A GUIDE FOR CHILDREN TO EXPLORE THEIR WORLD

IMAGINE!
A Guide for Children to Explore Their World

Class of 2016-17
William J. Clinton Fellowship for Service in India

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**Contributor’s Note**
The world is such a fascinating place, filled with opportunities to learn something new! Unfortunately, many people only associate learning with schools, lectures, and examinations. However, we believe that learning and education extend beyond the walls of a schoolroom. In fact, we see the world as a classroom in itself! Education is a lifelong process that starts with a simple curiosity and a means by which to explore that curiosity. This book allows a child to imagine education beyond their current spaces of formal learning interactions. Additionally, it offers creative ways to spark curiosity and explore the worlds of natural science, the environment, social science, and beyond.

The unique, hands-on educational activities within this book are designed to broaden children’s horizons and serve as windows of colourful opportunity for youngsters to develop an interest in a topic that may not be presented to them anywhere else.

The main objectives of this book are as follows:

1. To excite students about education, encourage them to interact with and question their world, and demonstrate that education comes in endless forms.

2. To emphasize that few materials are required to be able to learn something new. The activities in the book require minimal equipment or materials that can be found around the community.

3. To plant the seed of the endless learning opportunities that exist, right outside one’s door.
How to Use This Book

For the Young Reader

No matter which village, state, or country you live in, we all share this planet and call it “home.” Our earth is very special because it is one of a kind. If we don’t take care of this one, there is no other one for us to use. This book is designed so that young learners like yourself can study, enjoy, and protect our special planet, along with your friends, family, and teachers.

This book is divided into three headings: Our Natural World, Protecting Our Earth, and Our Society.

Our Natural World includes activities that will take you out of the classroom and into nature. It will ask you to look at the sky to see the sun, moon, and stars. It will ask you to inspect plants and insects, make a model of the solar system, and learn about constellations. But, most of all, it will show you how you can have fun and learn about nature at the same time.

Protecting Our Earth is based on the idea of “recycle, reuse, and reduce.” Kids like you can make a big difference in keeping the earth clean and green. This section will ask you to find ways to tell your friends, families, and communities to recycle plastic bottles. It also will show you how to reuse everyday items in fun ways instead of throwing them away. Finally, it will give you ideas about how you and your community can reduce the amount of waste you create. This will help keep the earth clean and healthy for other children in the future!
Our Society is all about how you can make a difference in your community. It explains how children are a very important part of the community and how their thoughts and feelings deserve to be heard. It will give you ideas about how to spread news around your community about all the things you have learnt in the other sections of this book. It is all about empowering you to make positive changes in your community.

The activities in this book are for you to learn some fun ways to explore and question the world around you. You can do some of the activities on your own, but others might be more fun to do with your friends, classmates, family, and teachers.

There are no right or wrong answers when doing these activities. The most important thing is that you ask questions about what you are learning. After all, the essence of education is curiosity and that can begin by simply asking “why?” So go outside, have fun while you learn about the world, and imagine how we can make it a better place to live in!

For the Facilitators
Each chapter in this book includes background information, hands-on activities, and a supplemental information section. The supplemental information section is intended to be used by a facilitator, if present, as it provides further details related to the activities. If present, a facilitator’s job would be to assist the student to carry out the activities, foster an understanding on the topic at hand, and encourage the student to ask questions. Questions are an indicator that a student is thinking critically about the topic. Questions also fuel curiosity and the desire to learn more. Furthermore, the supplemental information section can also be used by a young reader as an advanced information section, if they wish to challenge themselves and delve deeper into the activities.
Our Natural World

SPACE SCIENCE

Introduction

Just like how birds fly in the sky, humans use spaceships to fly to outer space! Where is outer space? It is the place where the sun, moon, and stars are. It is not easy to go there. You need lots of training to learn how to fly the machine that takes you to outer space. That machine is called a spacecraft!

A few people have gone to space. Some have even landed on the moon! These people are called astronauts. Rakesh Sharma, who is from Punjab, was the first Indian to go to outer space! Would you ever want to travel to space?

Left: Rakesh Sharma
Right: The spacecraft that Rakesh Sharma traveled in to go to outer space
**Background**

When you look up at the clear night sky, what do you see? Many, many stars! Each twinkling star is beautiful. But did you know that together, they can also make shapes? For thousands of years, humans have looked at the night sky and joined the stars with imaginary lines to make shapes and pictures. These are called constellations. The stars appear in the same places in the sky, so people can find their constellations every night. Below you can see two well-known constellations: Ursa Major, which means “big bear” and “Orion” who was a hunter, according to Greek stories. Notice how people imagined the image of Orion as they looked at the stars in the sky.

![Ursa Major constellation looks like a “big bear”](image1)

![Orion constellation is a Greek warrior](image2)

There are 8 planets in our **solar system** that always move around, or **orbit**, the sun. Each planet is a different colour and size! The smallest planet is Mercury. The largest planet is Jupiter, which is 300 times bigger than the planet we live on: planet Earth!
Our planet Earth has one moon. Have you ever noticed that it looks like the moon changes shape? Sometimes it is big and round and other times it is barely there at all. But, the moon itself doesn’t actually change shape! So why does it look like it is changing shape? While the Earth goes around the sun, the moon goes around the Earth.

The sun’s light shines on the surface of the moon. We can only see the part of the moon that is lit up by the sun’s light. And as the moon moves around the earth, we see different amounts of light on the moon, so it looks like the moon changes shape. From one bright white circle to a thin crescent, this pattern of shapes of the moon that we see is called the phases of the moon.

Activities
1. **Make a Constellation:** Look at the stars at night. Choose about 6-10 stars that are close to each other. Draw those 6–10 stars on a piece of paper, trying to draw them in the same positions as you see them in the sky. Now, create your own constellations by connecting the dots into the shape of anything you can imagine. Name your constellation and try to find it each night in the sky, before you go to sleep!
2. **Day and Night Sky**: During the daytime, draw what the sky looks like. Include as many details as you can. Do you see clouds? Birds? The sun? Then in the night, draw the sky again. What differences do you see between your day and night sky pictures?

3. **Moon Phase Diary**: Take a piece of paper and set it up so it looks like this:

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   Every night, look for the moon in the sky. Then, draw what the moon looks like by colouring one circle on your paper. Label that drawing with the date. 5/3/17

   Do this every day for about four weeks. Next, look at your drawings in order of each day. What patterns do you see in the changing shape of the moon? Compare your drawings to the picture of the phases of the moon in the Background section of this book. Does it look similar? Are there any differences?

4. **Solar System Mobile**: Collect 9 objects to represent the parts of our solar system (plastic bottles, rocks, your friends—be creative!). Label each object to represent one of the 8 planets and one to represent the sun. Then find a creative way to display your planets in the correct order from the sun. Here are some ideas:
5. **Moon Phases Demonstration:** You can do an experiment to see why the moon changes phases as it travels around the Earth. First gather your materials: a light source (light bulb, candle, etc.), a light-coloured sphere (round rock, small ball, round fruit), and a dark room. Next, place the light source in the middle of the dark room. Pretend that the light source is the sun, the light-coloured sphere is the moon, and you are the Earth. Next, follow these instructions to see the phases of the moon:

- **a. New moon:** Stand facing the light source, hold the sphere in your hand, and stretch your arm straight out in front of you. Raise your arm enough so you can also see the sphere and the light source. Look at your “moon” and notice how the sunlight is only shining on the opposite side. The side that you see is dark, so from Earth, the moon cannot be seen. This is called a **new moon**.

- **b. Waxing Crescent Moon:** Keep your arm extended in front of your body and slowly turn your body counterclockwise. As you turn slowly, notice how you see a crescent that starts out thin and gets bigger as the moon moves farther away from the sun. Since the crescent is getting bigger, this is called a **waxing crescent**.

- **c. Full Moon:** Stop turning when your back is facing the light source. Now the moon is directly opposite the sun, as viewed from Earth. Make sure you hold the moon high enough so the sunlight is not blocked by your head. The moon should be fully bright. This is a **full moon**.

- **d. Waning Crescent Moon:** Keep turning counterclockwise. The crescent will become smaller until you finally return to a new moon. Because the crescent is getting smaller, this is called a **waning crescent**.
Follow-up questions:

1. It is common for people to create stories about the constellations that they see in the night sky. Make up your own story about the constellation you created and tell your story to your friends. It can be about queens, soldiers, farmers, animals, or anything you can imagine!

2. Would you want to become an astronaut? Which planet would you want to travel to? Why?

Supplemental Information:

The objective of this chapter is to allow students to look beyond the scope of the Earth and be introduced to the wonders of the universe. The activities should encourage students to observe aspects of the night sky that can be seen with the naked eye and to notice the patterns that people have transcribed for centuries. Students should also be encouraged to look beyond the patterns we have listed and make out shapes of their own in the night sky.

Our solar system is made up of eight planets that orbit the sun. The planets closer to the sun, also known as terrestrial planets (Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars), are smaller and made mostly of rock and metal. The outer planets, also known as gas giants (Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune), are much larger and made mostly of hydrogen, helium and other gases. All of these planets orbit around the sun, in a counterclockwise manner. The sun itself is a star, just like all the stars that one can see in the night sky. The reason that it appears so big and bright compared to the other stars we see, is that the sun is relatively closer to earth, compared to other stars, so we receive more light and heat from the sun.

Now let’s focus on our planet: the Earth. In addition to orbiting the sun, it rotates on a tilted axis, which is an imaginary line that goes through the top and bottom of the Earth. Many natural phenomena are caused by such astronomical reasons. For example, the tilt of the Earth causes the seasons to change. Also, one year is defined by the amount of time it takes for the Earth to fully travel around the sun once. Finally, a day is the amount of time it takes for the Earth to complete one rotation around its axis.
WILDLIFE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Introduction
We approached very close to the happy plants
Astonished to see the nature’s wonder.
Bottom layers have shed the flower all around the sand
Whereas mid layer flower blossomed
In number to the magnificence
Perfume radiating, beauty all around
Honey bees filling the flower bed, mutual love flowing
Intoxicated with the scene, we looked at the top layer
Ring of the buds about to blossom
And new layers at their birth.

This is a part of a poem called “The Life Tree” by Abdul Kalam, India’s 11th president. What do you think it means?

Background:
Humans, trees, mosquitos, elephants, and flowering plants are all living organisms! All living organisms need a source of energy, which is found in food. The fox eats the rabbit. The rabbit eats the carrots. And the carrot uses energy from the sun to make its own food. This is called a food chain.
When many food chains are put together, this is called a **food web**.

All living organisms interact with each other and their environment to live. The **environment** is made up of all the non-living things, such as the river, the soil, and the air. The **ecosystem** is made up of the environment plus all the living plants and animals.

The tiger is a **predator**! He eats the deer. What other animals are predators?

The deer is a **prey**! He is eaten by the tiger. What other animals are prey?
Activities:

1. **Food chains**: Every day, on a piece of paper, write down all the animals you see. If you do not know the name of the animal you see, try to describe its size, colour, sounds, behavior, and draw a sketch. Once you have 5–10 animals in your list, see if you can create a food chain using some of the animals. Draw the animals in a line and draw an arrow from one animal pointing to its prey. You might have to include some plants in your food chain as well! How many food chains can you make? Here are two examples:

2. **Nature Museum Exhibit**: Gather your friends and take some time to collect interesting things that you find outside, such as rocks, leaves, pebbles, feathers, and sticks. Then, on small pieces of paper, make labels for each item and write a few sentences to describe it. Select a day and location for your museum exhibit and display your museum pieces however you like. Invite your community and friends to see your exhibit!

3. **Planting Experiment**: Let’s see what kinds of seeds will grow! First, select a location where you wish to plant your seeds, either in your community or school yard or in old pots or cups. Next, you must find seeds. Go outside and find anything that you think might grow—be
creative! You can look for seeds or beans that you might find in a kitchen, such as coriander seeds, mustard seeds, chickpeas, black eyed peas, and mung beans. You can even try planting the “eyes” of potatoes, the seeds from a tomato, or the green sprouts from onions.

Finally, try looking outside near trees or plants to see if you can find anything that looks like a seed. Once you have 2-3 seeds, write a short description and make a drawing of each type of seed. Then make small holes in the soil, place the seeds inside, cover them with soil. Make sure you know where you planted each type of seed. You can make labels or place rocks around each planting section.

Give your seeds some water every day. Over time, see what grows. Did all the seeds that you planted sprout? What do the new plants look like? Do they have flowers, leaves, stems? Draw each of the plants that grew next to your initial drawings of the seeds that you planted.

4. **Magnifying Eyes:** Have you ever looked closely at an insect’s wings, the veins of a leaf, or the rough bark of a tree? Find a natural object and look at it closely. What do you see? Draw an up-close, or “magnified” section of what you see.

5. **Natural History:** Talk to an elder and ask them what types of plants and animals they saw during their childhood. Is there anything that they do not see anymore? Why do you think the types of plants and animals that you see in one place change over time?

6. **Animal “Antakshari” Game:** Gather a group of friends for an exciting game! Each person will take turns saying the name of an animal that starts with the last letter of the previous animal. For example, one person can say “Elephant” so the next person might say “Tiger.” Once an animal is said, it cannot be repeated. How long you can play before you run out of animals?
Follow-up questions

1. How do you feel when you are outside in nature? What is one thing you like about it and one thing you do not like about it?

2. What kind of bird calls do you hear often? Can you imitate them?

3. Other than food, what other things do you think animals need to live? For example, what do they need to breathe?

Supplemental Information

The objective of this chapter is to encourage students to interact with nature and ask questions about their daily observations. A simple question about why something happens is enough to spark a greater curiosity for the world around them.

This chapter focuses on ecology, which deals with the relationship between living things and their environment. After learning that animals must eat other plants or animals to gain energy, a student might wonder how plants get their energy. Plants can make their own food, using the energy from the sun in a process called photosynthesis. During photosynthesis, the plant uses carbon dioxide (a gas that we breathe out), water, and sunlight to produce glucose, which is a type of sugar that the plant uses for food. In this process, the plant releases oxygen, which is the gas that we breathe in.

General process of how plants use the sun to make food.
Without being explicit, the *Planting Experiment* activity exposes children to the basics of the scientific method. The **scientific method** is a process by which scientists try to find answers to their questions. The basic scientific method follows a series of steps. Examples related to the Planting Experiment activity are included.

1. **Ask a question:** Which of the selected seeds will grow into plants?
2. **Run an experiment:** Plant the seeds, give them water, and wait to see which ones sprout.
3. **Write down observations:** Write down detailed notes about all observations. For example, which seeds sprouted first? What do the plants look like? Do they have leaves, flowers, etc.? Did any seeds not grow?
4. **Make a conclusion:** Read over all your notes and see which of the seeds that you planted actually grew. If something didn’t grow, why do you think it didn’t grow? Also think of ways you could perform the same experiment again to improve it.

Another important theme in this chapter is the idea of a “cycle.” All living organisms are interconnected. Nothing ever completely disappears, but instead changes from one form to another. This keeps happening constantly in a cycle. A food web is the best example of this. For example, the deer eats grass and the lion eats the deer. But what happens to the lion? Once it dies it is either eaten by **scavengers** (animals that eat dead animals, such as vultures) or **decomposers**, which are microscopic bacteria that eat up dead matter and turn it into soil. The soil then helps the grass grow, and the cycle starts again. In the end, all **organic matter**, or anything that was once living, will break into small pieces and recycle back into the earth.
Protecting Our Earth

RECYCLING
Introduction

Ashok there are many plastic bottles lying around the village square.
Yes Fatima, and don’t you think it makes the place look ugly?

Yes Ashok. And also plastic waste is bad for the environment. But what can we do about it?
We can make waste bins! Then we can place them near the village square, the panchayat house and the school.
Our friends and us can then tell our community to put their trash into our trash bins!

And why not we collect the plastic and recycle it!

Wonderful idea! Let us go to Mary, Santosh and Selvamani and tell them this. Then we can tell our elder or teacher, and we can organize a cleanliness drive.

We can hold it on Earth Day: a special day each year that reminds us to keep earth clean!

Great idea! Let’s do something to “Protect our Earth”!
Background

Littering is when someone throws waste material on the floor instead of in a waste bin. This is not good for the environment. Littering leads to pollution, makes the water impure, and even spreads diseases! Some waste materials can be recycled. Recycling means turning old waste products into something new and usable. For example, you can sell old plastic bottles to a kabadiwala and he will sell the bottles to a recycling factory. At the factory, the plastic bottle will be broken down and remade into a new plastic item.

This is good for the earth because when you recycle, less waste is placed in the landfill and burned.
Activity:

*Recycling:* Gather old boxes, buckets, or bins. These will be your recycling bins! Label the bins “Recycle: plastic, clean paper, glass, and metal only.” Set up the recycling bins at the village square, your home, or your school. Ask your friends and family to help! Then try to find the nearest kabadiwalla in the village.

Ask him/her the rates at which he/she buys each type of material. Think of how you can make people in your community throw their recyclable waste in the recycle bins. Once the boxes are full, take them to the kabadiwalla and sell the items. Set up a piggy bank for the money received from the kadadiwalla and use it for community development activities like buying books or art supplies for you and your friends!

When we burn waste in order to get rid of it, we release dangerous chemicals into the air, which can cause air pollution and make it more difficult to breathe.
Supplemental Information

Recycling is a process in which a product is taken, broken down, and remade into a new product. This is done in a special factory. Mostly only plastics, paper, metal, and glass can be recycled in this manner. The system of recycling in India is very much driven by the private sector, specifically by scrap dealers or kabadiwallas. Scrap dealers purchase recyclable items from people, sort them based on the type of material, and then sell them to a recycling center. In the recycling center, the materials are broken down and formed into new items. For example, in a plastic recycling center, plastic bottles are shredded and washed. The resulting plastic pieces are then used to make other items, such as fibers used inside of pillows, plastic carry bags, or other plastic items. By recycling, each item gets a “new life” instead of going to a landfill. That’s why recycling is one way to keep the earth clean.
REUSING

Introduction:

Background

Just like recycling, reusing is another way to get rid of waste without throwing it in a landfill. Reusing means taking something old and gives it a new purpose. For example, an old bottle can be a new pencil holder!

Activity:

Reusing: Go around the community with a box to collect old plastic bottles and used plastic chai cups. Find some art supplies, like glue, colours, scissors, old newspapers, and thread. Take the old plastic bottles and create pieces of art or useful household or school items. You can even use these materials to do Activity #4 in the Space Science chapter.
REDUCING

Introduction

Plastic waste is bad for the environment and human health. I wonder why people still use it.

We need to learn to reduce our use of plastics!

I think because it is cheap and easy to use, but many people do not know about the bad impacts of using too much plastic.

Background

Recycle, Reuse, and Reduce! Reducing means using fewer things so that you throw away fewer things. A lot of waste, such as plastic ends up in the ocean. If sea animals eat this, they get sick and can die.
Trash can also pollute our drinking water. Plastic takes more than 450 years to break down into smaller pieces and “go away.”

If we keep using plastic, there will be so much on earth, that it will pollute our oceans and land!

That’s why it is important to use less plastic. You can do this by replacing it with re-usable items. For example, instead of using many plastic bags, you can use a cloth bag.
Activity

Reducing: Go with your friends around your village and ask each home how many kilograms of plastic containers, bags, and bottles they throw away each week. Tell them that guessing is fine. After you have answers from ten different households, draw a bar graph showing how much waste just those 10 families created. Here is an example bar graph: Talk about how much waste is produced with your community. Show them your bar graph! Tell them about how to reduce plastic use in your community.

Follow-up Questions

1. When you put waste in a bin, where do you think it ends up? Ask some elders and your friends to find out.
2. How does littering affect your community and nature?
3. Why is it better to put waste in the bin instead of throwing it on the ground?
4. Why is it important to use less plastic?

Supplemental Information:

Reducing is the best way to keep the earth clean. Reducing means using fewer resources. Therefore, if you use less, you produce less waste. It is best to try to reduce your use of items that are difficult to recycle or reuse. For example, thin black carry bags are often not recycled and are too delicate to reuse. Therefore it is better to just not use them in the first place or reduce your use of them. These plastic carry bags can be replaced by a cloth bag, which can be used over and over again, helping to cut down on how many plastic bags are used.
Our Society

CHANGE MAKING

Introduction

When there is a problem in your community, you have the power to fix it, no matter how young or old you are! Just as Gandhi ji said, you can make a positive change in your world.

“Be the change that you wish to see in the world” - Gandhi ji

Background

Are there any problems in your community? Do you wish things were done a little differently? If these problems make you unhappy, there are probably other people who are unhappy about the problem, too. Why not talk about the problem with your friends and classmates? Together, you can try to solve the problem!

The first step to fixing the problem is to talk about it with others, so that more people learn about the problem. When you share information about the problem with others, they may want to help create a solution. This is called raising awareness.

Let’s see how a little girl named Sonal raised awareness in her own village.
A long time ago, a young boy was electrocuted by wires that were hanging above his street. This made his friend, Sonal, very upset.

She decided to do something about it. Sonal said to the adults and children in the village, “We should do something to make sure no one is hurt by the wires again!”

The children in her community agreed to take action. They all worked together to make maps of their communities and mark all the unsafe areas on the maps.
Then they took their maps to the District Collector’s Office to ask the local government to help fix some of the problems. Their idea worked! The local government listened and made changes to make the roads safer. By raising awareness of an important issue, Sonal and her friends fixed a problem in their community.

Activities

Think of an issue in your neighborhood that you would like to change. For example, maybe people are dumping waste into a nice lake, people do not wash their hands, or there are many dangerous electrical wires that can hurt people. Why do you think these problems are there and what can you do to change them? A campaign is an organized and creative way of raising awareness about a problem to try to fix it.
The following activities are ways to hold a campaign to fix the problem in your community. You can do these activities by yourself or with some friends. But remember, many voices joined together will reach more ears!

1. Write a Newsletter: A newsletter is a document that gives people information about a topic like you find in a newspaper.

You can write a short newsletter about the problem you see in your community. First, go around the community and ask different people to answer the questions below. Write down what they say so you do not forget!

a. What is the problem?
b. Who is being affected?
c. When does the problem happen?
d. Where does the problem happen?
e. Why does the problem happen?
f. How does the problem happen?
g. How does the problem make you feel?
h. Does the problem affect your life?
i. What do you wish would happen differently?
j. Do you have any ideas for how to fix the problem?
Then use this information to write a story about the problem. Draw pictures that illustrate the problem and include them in your newsletter.

Finally, share your newsletter with your friends, parents, neighbors, classmates, or anyone who might help to solve the problem.

2. **Make a Flyer:** A flyer is a piece of paper that has information and pictures about a certain topic. It is usually colourful and easy to understand. You can give flyers to many people to share the information with them. First, find a few pieces of paper that you can use to make flyers. Then draw a picture and write a few lines about the problem that you are trying to fix. Finally, give your flyers to people in your community to teach them about the problem.

3. **Tell a story at a community event:** Is there a holiday coming up? A community festival or other function where a lot of people will gather? This is a great place to spread your message about the problem and how to fix it! Before the event, think of a story you can tell about the problem. It can be about you or someone you know. Or it can be completely imagined, like a little monkey who wants to have safe places for children to play in your community. Practice your story, then tell it at the event!
4. **Act out a play:** Gather a few friends and act out a play to raise awareness about the problem. For example, if the problem is “having too much trash on the streets,” you can make a play about how the trash attracted more mosquitoes and a child got sick from a mosquito bite. Make sure to end the play with an example of how you can solve the problem. You can perform the play anywhere where you have a large audience of people who will watch the play!

![Illustration of children acting out a play](image)

**Follow-up questions**

1. How did you feel when people listened to you about the problem and your solutions?
2. What did you learn while talking to people about the problem?
3. In what other ways can you share information with people to solve a problem?
4. Do you think that you made any changes in people’s attitudes or behaviors? How does that make you feel?
5. What can you do next? How do you keep trying to solve the problem?
Supplemental Information

The purpose of this chapter is to empower children and teach them that their opinions matter. The activities in this chapter can be used to teach children about critical thinking, problem solving, empathy, and leadership. Simply talking about an issue is the first step to making a change. Sometimes all it takes is working with the community to establish a set of standards on a social issue together. In other cases, change may only happen after actively asking authorities or government officials for help.

After completing these activities, a student may wish to take their activism further. They can do this by asking their elders or teachers to help them to set up a meeting with other community members. At the meeting they can talk about the issue that they want to fix and discuss possible solutions. It is very important for adults to support the children’s efforts, as this will help to motivate them to keep working hard for their cause.

Ultimately raising awareness is one of the hardest and most important things to do. It requires a lot of talking, listening, and continuously approaching people to get a message across. Through these activities, a student will gain confidence in saying what they believe and working with others to reach a mutually satisfactory compromise.
Contributor’s Note

The following William J. Clinton Fellows for Service in India made this book possible:

Avan Antia served her fellowship in Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu, working at the Madras Crocodile Bank Trust. She worked as the chief editor for the book and focused on formulating the “Wildlife and the Environment” chapter. Education, specifically in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) fields, has always been a true passion of hers. This book is inspired by the experiences that she shared with other Fellows at the AIF Thematic Conference on Education, as well as the time she spent with school groups and camp students at the Madras Crocodile Bank Trust. She genuinely believes that every child has the potential to learn something new and that hands-on education serves as an endless source of fruitful entertainment.

Audra Bass served her fellowship in Kotagiri, Tamil Nadu, working with both Keystone Foundation and Last Forest Enterprise. She worked as an editor for the book by helping create the “Space Science” chapter and being a part of the broader discussion for the contents of the book. She is very excited for kids to receive copies of the book and hopes that it will encourage them to explore and become more active in their world, whether that’s on the streets of their home or across the globe and beyond!

Cal Brackin served his fellowship in Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu, working at the theater arts school Kattaikkuttu Sangam. He provided the drawings, figures, and illustrations in the book. With his artistic skills, he made this book a creative and fun resource that kids will want to read. He hopes to show kids that art is just as powerful as words when it comes to sharing ideas.

Caleb Christian served his fellowship in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, working with the American India Foundation’s Learning and Migration Program (LAMP). He worked as an editor for the book, specifically aiming to create a cohesive tone and structure for the various sections. He also provided insight on how the book would be used by students and facilitators in the field, based on his experiences working with LAMP and LAMP-affiliated organizations in Gujarat. He hopes that this book will inspire children to think beyond the classroom about how they can get involved in, empower, and change their communities.
Maura Deignan served her fellowship in Bhavnagar, Gujarat, working with Shaishav. She worked to develop the “Our Society” chapter, and also worked as an editor for the book. In Bhavnagar, she focused on empowering children to share their opinions on issues that affect their lives. She consistently worked on creating social change through child rights initiatives, from which she drew the inspiration for the activities in “Our Society.” She hopes this book will encourage more children to be socially active in their communities and serve as a resource for them to think of all the ways they can explore the world around them.

Palak Dudani served her fellowship in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, working with Medha. As a design researcher, she loves to ask questions, tinker with things, and solve problems. She worked on the visual layouting and presentation of the content to make it easy to read and use. She hopes that this book will help young minds ask more questions and go on adventures in search for mysterious answers.

Denise Fernandes served her fellowship in the village of Kotri, Rajasthan, working with a local grassroots organisation, Manthan. She worked as an editor to create the chapter “Protecting our Earth.” Environmental education has always been her passion and she hopes that through this book, children in rural spaces can imagine and dream of creating a better world, society, and environment.
Go explore your world!