectives by sharing what was happening elsewhere in the world, either during the same time period or about a specific issue.

Again, the contrast between the TTC and the NCERT textbooks is noticeable. The TTC textbooks include lessons that highlight diversity and other issues but less frequently than the NCERT textbooks do. However, both showcase diversity in literature by drawing on stories and fables from different lands and by a variety of authors (see TTC Tamil IX).

SENSITIVITY TO DIFFERENCES

With regard to sensitising students to differences in gender, ability and socio-economic status, there are many good examples where positive language, non-stereotypical representation and balanced gender representation have been used (see TTC Eng IX: 207). In a lesson titled “Families can be different”, the child is exposed to different types of families including nuclear families, single-parent families, joint families and families without children, thus helping her/him identify with and feel comfortable with whichever background s/he comes from (NCERT EVS III : 137).

However this was also the area that yielded many stark contrasts. For example, in the same lesson one witnesses subtle stereotyping. The teacher is automatically referred to as *she* and the traffic police is by default male. The general aim of the lesson nevertheless seems to be to make children aware of biases and discuss them as is evident from the note to the teacher - “When talking about roles of family members, if there is any gender bias, discuss the reasons for the same.” (NCERT EVS III: 79, 85)

While the Social Science texts do include people with different backgrounds, this was not in evidence in the English texts.

There are some positive efforts towards breaking stereotypes in both subtle ways and directly; for example, ‘Anita and the Honeybees’, which talks of the success story of a girl who has taken on the job of a beekeeper (NCERT EVS IV: 38-45).

Use of sensitive language is the one area where both TTC and NCERT seem to be functioning in tandem. Both have good examples of sensitive use of language. In the lesson “Sharing our feelings”, ‘Ravi Bhaiya’ is described as a professor who is respected and has a great sense of humour and just as naturally the text tells us that “he cannot see.” (NCERT, EVS III: 88). This signals the fact that the character is represented by her/his personal characteristics and not by a condition. In the Social Science texts, care has been taken to refer

to the duties of the President by using “he/she” instead of assigning a default gender (TTC SSc X: 133).

However, just as there are lessons and topics that are dealt with sensitively, there are also examples of judgmental language. The sensitivity shown in representing races and cultures realistically is missing in other cases. For instance, in lessons depicting British rule in India, while the TTC board texts relay facts and speak of the positive and negative consequences of specific issues e.g. *Ryotwari system* of 1820 (TTC SSc VIII: 22), a lesson on the same topic in the corresponding NCERT book only speaks of its demerits (NCERT Hist VIII: 29-30). The NCERT texts seem to focus mostly on the ‘impositions’ with not enough mention of the positive contributions. For example, the fact that in 1882 Lord Ripon appointed an educational commission “the commission suggested the improvement of Primary and Secondary education... . . . established the Punjab University” (TTC SSc X: 66) is not even mentioned in a corresponding NCERT chapter about changes in education under the British rule (NCERT Hist VIII: 95-105), harshly titled “Civilising the ‘native’, Educating the nation.” The language used seems to constantly attribute motives which can only be assumed, instead of objectively conveying facts that can be discussed in the follow-up sessions.

With regard to people with differing abilities, while an effort has been made to include realistic portrayals (NCERT EVS IV:210) and the follow-up activities do engage the student in conversation, there is no attempt to extend this to a deeper level of understanding by suggesting or soliciting action.

The Tamil texts barely touch upon diversity and differing needs. There is no evidence of sensitive use of language. On the contrary one of the lessons actually refers to people in derogatory terms. In a lesson titled “Kudirai Muttai” (The horse’s egg) about five men who were duped into purchasing a pumpkin which they believed was an egg that would grow into a horse, the names of the characters are Tamil words that literally mean dumb, below average, stupid, one who would believe anything and mad¹¹ (TTC Tamil VI: 140).

A PROACTIVE APPROACH

One of the important aspects of exposing children to issues that need to be resolved is to ensure that while the sharing brings about an awakening in the reader about things that need to be done, it is not left as a statement of a problem. Do the texts inspire this hope in the reader? Are there enough examples of positive work cited, along with profiles of the people responsible for this change?

What emerges is that, when discussing issues of the environment, textbooks provide many examples of strategies that have worked, thus inspiring hope. Darki Mai from Alwar, who sought the help of the people of the village to solve their water issues by digging a man-made lake (NCERT EVS V: 59), is one such example. When it comes to issues of biases or acceptance of differences, fewer examples are found. While some lessons in both Language and Social Science texts do sensitise students to people with differing abilities and class differences (for example see: NCERT PSc VI :13-23), not much is said about how such issues

¹¹ Terms used in Tamil: *Muttal, Matti, Madayan, Moodan, Peydai*

can or have been tackled. The primary method of showcasing proactive social initiatives is to include dedicated chapters or paragraphs about people like Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi. There are occasional instances of follow-up activities that do call for solution-based dialogue or action.

Heroes were well-represented in both Social Science and Language texts. World-renowned leaders, like Martin Luther King Jr. who spearheaded the Civil Rights movement in North America and regional heroes, like Rakesh Sharma, Superintendent of Police from Madhya Pradesh who has planted over two lakh trees in a span of two years (TTC Eng IX: 112,130), are both found in these texts.

EFFECTIVE & DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Children learn important skills from the activities they are asked to undertake following a lesson. These exercises teach, reinforce and support the main learning from each lesson, and here we have looked specifically for the provision of such support in the texts. There is strong evidence that a lot of effort has been put into ensuring that children do something practical with the knowledge gained from each lesson. Active participation and going beyond the textbook can be seen in both Language (NCERT, Eng HCVII: 81) and Social Science texts (TTC SSc VI: 10).

In the NCERT texts, lessons often have a section for active participation by way of children either going out and finding information from outside the classroom (NCERT PSc VI: 12), of going beyond the lesson to gather further knowledge (NCERT EVS V: 95) or by their engaging in a project that involves making or doing something (NCERT Geo VI: 8).

However, such instances in the NCERT texts far outnumber those in the TTC board texts. In the TTC texts, students are often asked to construct a paragraph based on the lesson. But the activity is structured around 'hints' and all the student has to do is string these 'hints' into proper sentences (TTC Eng VII: 22). Even these exercises are less frequent in textbooks for higher classes; the textbooks for classes 1-5 show more evidence of active participation than those for classes 5-10.

The Tamil texts have many open-ended questions, eliciting different answers from children. However, even in instances that could naturally lead to some form of active participation, the follow-up work stops at "talking". For instance, at the end of a lesson on gardening, the follow-up asks children how they would set up a garden based on the six steps laid out by the teacher, but does not point them in the direction of actual hands-on gardening (TTC Tamil V: 24).

Open-ended questions call on students to share their 'own' answers and not just repeat what is in the lesson. This openness stops short of offering students options on how to demonstrate their understanding. Texts call for students to place themselves in a particular position and answer thus ensuring that each student will have an opportunity to share their own unique thoughts (NCERT, Eng SR VIII: 54); however, they almost always specify how these thoughts and this knowledge should be shared (TTC SSc VIII: 121).

It is clear that the involvement of the teacher is considered critical. Almost all the NCERT texts include teacher pages or notes to the teacher giving tips or advice to her/him on topics or events to choose for further discussion; qualities or values to emphasise; questions and comments to anticipate and thereby accept from students. There are often notes to sensitise the teacher to children from different backgrounds offering different responses. They also specify projects for teachers to set up or trips to plan (NCERT EVS IV: 103). Overall, the texts guide the teacher on how to make the learning more meaningful for the students (NCERT Eng HCV II: 1-6).

There is a significant difference between the manner in which the NCERT and TTC books seek to engage teachers in the learning process. The NCERT books clearly place the responsibility for active learning on the teacher, giving detailed instructions about the 'what' and the 'how to'. This is clear from their use of language and the placement of the notes to teachers. In TTC books, on the other hand, notes are scattered and interspersed in the lessons. They are not particularly addressed to the teacher and often, even as they direct the student to do something which clearly requires a teachers' help, the language they use (instructions like 'try and learn') does not involve the teacher (TTC SSc VI: 20,21). Where the note is clearly meant for the teacher, the tone is commanding rather than engaging (TTC Eng I: 57).

Very few examples of true group-work are to be found across classes and texts (NCERT EVS IV: 105). While there are many instances of suggestions for discussions, debates and conversations involving a group of students (TTC SSc VIII: 121), there are not too many instances of projects that call for cooperation and collaboration amongst students.

SUMMARY

To what extent do the textbooks used by NCERT and TTC schools integrate the five facets of peace education that emerge from the NCF guidelines? This was the question behind our review of NCERT and TTC textbooks for Classes I-X. There were strengths occasionally revealed such as a sincerity with which diversity is portrayed or an evenhandedness in history lessons, but equally, these were often undermined by a lack of good examples and poorly designed follow-up exercises. Further, the ambivalence that they show towards teacher engagement in learning serves to underscore that textbooks are the beginning and end of the learning process.

The design and structure of the learning setting directly affects the effectiveness of peace education. Therefore, it is important that pedagogical issues in the textbooks be addressed, as much as it is important to engage with the 'lessons' themselves. To illustrate, the poem "Give me strength" by Rabindranath Tagore is followed by the question, "How many times does the poet use the word strength and why?" (TTC Eng IX: 19-20) It would be more meaningful to ask what the poet truly speaks of when he asks for strength. In other words, activities should tie into the lesson and create a space for deeper learning.

A very small change in the language used in a follow-up activity can ensure that it fosters the ability to make decisions. In a history lesson, for instance, instead of asking students to "draw a timeline for the following events," it would facilitate their learning if they were

asked to make a presentation to the class based on the sequence of events, including any additional information or relevant materials. Changing the wording thus ensures the desired learning outcome while allowing each student to express themselves in their unique way.

Where a topic is covered by the syllabus in different subjects, cross-referencing or mentioning related content across the curriculum, can enable teachers and students to access more information and design further activities. For example, many lessons speak of different aspects of water in different subjects, from poems to uses to conservation.

Finally, it should be noted that this study has reviewed only a selection of subjects and publishers. Multiple School Boards operate within a single educational jurisdiction, and they commission a number of publishers to produce their textbooks.¹² Given this plurality, a more comprehensive review of all subjects, keeping in mind the five facets of peace education, would be useful, to help fill any data gaps from the implementation perspective.

¹² Akila R., *Mapping Educational Policy Structures and Processes in Tamil Nadu*, Educational Policy Research Series, The Prajnya Trust, Volume I Number 1, April 2009. Available at <http://www.prajnya.in/eprs11.pdf>.

V

FROM AGENDA TO ACTION

In the previous chapter, we discussed the major findings from our review of select textbooks used for classes 1-10. We do not claim that this study is so exhaustive as to conclude that the findings are true of all text books for every subject area. Nevertheless, we intend to apply these findings to identify points of departure for Prajnaya's Education for Peace Initiative, and thereby develop a dynamic intervention plan which can evolve with the changing needs of both students and teachers.

While details of the design, format and character of the intervention will have to be culled out after a proper survey of schools, we can piece together the broader picture. Some major areas of intervention are evident -

1. **Teacher Training** which will involve conducting workshops for in-service teachers, on peace related topics like respectful communication;
2. Creating complementary **content** which will include sample lesson plans and guidelines based on the existing curriculum, to help teachers transact a lesson keeping in mind the peace criteria;
3. **Student activities** where our trained staff will conduct workshops, demo classes and discussion groups for students to facilitate their involvement in the peace education process.

In keeping with the NCF recommendations of working with teachers, students and the content of textbooks, we propose to include these elements wherever possible and appropriate. Some areas allow for or need dual intervention - teaching respectful communication is essential with both students and teachers.

In this chapter, we will begin to apply the findings of this study to create elements of Prajnaya's *Teaching Peace* programme; this will be done by illustrating how lesson derived from the research can be translated into an action point.

TEACHER TRAINING

As the NCF suggests,

No reform, however well motivated and well planned, can succeed unless a majority of teachers feel empowered to put it in practice (NCF 2005, 50).

Accordingly, Prajnaya's Education for Peace Initiative (EPI) will begin its initial intervention by conducting workshops for teachers, to demonstrate a range of classroom activities and interactions that they can initiate and experience with their students. We will also help them generate contextualised plans to suit their unique situations. The different stages of this training will include specific exercises, tips on contextualisation, demonstration of techniques by experienced Prajnaya faculty who will then facilitate further learning through prepared materials, and finally, practice sessions to hone these skills.

The common thread running through the different initiatives for teachers will be the manner in which workshops and successive interventions are carried out. Essentially our work will begin with in-service teachers, by conducting a series of workshops on the topics in question, in their schools. The workshop modules, while addressing some essential topics, will also be flexible enough to accommodate any specific peace related concerns a school may have, like the presence of bullying or intercultural communication issues. There will be space for reflection and concrete action planning for teachers to come up with cooperative solutions. Providing opportunities for teachers to keep in touch either in person or via web-based communication with other teachers from different schools will help create a support community for the teachers.

Non-biased communication

While there are instances of teachers using or suggesting sensitive language, they need to learn to use respectful communication and to avoid judgmental language on a daily basis. This is an important skill for teachers to have, as they are role models for children. It is more effective for children to experience this kind of communication in everyday interactions and to get opportunities to practice it, thereby imbibing it themselves, than if they are just told to use respectful terms. This must begin by making teachers aware of their own biases that tend to show up in normal conversation; we can then lead them to learn to pay attention to not only what is said but also how it is said.

The teacher training will take teachers through the entire process of identifying existing biases, isolating features that communicate these biases, learning to re-orient to a bias-free way of communicating by modifying their own forms of expression and facilitating the same amongst their students.

Non-biased, respectful communication also needs to be addressed in student workshops. Workshops for children on respectful communication will ensure that they are exposed both directly and indirectly to effective communication. These workshops will be a first step towards implementing any peace related curriculum, as respectful communication lays the foundation for any further dialogue.

Activity design

In order to facilitate thought-provoking discussions and design action-based projects, a teacher must first be able to recognize the potential of a lesson to engage students. While many of the NCERT textbooks do provide notes for teachers as well as suggestions on what to discuss, translating these into action requires the teacher to educate her/himself more on the subject, thereby maintaining a neutral fact-based position and acting as a facilitator of the thought process by giving the right kind of input at the opportune moment. Teachers need to be made aware of the basic components of an activity, discussion or project thereby enabling them to design follow-up work that includes the appropriate type of engagement. Teachers also need opportunities to contextualise lessons and make connections to a child's existing reality.

While we will provide materials with prepared tasks as examples for creating this content, the teacher training modules will focus on how to conduct discussions, seminars and debates, the components to keep in mind for contextualisation and methods to redesign existing lessons or create new ones to suit the content that is being addressed. The style of the workshops will be similar to the others, wherein there is scope for contextualising the training to the immediate needs of that specific group of teachers.

Awareness-ideation-action process

Teachers will engage with a lesson through three distinct stages - awareness to ideation to action. This three-phased approach will permeate all areas of intervention. While teachers will be trained to follow through the entire cycle, the content needs to be tweaked and students sensitised. Teachers will learn to take the topic through all the steps thus making it clearer and more relevant, than merely stating issues. Moreover, taking an issue through the entire awareness-ideation-action process gives students an opportunity to learn of others' efforts that inspire hope and spur them to action.

If the existing texts do make readers aware of issues like traffic congestion leading to pollution for example but leave it at that, this could create a feeling of helplessness or despondency, unless balanced out by examples that give students hope that things can be set right. Therefore citing instances of changes that have taken place as well as examples of people responsible for this positive change is a core part of this sensitising process. After going through each stage, the teacher should be able to create a space for the students to get involved at their level, thereby helping them to take control of the situation, albeit in a small way. For example, students can persuade their parents to organise a carpool for them to commute to school or insist on taking the school bus.

Here, the main intervention will be workshops on key components of the complete cycle, focusing on learning to map a topic according to these criteria and elaborating on the overall design.

Creating conditions for informed choice

Choice has been deemed an important skill to cultivate towards peace building skills. This area is minimally represented in the texts and teachers need to take the onus upon themselves to make this happen. While open-ended questions do help the students create their own unique points of view, the lack of appropriate choices tends to detract from the effectiveness of such an exercise, forcing them to conform to one format. Creating opportunities and choices for students to express their unique thoughts can result in unprecedented action, exactly the kind of solution needed to combat many of the issues we face today.

Teachers will be trained to recognise and design activities that offer 'true' choices, wherein the students' engagement with the subject can take place in a variety of ways. This is not to say that there will be no instruction; on the contrary, it means designing or selecting as many ways of engagement that can yield similar outcomes. For example, after learning about the properties of liquids, children can demonstrate their knowledge through any of these

different ways: by reading about the basic properties, conducting experiments to prove these, or by finding exceptions to the rule.

Teaching through cooperative work

As with choice, cooperative group-work is a building block for peace. This area too is hardly represented in the texts. Training teachers to structure and develop cooperative projects for students of varying skills will both directly and indirectly showcase interdependence and inclusion, both key aspects of a peaceful society. It is important to sensitise teachers and give them the skills for differentiated instruction; this is a key component of designing a collaborative activity - to tap into each student's strengths.

Some of the training modules will deal with identifying essential components of a well-developed group project, recognising strengths within a group to design or assign tasks and varying instruction to complement the ability of the learner.

CONTENT

The content-based sessions will deal with both prescribed text-based content as well as other resources that give relevant information to students and teachers. This will draw heavily on folklore and literature as a means of illustrating values.

Peace Tales

Many generations have relied on the simple wisdom and enchanting lure of stories from their own cultures to showcase the inherent values of compassion, honesty, cooperation and acceptance, to name just a few. Traditionally these stories spell out the key aspect in a section called 'moral' at the very end. However they also offer an opportunity to engage children and adults in a variety of meaningful discussions and projects and make this learning experiential and relevant to them. This is the potential we need to tap into to take these classic tools to the next level.

Here the goal is to find literature that easily aligns itself to the peace conversation and create appropriate lesson plans that can easily be used as part of the language or arts curriculum or on their own in life skills classes. These stories could be from fables and folklore like the Panchatantra, highlighting desirable virtues and values, supported by suggestions for follow-up activities and discussions that encourage deeper, more meaningful conversations based on the story. The range of activities will include simple discussions on the story for younger students, linking to their immediate context and gradually increase in depth and scope for older students.

Companion manuals and support materials

These manuals are to be extensions of the existing curriculum and will address criteria that were either not addressed at all in the texts such as choice or use of dialogue; or those that are not represented enough like cooperation or group work. The manuals will seek out

topics and give examples of activities and follow-ups that can immediately be put to use in the classroom. These will include both generic as well as subject-specific examples.

Peace library

It is important to have a dedicated space that is geared towards providing information and can also serve as a resource and communication hub for these peace conversations. This will be done by creating a peace library for children and adults, to function as a source of knowledge, inspiration and connection to historical perspective, current thoughts, peace related texts and pre- screened literature. This space will also double as our peace centre and as a location for bringing students together for cooperative activities as well as a meeting place for the action-based clubs.

To begin this venture, the EPI team will collect peace-related books and media. This initiative will introduce material suited for children at their level and also give adults access to more academic documents like research papers, journals and reference material.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Working directly with students is not just a way to practically demonstrate to teachers and other adults the scope of these interactions but can also serve as an ongoing feedback mechanism to shape and refine our work.

Demo Classes with students on respectful communication and group work

While sensitising teachers to student needs, we must also be aware that students will find changes unsettling at first as well, even if they are for the better. It would therefore be unfair to train a teacher to change his/her method of teaching without also helping students become more open to this change. This task can be accomplished by trained staff, who will conduct demo classes with students, where they can experience the difference; teachers will get to observe and/or participate to understand it better themselves.

Peace Forums for students and teachers

There needs to be a space where students and teachers can brainstorm, collaborate, network and create plans that will set in motion a larger conversation or reform process. This could be web-based or in person or both, connecting members of a smaller community to each other as well as to other such groups. This could act as the launch pad or junction point for many related efforts that are already in place as well as new initiatives. These could be activities connecting students and teachers to existing youth exchange or penfriendship programmes or based on the model UN Assembly. Other options include initiating smaller set-ups like issue-based clubs that can connect groups of students to others who are passionate about similar subjects; together, they can start action-based programmes.

Issue-based workshops

While teachers can sensitise students to issues, it would help for students to also be a part of issue-based clubs, at least for short durations. This can take them from awareness to action in one well-planned and structured workshop. Students can then join groups of their choice. This could happen at a single school or at the interschool level, depending on the interest level of students. For example, the issue of non-biodegradable waste can be assessed practically through field visits, theoretically through literature and socially through surveys. The students will then be exposed to historical and current work in this area and can also come up with their own ideas. These may include educating people to separate garbage or finding ways to reuse, for instance. These ideas can be put into action immediately, in schools, communities or cities.

Camps with a focus

While the workshops can be implemented during school days within the immediate school community, the summer camp format will do the same by connecting an individual to another in the larger community. Here the focus will be on designing engagements for students for specified periods of time, say, during the summer or winter holidays. The idea is to conceptualise and implement focused camps that can double as interest-based clubs where students can gather with like-minded peers to explore any peace related concept such as diversity, inclusion or bias, among others.

Student exchange and immersion programs

Learning about cultures and communities requires exposure. One learns to deal with new customs, foods and behaviours best by being a part of it, albeit for a short while. There are many such exchange programmes world over but it is not necessary for schools in one country to always connect with the people of another country or race. In the context of India itself, we can find several opportunities. For instance, to create a better understanding of neighbouring states and communities, a child from Hyderabad can live for two weeks with a traditional Kerala family; this offers immense possibility for building lasting cultural bridges. We will collaborate with existing organisations to give students this opportunity in a safe way.

These can also be done as short exchanges called “live in my shoes for a day”, wherein students after communicating for a while can shadow one another in their respective living conditions for just one day to really understand their different perspectives. This can be arranged between schools in the same city/town, keeping safety in mind.

The next, and final chapter offers the first design of an intervention programme with all its various elements and to some extent, in sequence of action.

VI

EPI@PRAJNYA

The Education for Peace Initiative (EPI) at Prajnaya begins with a certain set of assumptions about education, peace and peace education –

1. Peace education is the learning of skills and building of attitudes that support the development of a peace-seeking mindset.
2. In order to be effective, peace education programmes must work with students, teachers, parents and communities at large.
3. Peace education works when peace values such as acceptance, integrity, cooperation and inclusion permeate every curricular and extra-curricular activity.

THE PRAJNYA EPI MISSION

Prajnya’s vision is “peace, just and sustainable, which is the basis of a secure and happy life for all humans.” The mission of Prajnaya’s Education for Peace Initiative is:

To create an inclusive space where the habit of peace is nurtured and cultivated through learning, play, introspective engagement and interaction.

At the heart of EPI’s work is our project **Teaching Peace** which incorporates most of the elements listed above. Our programme will work through three intertwined strands, representing the three parts of our audience: students, teachers and the community. Accordingly, the three main components of the Teaching Peace programme are –

1. Teaching Peace workshops, for teachers, students, school administrators and communities;
2. Creating content and teaching materials, i.e developing the Peace Tales component of the programme;
3. Introducing peace education into the community by providing resources, a dedicated space and organising activities

TEACHING PEACE WORKSHOPS

We will work towards spreading awareness about the inclusion of peace education in the curriculum through seminars, talks, volunteer opportunities and community events that will bring teacher trainees together with in-service teachers, educators and students.

Prajnya will train teachers at two career-stages: students training to teach and in-service teachers. Depending on the career-stage, the venue and the structure of these training programmes will vary accordingly.

In the school community

We will begin with workshops on respectful, non-biased communication, as a foundation for all other work. This will include separate workshops for teachers and administrators, informal seminars with parents, and discussion groups with students, with a view to eventually bring parents, teachers, students and administrators together for sustained interaction. These workshops will be conducted primarily at schools with their respective staff, students and parent bodies.

Following these introductory sessions, we will continue to work with each of the groups. Demo classes with students and teacher training workshops will be scheduled to be a part of one school term with follow-ups scheduled throughout the rest of the academic year.

Parent interventions will be largely dependent on the school calendar and will either coincide with a school's regular parent sessions or can be offered as special seminars to groups of interested parents within a geographical area.

The student workshops will begin the process of introducing students to alternate ways of interacting with adults and peers, through demo classes that focus on discussion, dialogue, cooperation, choice and responsibility.

The teacher workshops will be the most regulated of the three interventions and will begin with an introductory seminar on peace education and the need for respectful communication with all. This will be followed by sessions that will allow teachers to explore their own biases and work around them; learn the skills of conflict resolution and effective problem-solving; learn to plan lessons and activities that promote a peaceful way of being; and learn to communicate these ideas to others, including students, parents and community members. The Prajnaya team will mentor the teachers after the workshops, create model lessons to illustrate key strategies and involve students in peace-related work.

We will follow this up with modules that address three main points to get students and staff involved in the community -

- Awareness of issues
- Reflection and Analysis
- Action-based planning

We will anchor the establishment of clubs, forums, focus groups and programmes that will get the student community interacting with one another and thereby expanding their cultural, social and emotional boundaries. These forums will bring students together for issue-based discussions that can lead to action planning and working towards making a change at their own levels.

We will help create appropriate peace education materials for enhancing student learning, beginning with the 'Peace Tales' project (described below) and by later evolving companion manuals for select textbook content.

In teacher training colleges

Prajnya's engagement with the teacher training process will take three forms. Teaching Peace modules will be offered in teacher training institutions as short courses or workshops. We will create complementary sessions to go along with the teacher training programmes of other organizations in this field. Finally, we want to build the capacity of teacher training colleges by helping them integrate our process into their teacher training curriculum and practice.

- *Teaching Peace modules in colleges as either short courses or workshops*

There will be an introductory session, followed immediately or shortly after by a full training schedule, including a practicum element. These sessions will include elements of the workshops offered in school communities to teachers, parents and students, working towards passing on the skills of interacting with each of these groups to teacher trainees. The aim of these interventions will be to sensitise and equip these trainees with the skills and attitude to begin their teaching career, with a broader view of education and by developing an inclusive approach. While the workshops will be conducted at the training colleges, there will be a strong emphasis on integrating this learning and carrying it into the practical observation or student teaching component that they are required to do to obtain teacher certification. This process will be overseen by a member of the team through direct observation as well as by obtaining feedback from individual trainees and reflective discussions with the group.

- *The creation of miniature but complete sessions to complement the teacher training programme of other organisations engaged with educational issues*

When working with other organisations engaged with educational issues, we will organise sessions in consultation with them and based on both their needs and our analysis of the components that best fit the requirement. The venue and duration of these sessions will be determined based on the content of the sessions. For example, demonstration sessions with students are best done at school or in student group settings.

- *Building capacity in the teacher training colleges to integrate our process into their teacher training curriculum and practice*

We will liaise with teacher training colleges to incorporate some key elements of our programme into their regular training modules. Teacher training colleges can do this in several ways - by dedicating a specific number of classes to peace education, appointing dedicated staff, and by introducing "teaching peace" as an additional professional certificate that both current trainees and in-service teachers can enroll in to attain the status of trainer. These trainers will then be able to support the geographical spread of peace education.

CREATING CONTENT AND TEACHING MATERIALS: THE PEACE TALES

We will gather stories from fables, mythology and folk tales to create a comprehensive set of texts that is geared towards building peace skills. These chosen texts will also have detailed

guidelines for use by both teachers and parents to enhance the learning process. The guidelines will suggest age-appropriate levels of student involvement, thus allowing them to be utilised at different grade levels to extract a deeper understanding of the embedded values.

As a first step, we will collect the relevant tales and compile them into a series of five each in a book, with a manual of activities and follow-ups. These manuals will contain ideas for extending the conversation beyond merely reading the story to actually discussing and debating the issues, thus focusing on the inherent values. These activities will be graded, ranging from simple tasks to those that require deeper thought and action, thus allowing the teacher or parent to select the appropriate activity based on the students' readiness.

The Peace Tales books will initially be introduced during the teacher training sessions; its use will be demonstrated in classrooms and will also be discussed at the parent seminars as it is envisioned as a resource for both teachers and parents. While the stories will be accessible to the students as part of the class library, the companion manual, with instructions on structuring activities will be for adults.

Following this, we will also create specific manuals for teachers based on the content of the textbooks currently used in schools. These manuals will include sample lesson plans, generic follow-ups that can enhance conversations based on a lesson and specific follow-ups for lessons that deal with peace-related issues.

EPI IN THE COMMUNITY

Prajnya will establish a Peace Library and Resource Center, as a gathering place for people to explore thoughts, ideas and actions related to the impact and implementation of peace education in the community. To begin with, this will exist virtually through The Peace Blog, launched in August 2009. Eventually, this library/centre will be a space with different sections that will anchor all the areas of Prajnya's work with peace, not just EPI. It will serve as an archival centre for all our work and as a repository for peace-related material in print and other media. This space will host seminars, sessions and club meetings, with a view to facilitate the networking of people involved in this area of work. The centre will encourage inclusion and be accessible to people of varied backgrounds and abilities.

NEXT STEPS: A PROSPECTIVE TIMELINE

Towards these initiatives, Prajnya has already commissioned three studies including this one, giving us specific insights into structures in the educational system, the complementary efforts of other peace organisations and an assessment of the guidelines for implementing peace education in the existing curriculum.

Looking ahead, we now plan to survey a selection of schools, belonging to both CBSE and the State Board and with students from low, middle and high income families. The focus of the survey will be to gauge the interest level of schools, become aware of their needs and begin to comprehend the logistics of intervening. Once this data is collected, it will provide the necessary information for us to contact individual schools with proposals.

In 2009-10, Prajnya anticipates –

- Networking with other peace educators who have been identified through the groundwork research process, using The Peace Blog as a platform <http://prajnyaforpeace.wordpress.com>
- Getting in touch with CBSE and State Board schools in Chennai to introduce ourselves and do a needs-assessment, which will set the stage for us to carry out our workshops in schools June 2010 onwards.
- Beginning preparatory research for Peace Tales by collecting literature suited to the project from various folk tales, starting with stories from Indian folklore.
- Conducting short workshops for local NGOs working in the area of education who have expressed an interest in introducing peace education into their workspace.
- Pre-launch outreach through interactive programmes for children.

Thereafter, EPI will start working with schools in Chennai and reach out to teacher training institutions. Planning for the resource centre connected to this Initiative will also commence.

REFERENCES

NCF 2005: National Curriculum Framework , National Council of Education Research and Training, 2005

Education for Peace, Maria Montessori, Clio Publication, 2002

LIST OF TEXTBOOKS REVIEWED

National Council of Education Research and Training [NCERT] English

NCERT Eng I	NCERT, 2009, Marigold, Class I
NCERT Eng II	NCERT, 2007, Marigold, Class II
NCERT Eng III	NCERT, 2007, Marigold, Class III
NCERT Eng IV	NCERT, 2007, Marigold, Class IV
NCERT Eng V	NCERT, 2008, Marigold, Class V
NCERT Eng HS VI	NCERT , 2007, Honeysuckle, Class VI
NCERT Eng SR VI	NCERT, 2002007, Supplementary Reader in English, Class VI
NCERT Eng HC VII	NCERT, 2007, Honeycomb, Class VII
NCERT Eng SR VII	NCERT,2007, Supplementary reader in English, Class VII
NCERT Eng VIII	NCERT 2008, English, Class VIII
NCERT Eng SR VIII	NCERT , 2008, Supplementary reader in English, Class VIII
NCERT Eng IX	NCERT, 2008, English, Class IX
CBSE Eng main X	CBSE, 2008, Interact in English main course book, Class X
CBSE Eng Lit. X	CBSE, 2008, Interact in English Literature reader X
CBSE Eng WB X	CBSE, 2008, Interact in English Workbook, Class X

National Council of Education Research and Training [NCERT] Social Science

NCERT EVS III	NCERT, 2007, Environmental Studies, Looking Around, Class III
NCERT EVS IV	NCERT, 2007, Environmental Studies, Looking Around, Class IV
NCERT EVS V	NCERT, 2008, Environmental Studies, Looking Around, Class V
NCERT Pac VI	NCERT, 2007, Social Science, Social and Political life-I , Class VI
NCERT Geo VI	NCERT, 2009, Social Science ,The earth our habitat, Geography, Class VI
NCERT Hist VI	NCERT, 2009, Social Science, Our Pasts-I, History, Class VI
NCERT PSc VII	NCERT, 2008, Social Science, Social and Political life-II , Class VII
NCERT Geo VII	NCERT, 2007, Social Science ,Our Environment, Geography, Class VII
NCERT Hist VII	NCERT, 2007, Social Science, Our Pasts-II, History, Class VII
NCERT PSc VIII	NCERT, 2008, Social Science, Social and Political life-III , Class VIII
NCERT Geo VIII	NCERT, 2008, Social Science, Resources and Development, Class VIII
NCERT Hist VIII	NCERT, 2008, Social Science, Our Pasts-III, part I, History, Class VIII
NCERT PSc IX	NCERT, 2009, Social Science, Democratic Politics-I, Class IX
NCERT Geo IX	NCERT, 2009, Social Science, Contemporary India-I, Class IX
NCERT Hist IX	NCERT, 2009, Social Science, India and the contemporary world-I, Class IX
NCERT Eco IX	NCERT, 2009, Social Science, Economics, Class IX
NCERT PSc X	NCERT, 2008, Social Science, Democratic Politics-II, Class X
NCERT Geo X	NCERT, 2007, Social Science, Contemporary India-II, Class X
NCERT Eco X	NCERT, 2007, Social Science, Understanding Economic Development Class X

CBSE SSc X	CBSE, 2008, Social Science, Together towards a safer India III, Class X
NCERT Hist VIII	Our past 2008

Tamilnadu Textbook Corporation [TTC] Social Science

TTC EVS I	TTC, EVS "Suvanillayum Samoohaviyal" Class I
TTC EVS II	TTC, EVS "Suvanillayum Samoohaviyal" Class II
TTC EVS III	TTC,2009, EVS "Suvanillayum Samoohaviyal" , Class III
TTC EVS IV	TTC,2006, EVS "Suvanillayum Samoohaviyal" Class IV
TTC EVS V	TTC, EVS "Suvanillayum Samoohaviyal" Class V
TTC SSc VI	TTC , 2009, Social Science, Class 6
TTC SSc VII	TTC , 2009, Social Science, Class 7
TTC SSc VIII	TTC , 2009, Social Science, Class 8
TTC SSc IX	TTC ,2009, Social Science, Class 9
TTC SSc X	TTC ,2009,Social Science, Class 10

Tamilnadu Textbook Corporation [TTC] English

TTC Eng I	TTC,2007, English Course Book, Class 1
TTC Eng II	TTC,2005, English Course Book, Class 2
TTC Eng III	TTC,2006, English Course Book, Class 3
TTC Eng IV	TTC,2006, English Course Book, Class 4
TTC Eng V	TTC, 2008,English Course Book, Class 5
TTC Eng VI	TTC , English Reader and Supplementary reader, Class 6
TTC Eng VII	TTC ,2004, English Reader and Supplementary reader ,Class 7
TTC Eng VIII	TTC , 2005, English Reader and Supplementary reader, Class 8
TTC Eng IX	TTC , 2009, English Reader and Supplementary reader, Class 9
TTC Eng X	TTC , 2008, English Reader and Supplementary reader, Class 10

Tamilnadu Textbook Corporation [TTC] Tamil

TTC Tamil I	TTC, 2009, Tamil , Class I
TTC Tamil II	TTC, 2009, Tamil , Class II
TTC Tamil III	TTC, 2009 , Tamil, Class III
TTC Tamil IV	TTC,2009, Tamil , Class IV
TTC Tamil V	TTC,2009, Tamil , Class V
TTC Tamil VI	TTC, Tamil , Class VI
TTC Tamil VII	TTC, 2009, Tamil , Class VII
TTC Tamil G VIII	TTC, Tamil Grammar, Class VIII
TTC Tamil ND VIII	TTC, Tamil Non detail, Class VIII
TTC Tamil G IX	TTC, Tamil Grammar, Class IX
TTC Tamil ND IX	TTC, Tamil , Class IX
TTC Tamil G X	TTC, Tamil Grammar, Class X
TTC Tamil ND X	TTC, Tamil , Class X

About Prajnya

Prajnya is a non-profit think-tank in Chennai that works in areas related to peace, justice and security. Prajnya's work embraces scholarship, advocacy, networking and educational outreach and is organized into thematic Initiatives.



About Education for Peace

The Education for Peace Initiative (EPI) hosts Prajnya's pedagogically oriented projects. Its vision is to teach peace by fostering the learning of skills conducive to communication, healing, reconciliation and interaction between people with divergent interests and creating capacity for the resolution of conflict and the creation of a sustainable peace. A citizenry accepting of diversity and difference is a citizenry capable of building and sustaining peace.

Crafting the perfect pedagogical intervention is futile without a clear understanding of the structure, functioning, culture and specific needs of a given system. Educational policy research is also Prajnya's way of nurturing a sustained engagement with educational issues and debates, so that our peace work is not isolated from other educational challenges.

The Educational Policy Research Series is intended to document and disseminate our research into a wider community of educators and educationists.

<i>Visit our website</i>	http://www.prajnya.in/peace.htm
<i>Follow us on Twitter</i>	prajnya
<i>Email us</i>	prajnyatrust@gmail.com peace.prajnya@gmail.com
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About this study

The National Council for Education Research and Training's revised National Curriculum Framework (NCF), published in 2005, includes guidelines for introducing peace education into the school system. This study interprets these guidelines as five facets of peace education, and assesses how each facet is being implemented in school text books prescribed for language and social sciences across grades. Based on the findings of this textbook review, the study identifies action areas and makes suggestions and recommendations for activities and practices. Finally, it draws together these different elements to propose a framework for Prajnya's Education for Peace Initiative (EPI).