Chapter 15 Equations

Suggestion 1: Use of silent sitting to introduce the topic

Begin with a silent sitting exercise.

Ask the students to visualize a village which was at first surrounded by trees but which changed as the trees were cut down and was eventually destroyed by a flood because there were no trees to protect the soil.   Ask them to think for a moment about, "What can <u>I</u> do <u>right now</u> to prevent this problem?"* and what they have learned from reflecting on this scene. This can help them to realize that everyone has a responsibility to the environment, not just to leave it to others.

The theme of balancing the environment can then be used to lead into the topic of balancing equations.

Balance in equations can also be related to balance in <u>themselves</u>, i.e. keeping themselves peaceful even when things go wrong, and how they can get back into balance if they feel disturbed or bothered by something (e.g. breathing deeply, doing silent sitting, having a drink of water and lying down for a while). (PEACE/calmness, equanimity, NON-VIOLENCE/concern for ecological balance)

*This is a good question to ask students often – it helps them to understand that even individuals can make a difference to the world, and that each one of us has the responsibility to do whatever we can.

Suggestion 2. Values message for discussion: Equations are about balancing the two sides of the = sign, and life is about us being balanced. What is a balanced person? When we have lots of desires and 'wants' these are clamouring inside us and we are open to feeling let down and disappointed, and balance is not possible. But if we can happily accept everything that happens to us and see it as an opportunity to learn and grow into stronger people, we can become more balanced.

Balanced people are those who cope equally with things that flatter and things that hurt them – they accept praise and criticism equally, they treat friends and enemies the same, they are not affected by events that happen around them that are either happy or sad.

Suggestion 3: Adjusting the words of problems to reinforce values messages.

p. 153 Existing problem

A father and his sons equally shared an amount of Rs 270. Then the amount each person had was Rs 45. Taking the number of sons as *x*, construct an equation. Solve this equation and hence find the number of sons the father has.

Suggested change

A father and his sons decided to donate an amount of Rs270 to help buy food for some poor people. They wanted to do this because giving to others is one important way to help us to feel love and compassion. Sai Baba says "Love all, serve all". The father and his sons each donated Rs45. Taking the number of sons as *x*, construct an equation. Solve this equation and hence find the number of sons the father has.

p.154 Existing problem

Sajithi and Sanjana have certain amounts of money. …

Suggested change

Sajithi and Sanjana decided to practise Ceiling on Desires by cutting back the amount of money they spent in one month at the computer shop playing computer games. When twice the amount of money Sanjana saved is added to the amount of money Sajithi saved, we get Rs. 110 ………

Point for brief discussion: What is the point of Ceiling on Desires? The Buddha said "Desire is the cause of all sorrow". Sai Baba says "If the desires are cut off one by one, then there is peace".

 Setting a Ceiling on Some of Our Desires is not about making our life less fun; it's about making our life more fun and satisfying while feeling more self-confident because we now have more self-control!

As an out-of-school challenge, ask students to practise Ceiling on Desires for one week to reduce their desire for something that they do too much of that is not good for them (eating too much of a certain kind of food, wasting too much time on social media or computer games, wasting water by bathing for too long….) At the end of the week ask them to report on how it has affected their lives and the lives of their friends and families.

p.157 **Existing problem**

The price of two baby shirts and three pairs of baby shorts is Rs. 1150. …

Suggested change

After saving money from Ceiling on Desires, the class was able to buy some toys and books for poor people in their community. Two toys and three books cost Rs1150. If they gave three toys and one book it would cost Rs. 850. Taking the price of a toy as Rs. *x* and that of a book as Rs. *y*, construct two simultaneous equations and find the price of a toy and that of a book separately by solving the two equations.