



Reimagining English Language Education at the Middle Stage: A Comparative Analysis of Odisha's Jasmine Textbook Series (Classes VI, VII & VIII) in the Context of NEP 2020

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Abstract

Odisha's new textbooks JASMINE for Classes VI, VII and VIII arrive at a crucial point in the restructuring of school education under the 5+3+3+4 pattern. Since these three classes form the middle stage, the books deserve to be read together rather than as separate readers. This article examines how the three textbooks imagine English teaching for early adolescents in the context of NEP 2020, NCF-SE 2023 and SCF-SE 2025. The analysis is based on the cover pages, forewords, 'About the Book' sections, contents pages, units, selected lessons, activities, vocabulary support, visuals and value-related tasks. Across the three books, English is presented through fables, friendship, nature, humour, dreams, travel, culture, science, environment, courage and curiosity. The activities that are repeated at the end of every activity (Let us discuss, Let us think and reflect, Let us listen, Let us speak, Let us write and Let us explore) indicate a move away from a reading-answer model and towards a participatory language classroom. The article asserts that meaningfully, the series provides an opportunity for LSRW development, values, cultural rootedness and inclusion, measurable skill balance, contextual vocabulary, and literary appreciation, but with the need for oral language practice, teacher preparation and classroom feasibility, and local diversity to be strengthened.

Keywords: Odisha New Textbook-JASMINE; NEP 2020; Middle Stage; NCF-SE 2023; SCF-SE-2025, Content analysis; LSRW.

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I. Introduction

The three new books for Classes VI, VII and VIII, when juxtaposed with one another, reveal a conscious effort towards rethinking English at the middle stage. English is not just a collection of prose passages, poems and exercises in the books. They introduce children to folk tales, friendship, nature, humour, travelling, scientific curiosity, sports, values, culture, brave lives and communication in everyday life. The first clue to the curricular shift is in the titles of the units themselves: Fables and Folk Tales in Class VI, Learning Together in Class VII and Wit and Wisdom in Class VIII.

The uploaded books identify themselves as 2026 tryout editions of Jasmine, prepared for Odisha under the School and Mass Education Department with SCERT and OSEPA involvement. Their introductory pages link the books with NEP 2020, NCF-SE 2023 and SCF-SE 2025. The forewords repeatedly describe Jasmine as more than a textbook: it is presented as a window into the linguistic, cultural and literary world of children, with emphasis on listening, speaking, reading and writing in a meaningful way. The 'About the Book' sections also refer to curricular goals, competencies, learning outcomes, real-life communication, aesthetic appreciation, literary forms and basic linguistic awareness^{[1], [2] [3]}.

The middle stage in the 5+3+3+4 structure is a sensitive period for language development. Children are no longer beginners in schooling, yet they are still building confidence in reading, speaking, writing, reasoning and self-expression. A textbook for this stage must therefore do more than offer texts for examination. It should

help learners observe, ask, discuss, listen, infer, narrate, imagine, write, compare and connect language with the world around them. This article reads the three Jasmine textbooks from that concern.

The purpose of the paper is not to celebrate the books only because they are new. Nor is it to dismiss them merely because they are official textbooks. The aim of the paper is not to applaud the books simply because they are new. It is an attempt to look at how the series designs English teaching in Classes VI, VII and VIII, what pedagogical directions it opens and what are the areas that still need to be looked at with greater depth before the books can be used to implement the NEP vision in real classrooms.

II. Policy and Curricular Background

NEP 2020 calls for a paradigm change from rote learning to overall development, conceptual learning, sensitivity to multilingualism, learning through experience, creativity, ethical awareness, inclusion and rootedness in Indian knowledge systems^[4]. This focus is extended to curricular language in NCF-SE 2023 through a focus on competencies, learning outcomes, meaningful assessment, and classroom participation^[5]. The three books of the Jasmine series fit into this curricular discussion.

The 'About the Book' sections throughout the series are particularly significant as they describe five curricular objectives in the area of independent reading comprehension, summarising, writing thoughts and experiences, effective communication and literary appreciation and basic linguistic awareness. These objectives are not mere statements of intent. They offer a way of evaluating how well the books enable the use of English as a means of communication and reflection/expression, and how well they return to the older patterns of explanation and answer-writing.

The books also repeatedly speak about Odisha's cultural heritage, local knowledge systems and the Indian Knowledge System. This is significant in a state-school setting where English can be easily perceived as being culturally removed. The Jasmine series tries to bridge that gap by starting with *Bande Utkala Janani*, the Indian stories including local and national contexts, and by incorporating values and lived experiences into English lessons.

III. Rationale of the Study

A comparative study of the three books is required since the middle stage as per NEP 2020 is Classes VI, VII and VIII. One class, one picture only. A series-level reading reveals the extent to which themes, skills, activities and values develop over the stage or are repeated.

The second is the relevance of the classroom. In many schools in Odisha, the textbook is the most trusted source of guidance for teaching and the primary source of English input. The textbook reading content is what teachers use to plan reading, explanation, vocabulary, activities, writing and assessment. Thus, an analysis of the books is relevant to the classroom practice.

The third one is academic. New state-level textbooks under NEP 2020 should be systematically documented. These books are not just teaching resources but also early evidence of how national and state curriculum reform is infiltrating subject classrooms.

IV. Review of Related Literature

The analysis of textbooks has long been employed to comprehend the selection and organization of school knowledge. According to Apple (1992)^[6], textbooks are related to cultural and political decisions and Pingel (2010)^[7] demonstrates that textbook research can shed light on the representation of values, identity and citizenship prior to children. Here, these arguments are relevant because the teaching of English is not just what is being taught, but also the teaching of certain cultural, courageous, natural, scientific, gender, national and social behaviour ideas by Jasmine.

Textbooks in language education are frequently used as a syllabus, a practice book and a classroom guide simultaneously. Cunningsworth (1995)^[8] and Richards (2001)^[9] state that good language textbooks should offer meaningful input, a range of activities, progression, learner relevance and classroom usability. Tomlinson (2011)^[10] also states that materials are effective if they are able to engage learners emotionally and cognitively and not as a passive recipient of information.

Content analysis is useful in this context because it allows the researcher to examine not only the explicit lessons but also the activities, visuals, value messages, genre choices and silences of a textbook. Krippendorff (2018)^[11] and Schreier (2012)^[12] stress systematic categories and transparent interpretation. The present paper follows this approach, but it keeps the discussion close to the actual books so that the analysis does not remain abstract.

V. Research Gap

Existing discussions on NEP 2020 often remain at the level of policy intention. Much less attention is given to how newly prepared state textbooks actually organise language learning at the classroom level. The three Jasmine books for Classes VI, VII and VIII provide a useful corpus for such analysis because they cover the complete middle stage.

Previous single-book analyses can show the strengths and gaps of a particular class textbook, but they cannot fully show continuity across the stage. This paper addresses that gap by examining the three books together in relation to thematic progression, language skills, pedagogy, values, culture, Indian Knowledge System, gender sensitivity, inclusion and classroom feasibility.

VI. Objectives of the Study

- To analyse the structure and thematic progression of the Jasmine textbooks for Classes VI, VII and VIII.
- To examine how the books reflect the broad curricular vision of NEP 2020, NCF-SE 2023 and SCF-SE 2025.
- To study the treatment of listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary, grammar and exploratory learning across the series.
- To identify the values, life skills, cultural elements, Indian Knowledge System references and social messages embedded in the books.
- To examine representation of gender, disability, local identity, national diversity and inclusion.
- To identify strengths, limitations and classroom implications for English teaching at the middle stage.

VII. Research Questions

- How are the three Jasmine textbooks organised thematically across Classes VI, VII and VIII?
- What picture of English teaching at the middle stage emerges from the three books?
- How do the books support LSRW, vocabulary, grammar and language awareness?
- What values, cultural meanings and life skills are visible in the selected lessons and activities?
- How do the books address gender sensitivity, inclusion, Indian Knowledge System and local/national identity?
- What areas require strengthening for classroom implementation and future textbook revision?

VIII. Methodology

Qualitative content analysis with comparative documentary coding is used in the paper. The main sources are the three tryout editions of the Jasmine English textbooks for Classes VI, VII and VIII published by the School and Mass Education Department, Government of Odisha in 2026 (SMED, 2026a, 2026b, 2026c)^{[1] [2] [3]}.

The cover pages, publication information, forewords, 'About the Book' sections, contents pages, five thematic units of each book, lesson titles, activity headings, vocabulary support, listening and speaking sections, writing tasks, exploratory activities and selected illustrations were all analysed. Classroom observation and teacher/student interviews were not conducted. Hence, it does not examine the actual classroom results of the books, but rather the possibilities of curriculum and pedagogy in the books.

The reading was done at four levels. The books were initially read class-wise to find themes and lesson patterns. All three books were then combined to track development in the intermediate years. Then, activities were coded under language skills, pedagogical mode and cognitive demand. Lastly, the signs of values, cultural elements, gender, and inclusion were observed. Where the books do not give a directly countable indication, exact percentages are avoided. The tables are thus analytical matrices and not statistical statements.

IX. Corpus Description and Structural Profile

All three textbooks have a similar design, each book is divided into five thematic units, and the majority of units are based on three literary or informational texts. This provides the series with a tangible framework and enables a gradual progression from simpler moral, social and nature-based themes in Class VI to more abstract themes of scientific curiosity, civic courage and reflective values in Class VIII.

Table 1. Corpus Profile of the Three Jasmine Textbooks

Textbook	Publication Status	Publisher/Preparation	Structural Pattern	Policy Link
Jasmine Class VI	Tryout Edition 2026	School & Mass Education Department, Odisha; prepared by SCERT Odisha	Five units; fables, friendship, nature, sports/wellness, culture/tradition	NEP 2020, NCF-SE 2023, SCF-SE 2025
Jasmine Class VII	Tryout Edition 2026	School & Mass Education Department, Odisha; prepared by SCERT Odisha	Five units; learning together, humour, dreams, travel/adventure, bravehearts	NEP 2020, NCF-SE 2023, SCF-SE 2025

Jasmine Class VIII	Tryout Edition 2026	School & Mass Education Department, Odisha; prepared by SCERT Odisha	Five units; wit, values, mystery, environment, science/curiosity	NEP 2020, NCF-SE 2023, SCF-SE 2025
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Table 2. Class-wise Thematic Structure and Lesson Distribution

Class	Unit	Theme	Representative Lessons	Broad Teaching Focus
VI	1	Fables and Folk Tales	A Bottle of Dew; The Raven and the Fox; Rama to the Rescue	Hard work, wisdom, folk imagination, presence of mind
VI	2	Friendship	True Friendship; Nobody's Friend; The Chair	Empathy, real friendship, sharing, social behaviour
VI	3	Nurturing Nature	Neem Baba; What a Bird Thought; Our Daily Spices	Nature, healing, plants, herbs, local knowledge
VI	4	Sports and Wellness	Change of Heart; The Winner; Yoga- A Way of Life	Sportsmanship, play, health, discipline, emotional balance
VI	5	Culture and Tradition	Our Bharat-Incredible India!; The Kites; Ila Sachani; National War Memorial	Craft, culture, national identity, perseverance, remembrance
VII	1	Learning Together	The Day the River Spoke; Try Again; Three Days to See	Nature, girls' education, resilience, disability sensitivity
VII	2	Wit and Humour	Animals, Birds, and Dr. Dolittle; A Funny Man; Say the Right Thing	Humour, animal care, communication, careful speech
VII	3	Dreams and Discoveries	My Brother's Great Invention; Paper Boats; North, South, East, West	Imagination, invention, aspiration, national diversity
VII	4	Travel and Adventure	The Tunnel; Travel; Conquering the Summit	Adventure, exploration, determination, disability achievement
VII	5	Bravehearts	A Homage to Our Brave Soldiers; My Dear Soldiers; Rani Abbakka	Courage, patriotism, sacrifice, women's leadership
VIII	1	Wit and Wisdom	The Wit that Won Hearts; A Concrete Example; Wisdom Paves the Way	Reasoning, humour, problem solving, perspective-taking
VIII	2	Values and Dispositions	A Tale of Valour; Somebody's Mother; Verghese Kurien-I Too Had a Dream	Courage, empathy, service, perseverance
VIII	3	Mystery and Magic	The Case of the Fifth Word; The Magic Brush of Dreams; Spectacular Wonders	Curiosity, creativity, wonder, critical attention
VIII	4	Environment	The Cherry Tree; Harvest Hymn; Waiting for the Rain	Ecological care, agriculture, patience, gratitude
VIII	5	Science and Curiosity	Feathered Friend; Magnifying Glass; Bibha Chowdhuri	Observation, scientific temper, women in science

X. Analytical Framework

The coding framework was built around the actual features of the textbooks. It includes thematic design, genre, language skills, pedagogy, values, culture, inclusion, gender representation, cognitive demand and classroom feasibility. The categories are broad enough to compare all three books but concrete enough to stay connected with lesson-level evidence.

Table 3. Coding Framework for Comparative Content Analysis

Dimension	Operational Meaning	Evidence Searched in the Books
Thematic organisation	The main idea around which units and lessons are arranged	Unit titles, lesson sequence, recurring ideas
Genre range	The variety of textual forms offered to learners	Stories, poems, conversations, graphic stories, biography, descriptive writing, non-fiction
Language skills	Scope for LSRW and related language abilities	Let us listen, Let us speak, reading passages, writing tasks, vocabulary, grammar
Pedagogical mode	How learners are expected to participate	Discussion, pair work, role play, riddles, quizzes, reflection, exploration
Cognitive demand	Level of thinking required by tasks	Recall, explanation, inference, analysis, evaluation, creative expression
Values and life skills	Ethical, social and personal dispositions developed through texts	Empathy, courage, perseverance, responsibility, wellness, patriotism
Culture and IKS	Local, regional, national and knowledge-tradition references	Bande Utkala Janani, local knowledge, heritage, Indian traditions, yoga, crafts, herbs
Gender and inclusion	Visibility of girls, women, disability and diversity	Jahnavi, Arunima Sinha, Ila Sachani, Rani Abbakka, Bibha Chowdhuri, disability themes
Classroom feasibility	Practicality of activities in real school settings	Need for time, teacher preparation, oral practice, local adaptation

XI. Findings and Interpretation

11.1 A staged movement from familiarity to complexity

The Class VI book begins close to children's familiar moral and social world. Fables, folk tales, friendship, nature, sports and culture are accessible themes for early middle-stage learners. A Bottle of Dew teaches hard work through a folk-like story; True Friendship and The Chair introduce social judgement and relationship; Neem Baba and Our Daily Spices connect English with plants, herbs and household knowledge.

Class VII expands the learner's world. A river speaks to a girl who wants education; a doctor learns animal language; a child sends paper boats into imagination; travel opens the map of India; and stories of soldiers, Rani Abbakka and Arunima Sinha bring courage into the classroom. The book therefore moves from immediate social experience to wider national, adventurous and aspirational experiences.

Class VIII takes the progression further into reasoning, values, environment, science and curiosity. Tenali Rama, Verghese Kurien, The Cherry Tree, Waiting for the Rain and Bibha Chowdhuri show a more mature handling of thinking, service, ecological sensitivity and scientific contribution. The three books together thus show a movement from familiar values to reflective citizenship and inquiry.

Table 4. Progression of English Teaching Concerns across the Middle Stage

Teaching Concern	Class VI	Class VII	Class VIII	Progression Noted
Moral and social learning	Hard work, friendship, sharing, sportsmanship	Courage, communication, empathy, national service	Responsibility, service, kindness, duty, perseverance	Values move from everyday conduct to civic and social responsibility
Nature and environment	Neem, birds, spices, healing nature	River, travel, outdoor adventure	Tree, harvest, rain, ecology	Nature moves from familiar surroundings to ecological awareness
Imagination and curiosity	Fables, kites, folk tales, visual stories	Invention, paper boats, mystery of travel	Mystery, magic, observation, science	Imagination gradually connects with inquiry and science
Culture and identity	Bande Utkala Janani, crafts, Indian culture, war memorial	National diversity, brave historical figures	Odisha identity, Indian figures, science and heritage	Cultural identity widens from local-national pride to knowledge contribution
Inclusion and gender	Ila Sachani, crafts, special needs	Girls' education, disability, women leaders	Bibha Chowdhuri, empathy, social inclusion	Inclusion becomes more explicit across the stage but requires wider representation
Language use	Basic discussion, comprehension, vocabulary and guided expression	More speaking, reflection, travel narrative and role possibilities	More analytical, reflective, literary and informational tasks	Language demand increases in complexity and abstraction

11.2 Genre pattern and text variety

The Jasmine series does not depend on one type of text. It mixes stories, poems, conversations, non-fiction, graphic stories, biography-like pieces and descriptive or travel-oriented writing. For English teaching, this variety is useful because each genre asks the learner to process language differently. A poem invites rhythm, feeling and image; a conversation supports spoken English and role play; a biography builds informational reading; and a graphic story opens visual literacy.

Table 5. Genre Orientation across the Three Books

Genre/Mode	Class VI Evidence	Class VII Evidence	Class VIII Evidence	Pedagogical Value
Story/Fable/Folk tale	A Bottle of Dew; Rama to the Rescue; True Friendship	The Day the River Spoke; The Tunnel; My Brother's Great Invention	The Wit that Won Hearts; The Cherry Tree	Builds narrative comprehension, prediction, character understanding and moral reasoning
Poetry	The Raven and the Fox; Nobody's Friend; The Winner; The Kites	Try Again; Paper Boats; Travel; My Dear Soldiers	Somebody's Mother; Harvest Hymn; Waiting for the Rain	Supports rhythm, recitation, feeling, imagery and literary appreciation
Conversation/Play	Neem Baba; selected activity dialogues	Say the Right Thing	Wisdom Paves the Way	Provides scope for speaking, role play, turn-taking and communicative awareness
Non-fiction/Biographical text	Yoga-A Way of Life; Ila Sachani; National War Memorial	Conquering the Summit; A Homage to Our Brave Soldiers	Verghese Kurien; Bibha Chowdhuri	Connects English with real-life achievement, information and reflective citizenship
Graphic/Visual narrative	Rama to the Rescue; visual material in culture unit	Rani Abbakka	Selected illustrated texts and activities	Supports visual literacy and helps reluctant readers enter the text
Descriptive/Travel	Our Bharat-Incredible	North, South, East, West	Spectacular Wonders	Builds observation,

el/Cultural writing	India!			description, national awareness and vocabulary
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11.3 Language skill orientation: LSRW and beyond

The books consistently feature activity headings which guide learners from reading to listening, speaking, writing, reflection and exploration. The sequence is crucial for the English instruction of the middle stage. Oral practice is required to make writing confident and meaningful. The series acknowledges this need, but success in the classroom will rely on whether teachers actually carry out the oral and listening parts of the test or opt for written answers.

Table 6. Language Skill Orientation and Pedagogical Analysis of the Jasmine Series

Skill Area	Evidence across the Books	Pedagogical Potential	Scope for Improvement
Listening	Let us listen sections, listening transcripts, teacher-guided oral input, sound/observation activities	Promotes attentive listening, comprehension of oral language and classroom interaction	Requires teacher preparation, audio support, pronunciation modelling and adequate classroom time
Speaking	Let us discuss, Let us speak, role play, pair work, group sharing and opinion questions	Builds oral confidence, peer communication, turn-taking and expressive ability	May remain weak if classrooms continue to prioritise written work and examination answers
Reading	Stories, poems, conversations, biographies, non-fiction and graphic texts across all three books	Develops comprehension, genre awareness, inference and literary appreciation	Reading should move beyond translation towards interpretation, response and critical engagement
Writing	Let us write, guided tasks, reflective writing, descriptive writing and personal response activities	Encourages organisation of ideas, expression of experience and written communication	Needs regular feedback, rewriting opportunities and rubrics rather than correction only
Vocabulary Development	Side boxes, contextual meanings, word-based exercises and use of words from passages	Supports vocabulary acquisition through context and repeated exposure	New words should be used in speech and writing, not only copied as meanings
Grammar and Language Awareness	Language-focused exercises connected with lesson content	Helps learners notice word order, sentence structure and functional use of language	Grammar should remain tied to meaningful communication rather than isolated rule memorisation
Exploration and Experiential Learning	Let us explore, Let us do, riddles, quizzes, observation and project-like tasks	Extends English learning to home, community, environment and local culture	Needs local adaptation, teacher guidance and time within the school schedule

11.4 Competency orientation and activity design

The three books repeatedly mention curricular goals and competencies. More importantly, the activities show an effort to move from answering to doing. The learner is asked to discuss, reflect, match, listen, speak, write, explore, role-play, identify, reason and sometimes create. Such design is compatible with competency-based language learning, provided the teacher treats the activities seriously.

Table 7. Activity Headings and Their Teaching Implications

Activity Heading/Mode	Typical Function	Skill Supported	Middle-Stage Relevance
Let us discuss	Opens oral response, peer exchange and immediate comprehension	Speaking, listening, thinking	Helps learners move from silent reading to classroom talk
Let us think and reflect	Encourages inference, reasoning and personal judgement	Reading, critical thinking, writing	Supports transition from recall to interpretation
Let us listen	Provides structured oral input and listening practice	Listening, pronunciation awareness	Important because English is often text-bound in state classrooms
Let us speak	Promotes spoken expression, dialogue and presentation	Speaking, confidence, fluency	Can reduce hesitation if used regularly
Let us learn	Focuses on vocabulary, grammar or language forms	Language awareness	Links form with use when handled contextually
Let us write	Guides written response, paragraphing and expression	Writing, organisation	Builds academic and personal expression
Let us explore/Let us do	Extends learning beyond the lesson	Experiential learning, inquiry	Connects English with local surroundings and life situations

11.5 Values and life skills embedded in English teaching

One striking feature of the series is that values are not kept outside English teaching. They enter through characters, situations, poems, biographies and activity questions. In Class VI, hard work, friendship and wellness receive attention. In Class VII, courage, humour, communication, disability sensitivity and national feeling become stronger. In Class VIII, service, empathy, scientific curiosity and ecological responsibility appear more prominently.

Table 8. Value and Life-skill Matrix across the Jasmine Series

Value/Life Skill	Class VI Evidence	Class VII Evidence	Class VIII Evidence	Interpretation
Hard work and perseverance	A Bottle of Dew; The Winner; Ila Sachani	Try Again; Conquering the Summit	Verghese Kurien; The Cherry Tree	Effort is presented not as a slogan but through repeated situations of struggle and growth
Friendship and empathy	True Friendship; Nobody's Friend; The Chair	Animals, Birds, and Dr. Dolittle; Three Days to See	Somebody's Mother	Empathy grows from peer relations to animals, disability and social care
Courage and resilience	Rama to the Rescue; Ila Sachani	The Day the River Spoke; Rani Abbakka; Conquering the Summit	A Tale of Valour; Bibha Chowdhuri	Courage appears in personal, historical, national and intellectual forms
Health and wellness	Sports and Wellness unit; Yoga-A Way of Life	Travel and adventure as active life	Mindful observation and ecological balance	Wellness is treated physically, emotionally and socially
Environmental care	Nurturing Nature unit; Neem Baba; Our Daily Spices	River, travel and outdoor imagination	Environment unit: tree, harvest and rain	Nature moves from usefulness to emotional and ecological connection
National identity and citizenship	Our Bharat; National War Memorial	Bravehearts unit; soldiers; Rani Abbakka	Valour, service, Indian science and cultural memory	The series uses English to carry civic and national feeling
Curiosity and inquiry	Fables, folk wisdom, local knowledge, activities	Dreams, invention, travel, mystery of discovery	Mystery and Magic; Science and Curiosity	Curiosity gradually becomes sharper and closer to investigation

11.6 Culture, Indian Knowledge System and localisation

The series does not present English as culturally empty. Bande Utkala Janani gives the books an Odia cultural entry point. Class VI draws strongly on folk tales, herbs, spices, yoga, crafts and national memory. Class VII brings river, travel, soldiers and historical courage. Class VIII brings Tenali Rama, agriculture, national service, women in science and ecological themes. Together, these selections attempt to make English speak through Indian and Odia contexts.

This is pedagogically important. For many learners, English becomes easier to enter when the subject does not feel detached from home, culture and community. The series shows that English can be used to talk about neem trees, spices, kites, embroidery, rivers, soldiers, science, rain and moral choices. Such localisation is one of the strongest features of the books.

Table 9. Cultural and Indian Knowledge System Representation

Area	Evidence across the Series	Educational Meaning	Area for Enrichment
Odia identity	Bande Utkala Janani at the beginning; Odisha government/SCERT framing	Gives regional grounding to English learning	More dialectal and regional diversity within Odisha may be represented
Folk and traditional knowledge	Fables, folk tales, Rama to the Rescue, traditional wisdom	Shows that stories are sources of ethical and practical understanding	More tribal and local folk narratives can be included
Nature-based local knowledge	Neem Baba, Our Daily Spices, The Cherry Tree, Harvest Hymn, Waiting for the Rain	Links English with everyday ecological knowledge	More Odisha-specific ecological contexts such as forests, rivers and coastal life may be used
Yoga and wellness	Yoga-A Way of Life	Connects language learning with holistic well-being	Classroom activities may include reflective writing on personal wellness
Craft and art traditions	Ila Sachani; Our Bharat; Kites; cultural unit	Introduces art, craft, persistence and national heritage	Odisha crafts such as Sambalpuri weaving, Pattachitra and tribal art may be strengthened
National memory	National War Memorial, Brave Soldiers, Rani Abbakka, Major Somnath Sharma	Builds civic gratitude and historical awareness	Needs space for critical, reflective discussion, not only admiration

11.7 Gender, disability and inclusion

Gender and inclusion are visible, but uneven. Strong examples exist: Jahnavi's desire for schooling, Arunima Sinha's achievement, Rani Abbakka's leadership, Ila Sachani's persistence and Bibha Chowdhuri's scientific contribution. These are useful as they give girls, women and persons with disabilities an active role. However, a complete inclusion audit would involve the number of authors, protagonists, illustrations, occupations and community backgrounds in all lessons.

Table 10. Gender and Inclusion across Classes VI-VIII

Dimension	Class VI	Class VII	Class VIII	Interpretive Comment
Girls' aspiration and agency	Ila Sachani overcomes limits through embroidery and persistence	Jahnvi wants education; river encourages girls' courage	Women's contribution appears through Bibha Chowdhuri	Girls and women appear as active learners, achievers and knowledge makers
Women's leadership	Cultural and craft-based female agency	Rani Abbakka as brave ruler; Arunima Sinha as achiever	Bibha Chowdhuri as woman scientist	Series improves visibility of women beyond domestic roles
Disability sensitivity	Ila Sachani introduces special needs and achievement	Three Days to See and Conquering the Summit foreground sensory/disability issues	Implicit inclusion through social empathy	Disability is present but often framed through inspiration; everyday inclusion needs more space
Social diversity	Friendship, rural/nature contexts, cultural variety	Travel and national diversity	Agriculture, environment, science, national personalities	National diversity is stronger than Odisha's internal social diversity
Tribal and marginal voices	Limited explicit representation	Limited explicit representation	Limited explicit representation	Future editions may include more tribal, working-class, multilingual and rural community voices
Illustration-based inclusion	Colourful visuals support comprehension and engagement	Visuals support settings such as river, travel, adventure	Visuals support nature, science and narrative settings	A systematic visual audit is still needed

11.8 Environmental, scientific and wellness dimensions

The three books do not restrict English to literary and moral purposes. Nature, health, science and inquiry reoccur. Class VI makes nature familiar with neem, birds and spices; Class VII adds river, travel and adventure and Class VIII makes environment a full unit, adding science and curiosity. This is a good middle-stage design as learners are not only presented with facts but also through story, poem, observation and reflection.

Table 11. Environmental, Scientific and Wellness Concerns

Area	Class VI	Class VII	Class VIII	Teaching Possibility
Environmental awareness	Nurturing Nature; Neem Baba; What a Bird Thought; Our Daily Spices	The Day the River Spoke; Travel and outdoor imagination	The Cherry Tree; Harvest Hymn; Waiting for the Rain	Learners can discuss local trees, seasons, farming, rain and human dependence on nature
Scientific curiosity	Observation of plants, spices, health practices	Invention, travel, adventure and discovery	Magnifying Glass, Feathered Friend, Bibha Chowdhuri	English supports inquiry, observation and scientific vocabulary
Health and wellness	Sports and Wellness; Yoga-A Way of Life	Adventure, travel and resilience	Mindfulness through nature, patience and curiosity	Can link language learning with physical, emotional and social well-being
Local knowledge	Spices, herbs, yoga, crafts	Nature and community experience	Agriculture, rain, Indian science	Helps children see knowledge in home, community and Indian contexts
Ethical relation with nature	Bird's view, neem, spices	River as speaking guide	Tree, harvest and rain as lived experience	Encourages care, gratitude and ecological sensitivity

11.9 Cognitive demand and progression of tasks

The activities across the books show mixed cognitive levels. Direct comprehension is still required for language learning particularly in Class VI. However, discussion, reflection, reasons, opinions, role play, writing and exploration indicates progress towards higher order thinking. The problem is not that such activities exist, it is whether teachers are supported in doing such activities in the regular classroom.

Table 12. Cognitive Demand Coding across the Series

Cognitive Level	Typical Task Type	Evidence in Jasmine Series	Teaching Implication
Remembering	Recall of facts, characters and events	Direct comprehension questions	Useful for basic comprehension but should not dominate assessment
Understanding	Explaining meaning, sequence and character action	Let us discuss and paragraph-based questions	Builds reading comprehension and oral explanation
Applying	Connecting a lesson idea with life	Questions on hard work, friendship, courage, nature and communication	Helps learners relate English to personal and social experience
Analysing	Comparing, reasoning, cause-effect, motives	Reflective tasks, matching reasons, evaluating choices in stories	Supports middle-stage reasoning and deeper reading
Evaluating	Giving judgement with reasons	Questions on right action, courage, fairness, wisdom and values	Encourages ethical thinking and language for opinion
Creating	Writing, role play, projects, exploration, alternative expression	Let us write, Let us explore, Let us do, role play and creative tasks	Builds communicative confidence and productive language use

11.10 Visual design and learner support

The books feature colourful unit openings, character illustrations, side vocabulary boxes, tables, activity labels and visual storytelling. These features are significant because middle-stage students tend to use visual cues to comprehend setting, mood and action. Class VI has green nature design and folk illustrations which provide child-friendly entry points. In Class VII, the travel and adventure visuals open the world of the learner. Illustrations are used to support content in environment, science, mystery and biographical in Class VIII.

Table 13. Visual and Layout Features

Visual/Layout Feature	Observed Use	Pedagogical Function	Review Needed
Unit opening pages	Colourful thematic designs and illustrations	Creates mood and prepares learner for the theme	Ensure visual consistency and age appropriateness
Side vocabulary boxes	Meanings placed near reading passages	Supports independent reading and immediate comprehension	Need pronunciation and usage practice in class
Illustrations within stories	Characters, nature, adventure, cultural and historical scenes	Helps learners visualise action and context	Need diversity audit of gender, region and social groups
Graphic story format	Rama to the Rescue; Rani Abbakka and similar visual narratives	Supports visual literacy and engagement	Can be linked with speaking and retelling activities
Activity labels	Let us discuss/listen/speak/write/explore etc.	Makes pedagogy visible and teacher-friendly	Teachers need orientation to use all sections, not only comprehension questions
Tables and matching tasks	Word-picture matching, columns, True/False, reasoning tasks	Supports comprehension and gradual cognitive development	Should be balanced with open-ended expression

XII. Discussion

In the three books of Jasmine, it is obvious that there is a change in imagination of English teaching in the middle stage. English is not taught as a separate language subject. It relates to childhood experience, local knowledge, nature, health, values, science, art, national identity and civic feeling. This is the key curriculum core of the series.

The repeated effort to integrate LSRW is the most significant strength of these books. The books do not simply provide lessons followed by questions. These involve discussion, reflection, listening, speaking, writing and exploration. This design can contribute to the teachers' efforts to achieve a communicative classroom, provided that the oral and activity parts are implemented. In examination contexts, there is a danger that these sections are shortened or even omitted.

Another important strength of these books are integration of values. Hard work, empathy, courage, sportsmanship, wellness, curiosity, patriotism and ecological care are expressed in the texts, not as separate moral instruction. This is more effective as learners encounter values through characters and situations. But, teachers should not make every lesson a set moral statement. Discussion should be sufficiently open to allow children to ask questions and to make links with their own life.

Inclusion is one of the major highlighted component of these books. There are positive examples of girls and women, disability and achievement in the series. However, the representation of inclusion is still not wide. Tribal communities, rural occupations, multilingual families, migrant lives, contexts of coastal and western Odisha and various socio-economic realities need to be given more visibility in future editions.

XIII. Educational Implications

Activity sections should be viewed not as an optional, but as a core part of the lesson. Discussing and speaking can be done even with simple English, mother-tongue support and gradual scaffolding. There should be an effort to decrease fear and increase meaningful participation.

The three books can be used by teacher educators for the training of students as teachers in textbook analysis, lesson planning, classroom questioning, language games, role play, reflective writing and inclusive pedagogy. A theme for each unit can be used to show how more than one language activity can be developed.

Feedback from class can be used to make changes to the books by the curriculum developers. The most developed aspects are themed richness, values, cultural rootedness and diversified activities. Weaker aspects could involve measurable skill balance, oral practice support, more representation of Odisha's diversity and practical support for big classes.

There needs to be a shift in assessment practices, too. The broader purposes of the books will not be achieved if tests are only concerned with word meaning, recall of text and written responses. Assessment should involve speaking, listening, use of vocabulary, creative writing, project work and reflective response.

XIV. Limitations of the Study

This article is only based on the content of the three textbooks. Does not contain classroom observations, teacher interviews, or student responses and achievement data. Hence, it cannot make any claims as to the effectiveness of the books' use in schools.

The study further does not specify exactly how many of each of the activities, illustrations, male/female characters, and cognitive levels are represented. Some tables are matrices, which are based on evidence in the textbook. In a future study, two coders could be used and an inter-coder agreement could be determined, for a more quantitative content analysis.

XV. Major Findings

- The Jasmine series for Classes VI, VII and VIII represents a well-judged effort to restructure the approach to the teaching of English in the middle school.
- Each of all three books state alignment to NEP 2020, NCF-SE 2023 and SCF-SE 2025 and structure learning around curricular goals and competencies.
- Thematic progression is had from fables, friendship, nature, wellness and culture in class VI to learning, humour, dreams, travel and bravehearts in class VII and then to wisdom, values, environment, science and curiosity in class VIII.
- LSRW, vocabulary, grammar, literary appreciation and exploratory learning are given visible attention throughout the series.
- Values are integrated into stories, poems, biographies and situations and not just given as moral teaching.
- Local and Indian cultural elements are seen in the presence of Bande Utkala Janani, folk tales, yoga, spices, crafts, national memorials, Indian achievers and science related personalities.
- The presence of gender and inclusion is manifested in the form of characters like Jahnavi, Ila Sachani, Arunima Sinha, Rani Abbakka and Bibha Chowdhuri, but the social diversity still needs to be expanded.
- There is potential for classroom use of these books, but teacher preparation, oral practice, activity based assessment and local adaptation are crucial for successful implementation.

XVI. Conclusion

The launch of the Jasmine textbooks for Classes VI, VII and VIII is a significant milestone in the English language education in Odisha. These read together reveal how the new curricular framework is re-imagining the middle stage. The books introduce English in touch with stories, values, humour, nature, travel, science, art, wellness, culture and citizenship. This extends the function of language learning in the education field.

The series is best when it is related to lived experiences and English. A folk tale teaches work and wisdom, a friendship story teaches empathy, a neem tree becomes a teacher, a river encourages a girl, a mountain climber challenges disability, a queen represents resistance, a scientist opens the world of discovery and a harvest poem and rain story bring ecology into literature. Learners in Odisha may find such texts to be less alien and more meaningful in terms of English.

Meanwhile, the books are viewed as good curriculum resources, but not as solutions. They rely upon teachers, class hours, restructuring of tests, and constant redesign. Future editions might be stronger with greater Odisha-specific diversity, better scaffolding for listening and speaking, greater inclusion, and more systematic and higher-order scaffolding of tasks. Jasmine provides an excellent grounding for middle stage English teaching which is competency-based, culturally rich and activity-led.

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