

A NEW APPROACH TO ENGLISH

Class - VIII



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BHUBANESWAR

A NEW APPROACH TO ENGLISH

Class - VIII

(Experimental Edition)

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Publisher

Department of School and Mass Education, Govt. of Odisha.

Year of Publication

2018

2019

Preparation:

English Language Teaching Institute, Odisha, Bhubaneswar
and

Directorate of Teacher Education and State Council of Educational
Research & Training, Odisha, Bhubaneswar
and

Odisha State Bureau of Textbook Preparation and Production, Bhubaneswar

Printing:

Textbook Production and Marketing, Odisha, Bhubaneswar

PREFACE

The Govt. of Odisha has decided to strengthen the teaching/learning of English in Odia medium Govt. Schools. The English Language Teaching Institute (ELTI) has already prepared a handbook on teaching English at the primary level. About sixty thousand teachers have been trained with the help of the book during 2016-2017 and each teacher has been provided with a copy of the book. Next, the ELTI with the help of SCERT and OPEPA has prepared this new series of textbooks in English from Class-III to Class- VIII based on sound principles of English Language Teaching and principles of pedagogy enshrined in NCF 2005. The books have been tried out with real learners and teachers. Necessary corrections have been made accordingly. I wish the teachers to read the introduction and notes for them provided in the books and teach the books accordingly. I also want the inspecting officials to go through the textbooks and supervise classes accordingly. The workbooks are carefully built into the textbooks. The teachers should use the books following a learner-centred approach and make learners do the tasks. They should correct learners' scripts and provide feedback. The Inspecting Officials are expected to supervise this regularly. Each textbook has also in-built tests to test the performance of both the learners and the teachers. Language indicators for each class are also provided at the end of the book for the guidance of both the teachers and the Inspecting Officials. This will help the parents to check the progress of their wards. Attempts are also being made to prepare similar text books in other subjects from the coming years based on these sound principles. But unfortunately, our attempts to strengthen teaching/learning through good textbooks failed to yield expected results due to widespread prevalence of cheap bazaar notes (Meaning Books) prepared only with the motives of commercial gains. These books provide cheap ready-made helps by working out the tasks/activities thereby preventing students from getting/developing skills and restrict them from the pleasure of doing the workbook tasks/activities on their own.

I am sure the new series will help our learners excel in all the four language skills of English --- Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. I thank the Editors and the Reviewers for their sincere efforts in preparing the excellent materials. I also thank Dr. Manmatha Kundu, the Academic Adviser and Mr. Indramani Tripathy, the Director of ELTI under whose academic and administrative guidance the books are prepared.

Any suggestions for the improvement of the book are welcome.

Commissioner-cum-Secretary
Department of School and Mass Education,
Govt. of Odisha

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INTRODUCTION

The Secret of Language Learning

Language is mostly learned through exposure and use in meaningful contexts. While the exposure to language is mainly done through listening and reading, use is done through speaking and writing. The more one listens to a language and reads in a language, the more s/he gets exposed to it. Exposure lays the foundation of a language and also the foundation for using the same. One cannot use (speak) the language unless one has sufficiently listened to it. One cannot write in the language unless one has widely read in the language. And both the exposure and use are to be done in meaningful contexts. What one listens and reads should be useful and interesting to him/her. Similarly, what one speaks and writes should also be interesting and useful for the user. In other words, all these are to be done in contexts and the user should be involved in activities. This is the secret behind learning any language.

What implication does this have for teaching English to our learners ? First, our learners should be sufficiently exposed to English through listening. In case of acquiring mother tongue, a child listens to the language for long to be able to speak. Listening to the language lays foundation for speaking. Do we provide enough exposure to English through listening before teaching our learners to speak and write in our Odia medium schools? Certainly not. We usually tend to start teaching of English from reading and writing. This is why our learners in our Odia medium schools face difficulties in learning English. Then how to overcome such difficulties ? In Order to do this we have to change the current trend of teaching English. Instead of beginning teaching of reading and writing, we should first develop the listening and speaking skills of our learners through storytelling and TPR (Total Physical Response) activities. The current primer of English (Class III) has, therefore , been revised and rewritten with enough pre-primer activities (Storytelling , rhymes , Known English words, TPR etc.) before learners learn to read and write.

The Textbook

The class VIII English textbook has also been revised and rewritten keeping in mind the development of listening and speaking skills of our learners along with the skills of reading and writing. In this book, there is enough listening and speaking exposure provided under each lesson mainly through interesting activities. The layout of the book is as follows :