

QUALITIES OF GOOD TEXTBOOK

A textbook serves as a guide for a teacher and student as well. Its content decides the destination of the both. To my mind, a textbook provides foundation for the instructional process. This also motivates the teachers and the students for instruction and learning. Here are some established and acknowledged definitions of a textbook. A textbook are a basic book used in a particular course of study. A textbook is a book that is developed keeping in view particular curricular objectives, particular level of education and students possessing specific cognitive abilities. The book that is developed for the purpose of seeking similarities in content and instructional activities organized for the students of various educational institutions. The salient characteristics of a textbook are mentioned in the following lines:-

Conformity with the objectives of curriculum:-

A standard textbook conforms to the pre-determined objectives of curriculum. There must be coordination between the content of textbook and the objectives of curriculum. To me, every textbook is the most significant source of obtaining the curricular objectives. If it fails in achieving the aims of curriculum, it will definitely be regarded that there is no agreement and relationship between the content and the curricular objectives.

Harmony with national ideology:-

Every nation leads life according to its philosophy of life which is reflected in the system of education. This very philosophy of life is presented in the textbook contents so that the new generation may get acquainted with it. A textbook is developed in the light of the segments of the national philosophy of life. All aspects of a textbook mirror the national ideology. It is obligatory for the learned writers to provide these necessary services in terms of the development of textbooks for the attainment of the broad objectives of education.

Logical organization:-

A logical organization can be observed in the content, skills and other activities selected for the textbook. The flow of information and skills should be from simple to complicated, know to the unknown, easy to difficult and from abstract to concrete. The content of the textbook should be integrated, balanced, sequenced and harmonized. It should not be disintegrated and parted. All concepts presented in the textbook must be interlinked and logically connected so that they may assist in understanding one another.

Conformity with the capabilities of the learners:-

A standard textbook must be harmonized with the interests, needs, psychological demands and mental level of the student. In this situation, the students will take keen interest in the educative and instructional process. Otherwise, the educative process will end in nothing. If the textbook content is not in accordance with the psychological needs and cognitive level of the students, the students will exhibit fatigue and disinterest which will lead to wastage of academic and educational sources. A good textbook attracts the students in many ways if it is



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developed according to the established principles.

Unbiased content:-

The content and other learning experiences of a good textbook are unbiased and objective. There should be no amalgamation of the personal aspirations and attachments of the writers in the contents of the textbook. The textbook should be free from all those academic contents which hurt particular class of the individuals or a school of thought. The content of the textbook must address the whole mankind.

Comprehensiveness and simplicity:-

Comprehensiveness and simplicity are the two primary traits of a textbook. The content of the textbook should be simple in nature and in presentation but should be comprehensive in impression and effect. The content should cover all the aspects of human life. In this way, the comprehensive aims of developing the personality of the individual shall be obtained. It is necessary for the developer of the textbook to avoid from irrelevant material but they must keep in mind the principle of comprehensiveness and simplicity during the development of the textbook.

Real-life experiences:-

A good textbook makes the individuals aware of the experiences of real life. Curriculum is concerned with life and life is a reality. The experiences of life are the precious heritage of mankind. A textbook must consist of the human heritage. This heritage is transmitted to the students in terms of a textbook. Education is life and this life is presented in the textbook. In this regard, it seems necessary that the students should be acquainted with the truths of life so they may solve the problems of life.

Presentation of the content:-

A psychological and logical order is observed in the presentation of a textbook. First of all, the topics are described and thereafter, such topics are mentioned in the textbook. The division of the content into topics and sub-topics facilitate the instruction and learning process. This division enables the teacher to teach a topic under various headings. On the other hand, it brings about facilitation in learning of a topic for the students.

External impression:-

The external impression of a good textbook is always impressive and absorbing. The external impression includes printing on good quality paper, attractive title, appropriate volume, reasonable price and easily availability in the market. The external impression of a textbook matters much for a lay man. It is quite possible that a student begins to dislike a subject because of the unimpressive title of a textbook. It is also possible that a student cannot get



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benefit of a textbook because of its high price.

Objectivity:-

Objectivity refers to a tendency of viewing things on the basis of external truths and unbiased findings. It totally denies the personal desires and wills. A good textbook is marked with the feature of objectivity. The content of a textbook should be the spokesman of the external realities. All the content of a textbook should be verifiable. A textbook, lacking the quality of objectivity, cannot produce the students which the education system expects.

Explanation of the content:-

The difficult points of a textbook are explained in terms of pictures, sketches, tables, concrete examples and diagrams. The use of these explanatory tools can bring about better instructional results. The students become able to understand the immaterial concepts presented in the textbook. The writers must be careful in the development of explanatory tools. They should keep the social values and curricular objectives during the development of these explanatory tools.

Besides the above mentioned qualities followings are some other features of a textbook:-

1. The appearance of the textbook should be appealing with an attractive cover page.
2. The paper used in the textbook should be of superior quality.
3. The printing should be bold and easily readable.
4. The binding of the book should be strong and durable.
5. The price should be moderate.
6. It should have been written in accordance with the aims and objectives of teaching the subject in that particular class.
7. It should be prepared according to prescribed syllabus and every aspect of the syllabus should be adequately covered.
8. It should be written by qualified, experienced and competent teachers of mathematics or a committee of experts constituted for the purpose.
9. It should be written in simple and easily understandable language and the presentation should be within the grasp of the pupils.
10. The style and vocabulary used should be suitable to the age group of students for whom the book is written.
11. It should relate classroom learning to the real life needs and physical and social environments of the learners.
12. It should provide adequate opportunities to motivate the students to solve problems, by presenting an adequate number of worked out problems and problems that reflect daily life situations.
13. It should foster the right attitude towards self-study and self-reliance among pupils by suggesting project work, field work and laboratory work.

14. It should make provision for recapitulation of the subject taught in previous classes.
15. The new development and invention in the field of English should find their place in the textbook.
16. It should facilitate the use of analytic, synthetic, inductive, deductive, problem-solving and heuristic approaches to teaching.
17. It should provide accurate and up-to-date content. It should organize the content in the increasing order of difficulty.
18. The content should have a direct, practical and social utility value.
19. It should carefully organize the subject matter with reference to the logical as well as the psychological considerations which make teaching effective.
20. The presentation of the subject matter must be attractive and interesting with appropriate illustrations in terms of pictures, diagrams and figures. The diagrams used in the text book should be easily recognizable and geometric constructions should be in proportion to the measurements prescribed by the problem.
21. It should use the terms and symbols which are popular and internationally accepted. All the terms, concepts and principles used in the text should be clearly and accurately stated and defined.
22. It should provide for individual differences. It should meet the needs of students of varying abilities, interests and attitudes.
23. It should stimulate initiative and originality of the students. It should give well-graded exercises at the end of every topic to satisfy the needs of all types of students.
24. It should contain some difficulty problems or exercises to challenge the gifted students.
25. It should contain sufficient provision for revision, practice and review. It should satisfy the demands of examination.

On the ground of above description, it may be said that a good textbook must contain many qualities to be considered as a good book for study.