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A twenty-page book full of colourful and thought-provoking illustrations, *My Big Book of Earth* is part of the "My Big Book" series published by Katha Books. While the subject in this one is our earth, the other books have been on dogs, kindness, global warming and the latest one being girls.

My Big Book of Earth focuses on the need to be sensitive towards nature. It explores the forgotten values of harmony with nature to bring home this point for its young readers.

Katha's unique curriculum is based on explaining concepts through the storytelling method. Drawing from traditional sources like *Natya Shastra*, a handbook on performing arts by Bharata, the book aims to capture the imagination of a young reader.

The book begins with a hymn, translated from the ancient Hindu text Rig Veda, and is dedicated to our Earth. "The Song of Earth" evokes a sense of responsibility and respect towards our home planet.

The second story is based on a folklore, popular among the Mete community in

Keeping it easy for young readers

Here's a book that shows us how to reconnect with the environment through stories, legends and poems

Aditi Sharma

Manipur. The story is about how Sanamahi, the son of the "Lord of the Sky" and "Queen Mother of the Earth", created a beautiful world full of lush green trees, rainbow birds and silver fishes. The story is able to paint the picture of a beautiful earth where the light of seven suns shines brightly on all its creatures, and the reader is prodded gently to reflect upon co-existence.

Readers are also made aware of the philosophy of the Bishnois, a tribal community of Rajasthan and encouraged to learn from them.

The qualities of a true friend, listed as loyalty, sensitivity and care, are taken as a benchmark to assess our relationship with Earth. Simple lessons on waste management, habitat destruction and deforestation have also been shared keeping in mind a young audience.

Katha's way of connecting grassroots work with teaching and learning gets reflected in this book too. The stories, poems, ideas and anecdotes can be useful tools for learning at all levels. Through stories, legends, poems and a simple list of do's and don'ts, the book shows its young readers a way to reconnect with the environment and also protect it. While the book is easy to understand for young children, even those studying in class 3, it can be

used to enhance observational skills and critical thinking among older children.

However, some reference material would have helped the teachers incorporate some of the shared methods in their teaching. ◀





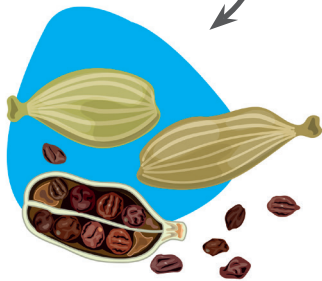
Step 1
Boil milk in a wide, heavy-based pan and then simmer over medium heat for 30-40 minutes. Make sure you keep stirring it from time to time.



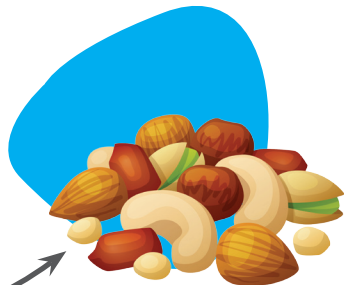
Step 2
Add sugar and saffron to milk once its colour changes to beige-cream and bubbles appear mostly in the centre of the pan.



Step 3
Bring the milk to a boil again and simmer for another minute or two.



Step 4
Add cardamom and turn off the heat.



Step 5
When cool, add the nuts and mix well.



Step 6
Pour the mixture into moulds and freeze at the lowest temperature.

Step 7
Take the moulds out of the freezer and prise the kulfi out with the help of a knife, into an individual serving bowl.



Beat the summer heat with kulfi!

Pallavi Ghosh