





The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) defines the Foundational Stage as a single curricular and pedagogical phase which comprises five years of flexible, multilevel, play and activity-based learning for children between 3 and 8 years of age. The National Curriculum Framework for the Foundational Stage (NCF-FS) has been developed based on the vision of NEP 2020 as a framework for guiding the various curricula for this Stage, across the country.

There has been a long tradition of inquiry both in India and other cultures on the various domains of development that have been observed in young children that are both natural and desirable. The *Panchakosha* concept in the *Taittiriya Upanishad* is one of the earliest articulations of the different domains of development of the human being. These descriptions remain relevant along with the more modern understanding that has emerged through various Sciences. Further, keeping the current realities in mind, NEP 2020 has also emphasised on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy as an ‘urgent and necessary prerequisite to learning.’

Based on these, the NCF-FS considers Physical Development, Socio-emotional and Ethical Development, Cognitive Development, Language and Literacy Development, and Aesthetic and Cultural Development as an important basis for setting Curricular Goals in the Foundational Stage. Thus, the Curricular Goals for the Foundational Stage have been derived



by giving equal consideration to the vision and details of NEP 2020, and the domains of development.

The NCF-FS describes how children at this stage learn best through play – through activity and doing. Children enjoy learning through several ways - talking, listening, using toys, working with material, painting, and drawing, singing, dancing, running, and jumping. Teachers should use all these ways to work with our children. Specifically, pedagogy at this stage will involve conversations, storytelling, toy-based learning, songs and rhymes, music and movement, arts and craft, indoor and outdoor games, spending time with nature, and field trips. Pedagogy for literacy will need to focus on oral language development, word recognition, reading, and writing. For numeracy, it will need to focus on oral math, teaching of skills, math games, and practising skills.

The content used in teaching at this Stage should be derived from children’s life experiences and reflect the cultural, geographical, and social context in which the child is developing and growing, move from familiar to unfamiliar, simple to complex, and from self to others, and accommodate the diverse interests of children. Teaching-Learning Materials that engage children in multi-sensorial activities and actively use their hands – simple toys to manipulatives for counting and numeracy, children’s books, picture books, activity books, worksheets, audio-visual materials etc. – should support learning. Textbooks should be designed specifically to achieve the Competencies as articulated for the Foundational Stage.

Jaadui Pitara

This *Jaadui Pitara* has been developed as an exemplar of content that is needed in any school for the Foundational Stage. It represents the range of content that is useful and demonstrates the sensibilities to be kept in mind while developing such content. The *Pitara* has toys, games, puzzles, puppets, posters, flashcards, story cards, playbook for students, and handbooks for teachers.



As you will discover, the content here represents what is needed to support pedagogy that will help achieve a broad range, though not the entirety, of Curricular Goals of NCF-FS, across the five developmental domains. More content and pedagogical strategies are needed to achieve all the Learning Outcomes, Competencies, and hence Curricular Goals for the Foundational Stage.

It also doesn’t represent the exhaustive set of content that is possible to be imagined and used in the Foundational Stage. There are other content that can be imagined that can achieve the same goals. It also doesn’t suggest that all pedagogy in the Foundational Stage will need such materials. As mentioned earlier, a large part of the pedagogy at this Stage will involve elements like conversations, field trips, or free play which doesn’t need specific teaching learning materials.

State education departments are encouraged to develop similar set of materials for the Foundational Stage. As in this case, any such material should be consistent with the State’s Curriculum Framework and Syllabus for the Foundational Stage which in turn is expected to draw from the guiding principles of the NCF-FS.

Digital versions of the handbooks, playbooks, posters, and flashcards are available at *Diksha* (www.diksha.gov.in) for free download. Each of the handbooks have instructions for the teachers which further describes the spirit behind such content. There is also a note that describes the use of toys in this *Jaadui Pitara*. The toys have been procured from local artisans – it is encouraged that developers of such materials procure such toys locally.

We wish all curriculum and syllabus developers, textbook writers, administrators, and most importantly teachers the very best in achieving the goals of the NCF-FS and through that a substantive part of the vision of NEP 2020.