

FOREWORD

COVID-19 has disrupted the world as we know it. Like other sectors, education too has been affected. The pandemic has forced us to innovate and think of alternative ways to ensure that the process of learning continues, be it in a school environment or at home.

This brings us to environment education. The 1991 Supreme Court order made it mandatory for the curriculum to integrate elements of environment education right from the start. Environmental Studies or EVS is mandatory for Classes 3 to 5, and from Class 6 onwards, environment is infused in various subjects. Additionally, schools have played a significant role in inculcating values among its students through eco clubs and various extracurricular activities related to environment. But with classrooms now shifting to homes, the questions that arise are: Will environment education continue? If it does, how?

CSE's Green Schools Programme (GSP) has a raft of initiatives that include the GSP Audit (an assessment of environment practices in schools); a capacity-building programme for teachers; and resource material to foster and strengthen eco-literacy amongst the youth. The primary objective of GSP is to help the students grasp that vital link between environment and everyday life.

Addressing the urgent need to introduce meaningful environmental education in schools, the programme focusses on:

GSP Audit: Over the years, hundreds of thousands of schools have participated in the GSP Audit. The programme is uniquely positioned to raise awareness on the most challenging crisis of our time and is an effective tool for environment education in schools. Students form teams to audit the management of resources in their school premises and then make changes to improve their resource efficiency. The GSP Audit helps students track all the critical elements (mobility, energy consumption, food consumption, biodiversity, water usage, sanitation and solid waste management) that directly or indirectly contribute to global heating, and empowers them to practise sustainable use of natural resources.

Capacity building of teachers: The GSP team regularly conducts workshops and orientation sessions. The workshops target teachers who implement the programme on the ground, familiarizing them with the steps and methodology of the GSP Audit and build the capacity of teachers or master trainers to conduct the environmental audit through their students. In addition, current information and updates on the state of India's environment are also shared with the teachers for use in classroom teaching.

Resource material: CSE's rich content is adapted to create content that will resonate with the school community. Fact sheets, board games, comic books, manuals and other publications serve to bring the subject of environment alive to them.

Environment and Climate Change Activity Book

The virus has forced us also to reset and pivot to alternatives for continuity in environment education. The Environment and Climate Change Activity Book is the first step in that direction. The activities in the book have been designed so that children will be able to complete the tasks in a home environment while teachers can use the activities in the classroom to keep students engaged.

This book will:

- Deliver comprehensive and detailed understanding of important environmental issues;
- Provide knowledge on what can be done to protect various facets of environment;
- Provide hands-on activities to stimulate learning by doing; and
- Encourage out-of-the-box thinking and making the right choice when it comes to environment protection.

This book is ideally for children in the age group of 10–14 years. The activities will help them understand concepts and explore ways to apply them in daily life. Parental guidance may also be required and parents are encouraged to participate with their children, making the activities a family bonding time.

The activities are wide-ranging and immersive. With crosswords, scrambled words and word search, this book will pique the curiosity of children and lead them to delve further into the subject of environment. Interspersed are 'Fun Facts', 'Key Tips' and 'Did you know?' to enhance general knowledge of the environment, and stories and comic strips to engage children.

The highlight of this publication is the special section 'Climate action'. With the acceleration of the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, it becomes imperative for children to understand the significance of their actions on the environment. Activities such as tracing trends in global warming and emissions will stimulate them to question their habits and help shift them from passive observers to active participants.

The endeavour of this publication is to provide opportunities for experiential learning for children and stimulate creative thinking to find sustainable solutions to emerging environmental issues.

We hope we are also successful in our endeavour to expand the environmental discourse from schools to homes.

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