

School Library – A Centre of Learning

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ABSTRACT

This article highlights the importance of education followed by the importance of books and libraries in self development. It also explores how books help children not only in teaching them a few facts but also in enriching their imagination, widening their outlook, developing a fact finding attitude and training them to use their leisure time properly. The social and educational significance of books for children cannot be underestimated. Realising the importance of school library in the educational process, NCF-2005 has emphasised its functioning as an essential component of the school at all levels.

Education in its true spirit leads to the development of the human personality from all angles i.e. intellectual, physical, moral, social, and spiritual. General education, which is necessary for all citizens, is imparted through school education. Therefore, all the children of a nation are required to attend school to get the necessary educational, cultural, vocational, administrative, and social skills to help themselves and the society. Realising the importance of education, the international slogan “Education for all” was announced in the JOMTIEN conference, 1990. In our national

perception, education is essentially for all. This is fundamental to our all-round development. Education develops manpower for different levels of the economy. The school is the temple of learning, home of affection, and a playground to perform. The school has been chiefly concerned with the teaching of subjects specially designed in the curriculum. A school of the past was entirely dependent upon text books. The development of skills in reading continues to be of outstanding importance. Now in the IT-age, educators are aware that learning is accelerated by the use of many and varied devices and

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materials, which include both print and non-print media, in which the library plays an important role. Collection of books, pictures, pamphlets, maps, films, filmstrips, recordings, and any other printed media make the library a goldmine for each teacher and pupil. As a child progresses with reading, his/her curiosity is stimulated to seek answers through print. This leads the child to see answers in the ample collection of the library. The child develops interest and borrows books. Through extensive reading, the child is enabled for proper judgment in all walks of life. Thus, the use of a library provides proper opportunity to explore and gain indepth knowledge, develop a taste for reading and learn how to choose the right books to read, to absorb, and widen the horizon of knowledge.

Importance of Books/School Library

Books not only teach children a few facts but also enrich their imagination, widen their outlook, develop a fact finding attitude and train them to use their leisure time properly. This shows that the social and educational significance of books for children cannot be underestimated. The school library equips students with life-long learning skills and develops the imagination, enabling them to live life as responsible citizens. The librarian and the teacher both give the child proper instruction and direction in order to develop an independent reading habit and to prepare their own projects. As a

result, the child learns how to study, how to discover, how to answer the questions independently, and to get familiar with the contents of many books. Books are no substitute for living. Books have always been a source of information, comfort, and pleasure for people who know how to use them. The habit of using books needs to be developed from childhood. The child needs to learn to balance personal happiness and social approval. In this situation, books help directly or indirectly to satisfy social, material, emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs. The child understands concepts like the need to belong or to be a part of a group, the need to love, and to be loved, the need to achieve, to be worthy of respect, to work towards change, and the need for aesthetic satisfaction.

The school library offers learning services by making available both print and non-print materials. Print material



includes books, periodicals, newspapers, reference books; whereas non-print material includes audio-visual materials, charts, globes, maps, micro-forms, micro-films, pictures, models, mock-ups, realia (real objects), recordings, slides, specimens and transparencies on different subjects. So, now a days, the library is otherwise known as a media centre. Besides the print and non-print materials, internet connectivity has become the necessity of the day to supplement the classroom projects. The books and resources in the library enable its members to become a critical thinker and effective user of the library.

Think about it:

Can we tell why it is raining?

Of course, we can.

We can see the raindrops and wet streets, we can hear the pitter patter of the rain, feel the wetness of the rain, think about rain—Where does it come from? Why does it rain? There is always moisture in the air but we cannot see it. We can see the clouds where the moisture has collected as droplets. To find out the proper answer, we read more about clouds from the literature available in the library and learn that when clouds are heavy and cool enough, drops of water fall as rain. We learn, see, hear, feel and think about things that help us learn.

The school library helps teachers as well as pupils to learn; to think logically; learn to work alone; learn to work and play with others; learn to draw

pictures and enjoy together; learn songs to sing; learn stories to tell; learn games to play; learn to keep safe and stay out of danger; learn to eat good food to stay well; learn to know about our country and to keep it great; learn about rest of the world(moon, sun and stars). the resources in the library helps students decide what they want to do when they grow up. The library helps individual find out what they can do best, and inculcate the love for books. Children learn to be voracious reader.

Ways to Increase Reading Habit among Children

Both teachers and students with the help of community members can undertake a good number of activities in and outside the library to make their learning process truly meaningful. There can be an organisation of a (weekly/fortnightly/quarterly) reading forum, a discussion forum, development of wall magazines on different current issues and themes, even a handmade school magazine that can have a compilation of local stories, poems, paintings, and things like a compilation of local language dictionary, etc. Such activities, organised in a regular manner can make schooltime very exciting and enriching for students, teachers, and community members including parents.

The following points are essential for the development of literacy, information literacy, and teaching. Core library services according to



UNESCO manifesto are: supporting and enhancing the curriculum; developing and sustaining the reading habit and creating an enjoyment of reading and learning. Libraries are instrumental in offering opportunities to learn and teach and inculcate creativity enabling students to enjoy knowledge.

Supporting all students in learning and in the practice of skills to evaluate and use information is a function of a good library. A library must provide access to local, regional, national, and global resources through the internet. It must play the lead role in organising activities that encourage cultural and social awareness and sensitivity. Working with students, teachers, administrators and parents to achieve the mission of the school in particular and society in general is the goal of the library. Promoting reading and providing resources and services of the school library to the whole community will be the expanding role of the library.

Role of Readers' Club

The Readers' Club is an informal organisation of NBT (National Book Trust), where teachers and children meet from time to time, read books, and have discussions and exchange ideas on books. The prime objective is that children should, from a very young age, acquire the reading habit and learn to look after books. The main objective of the club is to inculcate the habit of reading books other than prescribed text books as well

as to provide an easy access to good and interesting reading materials. The club can be setup anywhere in the school. There should be enough seating space. Children should have freedom to handle the books, select books of their choice, freely exchange them and take them home. The librarian or any interested teacher can take time for the Readers' Club. Schools establishing the Readers' Club will get books worth Rs 250.00 free of cost from the National Book Trust(NBT). They will also be sent a bilingual bulletin every month, containing stories, poems, interesting news and other articles. The bulletin also publishes the articles written by the members of the Readers' Club. The Readers' Club organises many activities like: wall newspaper, book readings, and perhaps invite authors, writers, and others to speak to the Readers' Club.

Conclusion

The school library is the best place for learning. It helps all of us to do better work, be better citizens, and to live useful, happy and full lives. No doubt, the school library is an integral part of the educational process. Every school, whether a pre-school, primary school, or secondary school, needs to have a library. Realising the importance of school library in the educational process, NCF-2005 has emphasised on its functioning as an essential component of the school at all levels. It has been recommended by NCF to treat the library as an essential component of the school.



Both teachers and children need to be motivated and trained to use the library, it is important to make children into self-reliant library users. A library must provide new information, use technology, and enable students and teachers to be connected to the wider world through books and journals.

The school authority, teachers, students, parents, and the community

may join together in fulfilling the objectives of NCF. This would ensure that the school library is an integral part of the education process. To facilitate this workshops can be organised to convey that and library is an essential component and not an ornamental part of any institute.

“The school library helps teachers teach and children learn” –*Laura Bush*

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