

RETAIL SKILLS PROJECT

TEACHER'S GUIDE

A 5-Step Practical Programme for Rural Schools

Based on CBSE Curriculum — Retail (Subject Code 401) — Class IX
Equitable Access Project | Bharti Airtel Foundation

About This Guide

This guide is for teachers running the Retail Skills Project — a 5-STEP hands-on programme that brings the CBSE Class IX Retail curriculum to life for rural students. Every session is designed around doing, not just reading. Students will build mock stores, conduct real transactions, serve customers, and reflect on what they learn.

The guide covers:

- Week-by-week session plans with objectives, activities, and timings
- Facilitation notes and tips for each activity
- Assessment guidance aligned to CBSE practical requirements
- Materials checklists that use locally available resources
- Discussion questions to deepen learning

How to Use This Guide

Each week follows the same structure:

Weekly Plan Structure	
Objective	What students will understand or be able to do by end of week
CBSE Units Covered	Which curriculum units this week addresses
Session Plan	Step-by-step guide for each session with timings
Materials Needed	Simple, locally sourceable items
Facilitation Tips	How to handle common challenges
Assessment	What to observe or collect this week

Project Philosophy

The goal is not to teach rural students about retail. It is to give them a working experience of it — so the knowledge lives in their hands and confidence, not just their notebooks.

Three principles guide every session:

- **Connect to what students already know. Every concept starts from the kirana shop, the weekly haat, the familiar vendor. Never introduce a concept in the abstract before grounding it in something they have seen.**
- **Make it real. Simulations are good. Real transactions are better. Whenever possible, students handle actual goods, real money, and genuine customer interactions.**
- **Reflection is part of the work. At the end of every activity, students discuss what worked, what did not, and what they would do differently. This habit of structured reflection is itself a vocational skill.**

Curriculum Alignment Map

The table below shows how each project week maps to the CBSE Class IX Retail curriculum:

Steps	Phase	Key Activities	CBSE Unit
1	Foundation	Market Walk & Observation	Unit 1: Intro to Retail
2	Foundation	Kirana vs Mall Comparison	Unit 1: Intro to Retail
3	Core Skills	Build Your Store	Units 1, 2, 3
4	Core Skills	Display & Merchandising	Unit 1: Store & Non-Store
5	Core Skills	Receiving Goods Simulation	Unit 2: Receiving & Storage
6	Core Skills	Billing Table Practice	Unit 3: Stock Levels
7	Customer Service	Sales Talk Challenge	Unit 4: Customer Service
8	Customer Service	Feedback Forms & Viva Prep	Unit 4: Customer Service
9	Entrepreneurship	Mini Business Plan	Part A: Entrepreneurial Skills
10	Assessment	Real Transaction Day & Reflection	All Units

STEP 1: Foundation

"UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD AROUND YOU"

ACTIVITY

1

Market Walk & Observation

CBSE Unit 1: Introduction to Retail

ACTIVITY 1 Overview

Objective	Students connect retail concepts to their own local market through direct observation
CBSE Alignment	Unit 1: Basics of Retailing, Organised & Unorganised Retailing
Materials	Observation worksheets (one per student), pencil, clipboard or notebook

ACTIVITY 1A: Pre-Walk Preparation

1. Opening Discussion

Ask students: "Where does your family buy groceries, vegetables, daily items?"

Let 4–5 students answer. Students will name local shops, mandis, haats. This is the starting point.

2. Introduce the Observation Sheet

Distribute observation worksheets (found in Student Booklet, Activity 1). Walk through each question with students. Explain they are becoming "retail detectives" — noticing things they have walked past every day without really seeing.

3. Teach the Key Terms

Introduce three concepts:

- **Retailing:** Selling goods directly to the final customer
- **Organised retail:** Licensed, registered stores with fixed systems
- **Unorganised retail:** Local, informal shops — kirana, haat, pavement vendors

Ask: Which type is most common in their village or town? Why do they think that is?

4. Assign Homework / Field Preparation

If the market walk will happen outside school, brief the students on what to look for.

ACTIVITY 1B: Market Walk & Debrief

1. The Walk

Students to go to a local market or a designated retail area.

Ask students:

"Why do you think the shopkeeper placed that item there?"

"How does this shop decide what to stock?"

2. Group Debrief

Students to share one observation that surprised them. Teacher builds a comparison chart on the board: organised vs unorganised, what makes one busier than another.

Deliverable

Students complete their hand-drawn comparison chart.

Teacher Facilitation Tips	
<i>If students are shy</i>	<i>Pair confident students with quieter ones for the walk. The observation sheet gives everyone a structured role.</i>
<i>If market walk is not possible</i>	<i>Bring in photographs or describe a nearby market yourself. Ask students to draw it from memory and then compare notes.</i>
<i>Common misconception</i>	<i>Students often think "organised" means "neat." Clarify: it means legally registered and formally structured.</i>
<i>Discussion to spark</i>	<i>"Is a WhatsApp order group a retail business? Why or why not?"</i>

ACTIVITY**2****Kirana vs The Mall**

CBSE Unit 1: Indian and Global Retailers

ACTIVITY 2 Overview

Objective	Students understand the spectrum of retail formats from local to global
CBSE Alignment	Unit 1: Store & Non-Store Retailing, Indian & Global Retailers
Materials	Images of supermarkets/malls (printouts or phone), chart paper, markers

ACTIVITY 2A: Formats & Comparisons

Show students images of: a local kirana store, a supermarket, a hypermarket, a weekly haat, an online shopping app.

Ask for each: "Have you been here? Have you bought something here?"

Students to compare kirana vs supermarket.

What is the same? What is different?

ACTIVITY 2B: India's Retail Story

Share one compelling fact: India has over 13 million retail outlets — more than almost any country in the world. Most are unorganised. Ask: Why does this matter for rural areas?

Group activity: Students identify 5 retail outlets from their own market and classify each as organised or unorganised, store or non-store. They present their classification with reasons.

STEP 2:

"LEARNING BY DOING"

ACTIVITY

3

Build Your Store & Merchandising

CBSE Units 1, 2, 3

ACTIVITY 3

Objective	Students physically build and operate a mock retail store
CBSE Alignment	Units 1, 2, 3: Store formats, receiving goods, stock management
Materials	Desks as shelves, available products (stationery, snacks, daily items), handwritten price tags, cardboard for signage

Setting Up the Store (Session 3A)

Students to be divided into four permanent teams. Each team has a role they will rotate through across all weeks:

- **Store Manager:** Oversees decisions, resolves disputes, tracks stock
- **Display Team:** Arranges goods, makes signage, ensures products are visible
- **Billing Team:** Prepares price tags, writes bills, manages the cash box
- **Customer Service Team:** Greets, assists, handles complaints

Teams set up the mock store in the classroom. Let students decide the set up. After setup, ask the class to walk through as "customers" and give feedback on what they noticed first, what confused them.

The Good Display vs Bad Display Exercise (Session 3B)

This is one of the most memorable activities in the programme. Ask the Display Team to deliberately set up one section of the store poorly (items jumbled, no signage, goods hidden) and one section well. Then ask other students which section they would buy from and why.

The discussion that follows teaches visual merchandising more effectively than any textbook explanation.

Ask student to think about if:

- Eye-level placement for popular items helped?
- Clear price tags built customer trust?
- Grouping related products together makes shopping easier

ACTIVITY**4****Billing, Calculation & Customer Records**

CBSE Unit 3: Stock Levels

ACTIVITY 4 Overview

Objective	Students master billing, price calculation, and basic financial record-keeping
CBSE Alignment	Unit 3: Stock Levels, Documents Required for Stock Handling
Materials	Billing sheets (printed or handwritten), calculators, simple stock register template, receipt books (optional)

The Billing Table — Three Rounds

This activity builds progressively. Never skip directly to calculators.

- **Round 1 — Mental Arithmetic:** Students calculate totals by hand. Simple prices only (multiples of 5 and 10). The goal is confidence, not speed.
- **Round 2 — Discounts:** Introduce a 10% discount on one item. Students calculate the discounted price and write a corrected bill.
- **Round 3 — Verification:** Students now use **CALCULATORS** to check their own work. They correct any errors in their billing sheet and note what caused the mistake.

Documents in Retail Students learn the key documents used in retail operations through their own store:

- Delivery Challan: What was sent by the supplier
- Stock Register: What the store currently has
- Customer Bill / Receipt: What the customer paid
- Feedback Form: What the customer thought

ACTIVITY**5****Receiving Goods Simulation**

CBSE Unit 3: Stock Levels

ACTIVITY 5 Overview**RECEIVING GOODS SIMULATION**

Students will be given a "delivery box" in advance: a mix of items, some correctly labelled, some with wrong prices, one or two "damaged" (crushed packaging). Include a simple delivery manifest listing what should be in the box.

The Billing Team acts as the receiving team. They must:

1. Check each item against the manifest
2. Accept items that are correct
3. Set aside items that are damaged or incorrectly labelled with a written note explaining why
4. Record accepted items in a simple stock register

Key insight to surface: A retail store's profit depends on checking what comes in, not just what goes out.

Stock Levels and Reorder

After the store has been "operating" for a simulated week, tell students that several items have run out.

Ask: How do you know when to reorder? What happens if you run out of a popular item? What happens if you order too much?

Introduce the concepts of minimum stock level, maximum stock level, and reorder level using their own store as the example.

Students update their stock register to reflect current levels and decide which items need reordering.

STEP 3: Customer Service - ACTIVITY 6

"THE HUMAN SIDE OF RETAIL"

ACTIVITY 6

The Sales Talk Challenge

CBSE Unit 4: Customer Service

Each student is assigned a product from the mock store and given 2 minutes to sell it to the class. Structure the activity in three rounds:

- Round 1: Sell however feels natural. No coaching. Teacher observes only.
- Round 2: Teach the GREET framework below. Students repeat their pitch using it.
- Round 3: Teacher plays a difficult customer — confused, unhappy, or asking hard questions. Students must respond.

The GREET Framework — Teach This in Round 2

G — Greet	Welcome the customer warmly and make eye contact
R — Read	Understand what the customer needs before speaking about the product
E — Explain	Describe the product's key features and price clearly
E — Engage	Ask if the customer has questions and answer them honestly
T — Thank	Thank the customer whether they buy or not

Facilitation Tips — Sales Talk

Stage fright	Normalise it: "Even experienced salespeople feel nervous. The feeling goes away after the first sentence."
Students who rush	Encourage them to slow down and make eye contact. Speed is not confidence.
Language comfort	Allow students to use their mother tongue initially, then encourage them to try in Hindi or English in Round 2.
Peer feedback	After each presentation, ask two students: one thing they liked, one thing they would suggest.

ACTIVITY**7****Customer Feedback & Viva Preparation**

CBSE Unit 4: Customer Service

Design Your Own Feedback Form

Students design a customer feedback form for their mock store — maximum 5 questions.

They must think about:

What do we actually need to know from our customers?

What would we do with the answers?

After designing, students survey each other as customers and tabulate the results.

Discuss: What did customers say they wanted that you did not have? What would you change first?

Viva Preparation

In the next session a mock viva to be conducted for the whole class.

Sample questions:

- What is the difference between a kirana store and a supermarket?
- Why is it important to check goods when they arrive at a store?
- How do you handle a customer who is unhappy with a product?
- What does a bill tell a shopkeeper that a stock register does not?
- If you were opening a small store in your village, what would you sell and why?

Encourage students to use examples from their own mock store in every answer. Specific examples are always more convincing than general statements.

STEP 4: Entrepreneurship & Assessment

"WHAT IF THIS WERE REAL?"

ACTIVITY

8

The Mini Business Plan

Part A: Entrepreneurial Skills

Student groups answer five questions to create a basic business plan for a store they would actually open in their community:

- What will you sell and why? (Based on what the community actually needs)
- Where will you source your stock? (Local suppliers, wholesale markets, cooperative)
- How will you price your items to make a small profit?
- How will you attract your first customers?
- What is one thing that could go wrong, and how will you handle it?

Groups present to the class. Other students ask questions as mock investors or customers.

What Good Plans Will Include

Specificity	Not "we will sell groceries" but "we will sell 8 essential items that our village currently walks 3km to buy"
Honesty about risk	Plans that identify real risks (seasonal demand, spoilage, competition) are stronger than plans that see no problems
Community awareness	Plans that respond to a real gap or need in their specific community
Simple math	Even a rough calculation of cost, selling price, and expected profit shows entrepreneurial thinking

ACTIVITY**9****Real Transaction Day & Final Reflection**

All Units

REAL TRANSACTION DAY

This is the most important session of the entire programme. If at all possible, run one actual sales event. Students bring low-cost goods from home — homemade snacks, vegetables, small handicrafts, stationery. They set up a real stall and sell to teachers, school staff, parents, or community members using real money. Every rupee is counted, costs are calculated, and profit or loss is determined.

The psychological impact of a real transaction is completely different from any simulation. It builds a confidence that stays.

ACTIVITY

10

STEP 5/ ACTIVITY 10 Final Reflection Session

STEP 5/ ACTIVITY 10 FINAL REFLECTION SESSION

Each student answers three questions in writing as part of their Practical File:

5. What is one thing I can do now that I could not do 10 weeks ago?
6. What was the hardest part, and what did I learn from it?
7. If I had to teach someone else one thing from this programme, what would it be?

Group presentations: Each group presents their mock store journey — what they decided, what worked, what failed, what they would do differently. The quality of reflection, not perfection of execution, is the standard for assessment.