


CHAPTER-5

Choosing, Organizing and Contextualizing Content for Teaching.





The arrangement and organization of the learning environment is very important for the Foundational Stage. Children of this age learn effectively through manipulatives and engaging actively with the help of material around them, sensorial experience and TLM's. These things play a vital role in the classroom. This is further elaborated in six sub-sections.

- ▶ 5.1 Developing a syllabus for the Foundational Stage based on the NCF.
- ▶ 5.2. Principles of Content Selection
- ▶ 5.3. Ways of Organizing content.
- ▶ 5.4. Teaching- Learning Material (TLM's)
- ▶ 5.5. Books and for Textbooks
- ▶ 5.6. The learning environment.

5.1. DEVELOPING A SYLLABUS.

The syllabus developers need to consider the local context like; the socio- cultural environment and practices, capacities of teachers, the infra-structure and material environment of the schools etc.

- a. Considering the local contexts as mentioned in NCF, the syllabus should rearticulate the Learning Outcomes for each of the Competencies as outlined in the NCF.
- b. The syllabus should make specific choices for content and material based on the learning outcomes, the principles and guidelines of NCF along with considerations for the local context.
- c. Syllabus should articulate the sequence of activities and learning experiences, based on the learning outcomes and content selection.
- d. For the Foundational Stage it would be appropriate to develop activity books and other handbooks for teachers, that would guide them through the sequence planned in the syllabus. (further discussed in section 5.5)
- e. The syllabus should design broad guidelines for assessments that check for the achievement of learning outcomes articulated in the syllabus.



5.2. PRINCIPLES OF CONTENT SELECTION

Content should be derived from children's life experiences and day to day life activities. Content should be from simple to complex activities and it should be inspired from the material from their socio-culture environment as children can easily relate to it. Special care should be taken to avoid promotion of stereotypes.

- ▶ 5.2.1. Content of language
- ▶ 5.2.2 Content of Mathematics
- ▶ 5.2.3. Content for arts.

5.2.1. Content for Language.

For workbooks and textbooks adequate visual cues and illustrations should be added. Font size should be minimum 14-point size so that these are easily recognizable for the students. Classroom should have an attractive display of children's literature inspired by local culture and regional songs. Worksheet to be simply designed, so that children are able to do the same by themselves. Material like flashcards, sandpaper letters and akshar, puzzle games and material for other activities keep language and literacy activities engaging and interesting. Audio-visual material like senses boards, smartphones and audio aids will be very effective for Grade 1 and 2. Rhymes, stories and other narratives can be a good source of oral language input for children.



5.2.2. Content for Mathematics

Similar to language, content in mathematics can reflect engagement with the local environment. Mathematical activities, whether understanding shapes or counting, can be integrated with activities related to natural and human environment. Textbooks and workbooks, need to be embedded within the narrative that is engaging, interesting and manipulatives for children in the classroom. The primary focus should be on specific mathematical tasks. The worksheet should have adequate space with clear instructions. For example.

KHUL JA SIM SIM

I am an even number
I come before 30
I come after 7

8

I am an odd number
My both digits are same
I am not more than 20

My both digits are odd
Sum of my digits is 8
My neighbour is 18

I am an even number
Sum of my digits is 5
I am less than 30

One of my digits is 2
Sum of my digits is 2
My tens digit is greater than my units digit

Write suitable hints

What could be the number based on the pattern observed so far?

5.2.1. Content for Arts.

Art learning experiences are to be planned as activities focused on specific Learning outcomes and the content is to be drawn from the local context of the school. Like, local songs, tunes, dances, and stories (both folk and contemporary) can be used in the performing arts context of music, movement, and theatre. Image 1 is of Rangoli and image 2 is of local theatre by students.



Section 5.3. Ways of Organizing Content

Content for learning in the early years can be organized in many ways with 'play' being the primary experience of the child. Some of the most commonly used approaches are illustrated below.

- **5.3.1 Project-based Approach**
- **5.3.2 Story-based Approach**
- **5.3.3 Theme-based Approach**
- **5.3.4 Eclectic Approaches**

5.3.1 Project-based Approach

Learning by doing is critical in early education. Projects, especially those involving collaboration with peers, enable children to develop a wide range of skills not only for schooling but for their future as well. Projects, for this stage, can be short and simple which can be grasped by young children easily, so that children engage with a real-world context and are allowed to pursue their own interests. There is no correct or incorrect answer either during the process of doing a project or in its outcomes. The implication is that a child can, without fear of failure, explore their own creative thinking. By nature, projects are interdisciplinary, involving as many subjects as language arts, social studies, math, science, art, drama, dance, and health along with any number of real-life experiences. In addition, projects provide occasions to acquire, practice, and apply skills used within academic disciplines and real life scenarios.

5.3.2. Story-based Approach

Stories are one of the oldest tools of communication. In our culture, stories play a very important role in binding together our families and communities. Stories are also able to stimulate the attention and the memory of children because of their emotional connect. Stories, through involving children directly in their learning process, help them build their own vocabulary. Besides being a rich resource of language learning and teaching, stories also introduce the world beyond their immediate experience, thereby helping children learn much more than words. Stories also serve as a powerful tool for the holistic development of children. They foster language learning as well as emotional, social, and intellectual development.

A story-based approach is generally developed on the basis of three phases - pre-story activities, activities while reading a story and post-story activities.

5.3.3. Theme-based Approach

The thematic approach is a way of teaching and learning where many areas of the curriculum are connected together and integrated within a theme. Rather than learning different skills at different points of time or learning different subjects, children are helped to make meaningful connections through a theme and explore different topics or aspects within the theme. Children explore topics about themselves, their interests, relationships and interactions with people and objects in the environment. They ask questions to understand these better, explore, experiment, experience and thus, build on their already existing knowledge. Examples of some themes are: My Home, My Neighbourhood, My Garden, My School, Market, Fields and Forests, Hills and Mountains, Rivers and Oceans, Vehicles.

The theme and the sub-themes provide a concrete base for children to make sense of experiences so that they can make connections to other experiences and eventually build on more abstract ideas. Children develop new concepts, practice new skills, build dispositions and have emotional experiences in each sub-theme.

5.3.4. Eclectic-based Approach

All the above approaches have different strengths. We do not recommend a single, specific approach for the early years. It is left to Schools and Teachers to choose the right kind of approach to design content for learning depending on their context and needs. While this kind of planning has a risk of appearing incoherent, a well-designed sequence of learning experiences without adhering to any specific approach can be equally engaging and effective in achieving Learning Outcomes.

5.4. Teaching Learning Material (TLM)

Children in the Foundational Stage are more engaged in learning when they use multiple senses and actively use their hands. From simple toys for play to specific manipulatives for numeracy, a variety of TLM is essential at this stage. Along with material, books play a very important role in developing language and literacy. Having a small but good collection of children's literature completes the TLM set for the Foundational Stage.

TLM

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graph TD; TLM[TLM] --- A[Material that can be prepared by teachers]; TLM --- B[Material that can be prepared by children]; TLM --- C[Material that can be purchased from market]; TLM --- D[Mathematics TLM for grade 1 & 2]; TLM --- E[Library and children's Literature]; TLM --- F[Usage culture]; TLM --- G[Digital and Audio Visual Material];
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Material that can be prepared by teachers

Material that can be prepared by children

Material that can be purchased from market

Mathematics TLM for grade 1 & 2

Library and children's Literature

Usage culture

Digital and Audio Visual Material

Teaching Learning material

- **1. Material that can be prepared by Teachers-** Teachers should develop capacities for creating simple TLMs from locally available material like cardboards, egg carton, pebbles, old clothes etc.
- **2. Material that can be prepared by children-** Making simple toys, puzzles and board games can be very engaging activities for young children and they can employ all domains of development in designing and creating these material.
- **3. Material that can be purchased from market-** Some of the TLM are made of materials that might not be locally available. They might require more sophisticated tools and equipment to produce. Like, Building block set, Story book set, soft toy, picture book set etc.
- **4. Mathematics TLM for Grade 1 & 2-** TLM that are simple to make with locally available material. These material make learning mathematics a more concrete experience for children. Like, simple counters can be made using used cardboard packages, Arrow cards etc
- **5. Library and Children Literature-** The idea of a library, a space for a collection of books, for browsing through the books and reading books is essential in the Indian context where the culture of reading texts from books is still emerging. A big challenge in learning to read is the motivation and libraries, and easily accessible children's literature are one part of the solution to generate this motivation and interest in reading.
- **6. Usage Culture-** Library books when borrowed and taken home should be returned by the due date and in good condition. Equally important to this usage culture is the actual and effective use of TLMs in the classroom.
- **7. Digital and Audio-Visual Material-** As the world is evolving towards technology, we should use it as an effective tool for teaching. The Audio-Visual material should have diverse range of content, diverse forms, spaces, and formats to ensure equitable access and to ensure inclusion of Divyang (Handicapped) children. Material would be used to create an enjoyable experience for the learner, supporting the capability development of Teachers, parents, and the community.

5.5. Books and Textbooks-

Children at the Foundational Stage need to engage with texts in a variety of forms (e.g., picture books, storybooks, graded readers, and worksheets). However, given the current ground realities, Teachers in Grades 1 and 2 are more familiar with the idea of using textbooks. Textbooks may be developed for Grades 1 and 2, but in accordance with the pedagogical ideas of this NCF, they must be completely different in their imagination and usage. This Section describes the development and use of all kinds of books including textbooks appropriate for the Foundational Stage.

- Children's book
- Importance of Textbook for children of 6-8 years
- Principle of textbook designing
- Process of Textbook Development
- Textbook and Assessment
- Teachers support for meaningful use of Textbook

5.6. Learning Environment-

An inclusive, welcoming, colourful, and joyful environment that supports every child's participation is very critical for achieving the Competencies outlined in the NCF. The indoor environment needs to be well lit and well ventilated.

- 1.It should feel safe and inviting for the children.
- 2.It needs to be inclusive.
- 3.It should have a balance of both familiar and novel experiences for the child.
- 4.It should have a balance of material that encourage different domains of development.
- 5.It should allow for both individual work and cooperative work.
- 6.It should include displays of children's work and also allow for children's work-in-progress to be preserved.

- Organising the indoor environment.
- Outdoor Equipment and Material.

5.6.1. Organizing the indoor Environment

Based on the above principles, one way to organize the classroom has been illustrated below. This arrangement has been made using some of the fundamental principles of ECCE.

- a. Running Blackboard
- b. Circles
- c. Corner set up
 - i. Dramatic Play Corner
 - ii. Blocks/Puzzles and Math corner
 - iii. Art/Drawing corner
 - iv. Books/language corner
- d. Classroom Display
- e. Portfolio Bags.





5.6.2. Outdoor Equipment and Material

Outdoor play includes giving an opportunity for hands on activity by which we can teach various concepts. Fe of the things in this context would be Sand pit, Clay box, Water, Kitchen garden and Outdoor play equipment like, see-saw, swings, ladder to climb.





OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT & MATERIAL



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graph TD; A[OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT & MATERIAL] --- B[SAND PIT]; A --- C[CLAY BOX]; A --- D[WATER]; A --- E[KITCHEN GARDEN]; A --- F[OUTDOOR PLAY EQUIPMENT];
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SAND PIT



CLAY BOX



WATER



KITCHEN
GARDEN



OUTDOOR PLAY
EQUIPMENT





Thank
you

