

UNVEILING GENDER SENSITIVITY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE
TEXTBOOK

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Abstract

Although we are living in 21st century gender discrimination, gender bias is clearly observed in the society. Irrespective of the urban or rural, educated or uneducated birth of a girl child is unwillingly accepted. The government has passed the act regarding sex detection yet female feticide cases are registered, this is a pathetic situation of our society. Women have proved their strengths, capabilities and intellectual in all the walks of life but complete equality is not established yet. Women are struggling for their equal status at home & society. To change the existing inequality; mindset of the people need to be changed. Education plays important role in inculcation of gender sensitivity. For the tomorrow's better society, gender issues must be incorporated in syllabus and accordingly it should be reflected in the textbooks.

In the present paper the author has analyzed the 9th standard textbook of English language of NCERT in relation to gender sensitivity



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Introduction-

National Curriculum framework 2005 has focused issue of gender sensitivity as one of the prime issue. NCF states, Unequal gender relations not only perpetuate domination but also create anxieties and stunt the freedom of both boys and girls to develop their human capacities to their fullest. It is in the interest of all to liberate human beings from the existing inequalities of gender.

We must use textbooks as one of the primary instruments for equity, since for a great majority of school-going children, as also for their teachers, it is the only accessible and affordable resource for education. (NCF-2005)

Our customs, traditions are needed to be study in new perspective where women should get equal status. The society where women get equal status in all the walks of life that society will

develop at greater pace. Our textbooks should be designed in this direction where ample opportunities should be provided for addressing gender issues.

Importance of the Study-

Textbook are very important tool to bring desired changes among children. Various social issues need to be incorporated in the textbook effectively. In the present paper author has presented an analysis of 9th standard textbook of English in relation to the issues of gender sensitivity.

Objectives of the Study-

Following objectives were formulated for the present study.

- To analyze the content of 9th Standard English textbook in relation to gender sensitivity.
- To suggest the activities to incorporate with the content.

Analysis of the Textbook –

‘Behhive English’ is the core textbook of English for standard IX. This book is developed by the NCERT. There are total 11 chapters in the textbook.

Key Features of the textbook

- One of the important features of this book is that learner friendly language is adopted in the textbook.
- Contemporary social issues are also given important place in the textbook.
- Different genres of such as story, biography, autobiography, science fiction, humor, travelogue and one act play are nicely included.
- For every topic Before You read section gives opportunity for the brainstorming on important issues.
- Opportunity to writing tasks (Newspaper report, writing an article, argumentative writing) gives ample scope for the children to express their views.
- The section “Thinking about the text” attempts to move from surface level understanding of the text to critical thinking.
- Communicative activities give opportunities for opinion and expressions.
- Part IV a (Article 51 A) of Indian constituent is provided in the textbook in which fundamental duties of Indian citizens are given

Content Analysis -

Content	Description	Ideas for incorporating Gender Sensitivity
The Fun They Had	The topic discusses about the future generation of computers and virtual reality.	A Teacher can give example that in the present scenario women are also very effectively contributing in the field of computers. They are IT analyst, software developers etc.
The Sound of Music	Biographical pieces tell us of people who have achieved success and recognition through hard work, determination and courage.	Teacher can assign an activity to prepare a list of renowned persons from the field of music. Teacher should mention that persons like Bhimsen Joshi, LataMangeshkar, ShobhaGurtu, Asha Bhosle, PadmajaFenani, ZakirHusen achieved success with great dedication and hard work. A teacher can also present a list of persons from various fields who have achieved success irrespective of their physical disability. E.g. SudhaChandran, Helen Keler, S.W. Hawking.
The Little Girl	The Story describes a changing attitude of a girl towards her father.	A teacher can highlight that boys and girls should be given equal treatment at home. Both should be equally loved and taken care.
A Truly Beautiful Mind	The lesson describes the life of Einstein. His personality is depicted as an ordinary human being who has common likes, dislikes and his problems.	Simplicity of scientist, stories from the lives of scientists can be discussed. Moreover contribution of women scientist also can be discussed.
My Childhood No Men are Foreign	These are the pieces of autobiographical accounts which deal with harmony & prejudice, tradition and change. Dr. A.P. J. Abdul Kalam expressed his gratitude towards his teachers, family members and friends. The poem of James Kirkup describes the humanity and oneness. Physical characteristics may differ but all are equal.	Teacher can give activity to the students to write an essay about, Importance of Women Education. Collect the information about girls' education in villages. Collect the information about traditions and customs in Indian society where equal status of women is rejected. Debate on Protection of Human Rights of women.

Duck and the Kangaroo	This is a humorous poem, describes that how a kangaroo fulfils the wish to ride on kangaroo's back.	Discussion can be carried out on the topic –How men and Women can help each other for their progress and harmony in life.
Reach for the Top	The unit biographical pieces that depict president endeavors to reach the top. First biography is of Santosh Yadav , the only woman in the world who has scaled Mt. Everest twice. She had born in a society where the birth of a son was regarded as as a blessing, daughter was not generally welcome. But santosh have proved that she is also equal to boys. Second biography is of Maria Sharapova, renowned tennis player.	Prepare a wall magazine on the topic –Success stories of Women. Prepare a graphical presentation on Male –female ratio in Rajasthan, Haryana, Utter Pradesh, Bihar & Maharashtra. Organizing awareness campaign in the society about equality of gender.(Rally, exhibition, speech) Debate on traditional and nontraditional or interchanged roles of men and women.
The Bond of Love	This unit is about a strong attachment between a human and wild animal.	A teacher should focus on the value of sensitivity, that we all should show sensitivity toward all the living creatures.
Kathmandu	It is a travelogue in which Vikram Seth gives an account of what he saw, thought and felt when he travelled from China to Tibet, from Heaven lake to Himalayans	There are some temples in India where entry is restricted for women. A teacher should motivate the students to do critical analysis of such irrelevant customs. Write an essay about Status of Women in Indian Society. Collection of News from newspapers about the events on inequality in the society.

Conclusion –

Variety of text is included in the textbook of 9th standard. A teacher can incorporate different activities for developing gender sensitivity among students. In a true sense textbook developers provided wide scope for the gender sensitivity.

References –

- 1) National Curriculum Framework (2005): NCERT
- 2) Beehive English Textbook (Core) Class IX(2012) : NCERT