



Syllabus

Year II, Quarter I

Age Group : 5 to 8

Gokulam is the place where Lord Krishna's magical days of childhood were spent. It was here that his divine powers came to light.

Every child has that spark of divinity within. Bala-Gokulam is a forum for children to discover and manifest that divinity. It will enable Hindu children in US to appreciate their cultural roots and learn Hindu values in an enjoyable manner. This is done through weekly gatherings and planned activities which include games, yoga, stories, shlokas, bhajan, arts and crafts and much more.....

Balagokulam is a program of Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS)

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Shloka

गुरवे सर्वलोकानाम्	gurave sarvalokänäm
भिषजे भवरोगिणाम् ।	bhisaje bhavaroginäm ।
निधये सर्वविद्यानाम्	nidhaye sarvavidyänäm
दक्षिणामूर्तये नमः	dakñiëämürtaye namah ।।

Meaning: Salutations to dakshinamurty, the Guru of all being, the healer who cures all worldly-illness and the embodiment of knowledge.

Subhashitam (Words of wisdom)

दानं हस्तस्य भूषणम् ।

dAnaM hastasya bhUShaNam ।

Meaning: Selfless giving is the ornament of hand.

Amrutvachan (Quotes)

Children are not vessels to be filled, but lamps to be lit.

- Swami Chinmayananda



Poem - Hindu Months

The Hindus, our seers have had a comprehensive study of time. They designed a calendar named Panchang or Kalaganana. The minute details covered by those fantastic minds in reckoning time is outstanding. There are twelve months according to Hindu calendar. Following poem helps to memorize those months and their significance.

Chaitra is first	Rama, Mahavira are born
Vaishakha is second	Buddha attaining Nirvana
Jyeshtha is third	Savitri saving Satyavana
Ashadha is fourth	Worship Guru giving Gyana
Shravana is fifth Tying Rakshabandhana	Krishna's birth in jail That shall never fail
Bhadrapada is sixth Halting ten days	When Ganesha arrives In procession he leaves
Ashvina is seventh Holidays of Diwali	With Dashahara fight Festival of light
Kartika is eighth	Guru Nanaka is born
Margashirsha is nineth	When Gita adorns
Pusha is tenth Bihi in the east	It is Sankranti day Pongal at the bay
Magha is eleventh	It is month of the Sun
Falguna is twelfth	Of Holi and fun.





Makara Samkranti

The month of January has witnessed several significant events of the history such as birth of Swami (sage) Vivekananda, lord Ganesha, and Martin Luther king. One of the most auspicious days for the Hindus, Makara Samkranti, also falls in the same month, generally on the 14th January. Makara (Capricorn) is a name of one of the 12 signs of zodiac. The analogy of Samkranti is Sama-Kranti. Sama in Samskrita means balanced, equal or orderly state of existence and kranti means a fundamental change. Briefly, Samkranti means a transition. Thus the basic meaning of the Samkranti is a change towards a balanced life and social setup and brotherhood amongst all individuals.

Celebrations

Makara Samkranti is celebrated in almost all parts of the Bharat (India). As Bharat is a diverse and multilingual country, this festival is called by different names in different parts of the country such as 'Pongal', 'Lohri', 'Khichari', 'Magha Samkranti', 'Bhogali Bihu'. This festival is also celebrated in different ways. During this day, elders in the family give special gifts to the younger members of the family. Thousands of people fly colorful kites. They also hold kite competitions. Especially kids and youngsters take part in the kite competitions and play enthusiastically. It has been a unique and famous game being played in Bharat. People from northern Bharat get up early in the morning and do the Ganga-Snan (bathing in the waters of the holy river - Ganga) and Surya-pooja (worshipping the Sun). The month January is the peak of the winter. On the eve of Samkranti, people lit huge bonfires around which all friends and relatives gather together. In some parts of the India, a til-gul (a mixture of sesame seeds and jaggery) is served to friends and family members. In cold days, eating til-gul maintains the body temperature and keep it healthy. Womenfolks, especially recently married ones, invite each other for the get together called 'Haldi-kumkum' and give gifts which are useful in the daily routine. In southern Bharat, it is celebrated by worshipping the god - Sun. People eat and serve a pongal - a delicious dish of sweet rice and jaggery. In villages, cows, bullocks and cattle are washed, decorated and worshipped. Birds are fed colorful pongal balls. Bullock cart races are held where the village people get together and participate. There is a tradition of special art called Rangoli, which is drawn during this festival season. This art



is done in front of the house with the Rice flour and colors. As described in the beginning, though Makara Samkranti is being known by different names and celebrated in different ways, the message delivered by it is one and same for all.

Social Aspect

On the social ground, Makara Samkranti carries a vital significance for society's welfare. It stands for the brotherhood amongst all individuals which is the basic requisite of the great precepts of liberty and equality. The selfishness, the ultimate destructor of the social fabric can not stand where a spirit of brotherhood; fraternity is alive. As described earlier, it is the tradition to eat and serve til (sesame seeds) and gul (jaggery). Til represents an individual whereas jaggery represents sweetness, love and affection. The paste of jaggery (love and affection) holds all til (individuals) together to form a social harmony. In today's world, where variety of faiths and beliefs exist, this kind of attitude is very much essential. This is the day considered as a time to express gratitude to the elements of mother nature which help to nurture and enrich human lives. From this day, the duration of sun-light increases and that of night (darkness) decreases. Light symbolizes knowledge, and brighter aspects of our lives and darkness represent ignorance and duller aspects. Thus 'Samakranti' signifies this positive change of increasing the good qualities in us and decreasing the negative ones.

Makara Samkranti as a Sangh Utsav

Makar Samkranti is special for the Bala-Gokulam (Sangh) too. It is considered as one of the six utsavs of the Bala-Gokulam. The Bala-Gokulam focusses on the Makar Samkranti because it promotes brotherhood amongst all individuals which is the need of the time. It is the day of introspection and making resolves for the entire year. In Sangh, the new adhikari gana is initiated and utsav is rounded off by distributing til-gul at the end.

Highlights of the Makara Samkranti

- 1) Makara Samkranti is known by various names and celebrated in various ways.
- 2) It stands for a change towards balanced life and social setup. It promotes brotherhood amongst all individuals.
- 3) It is one of the six Sangh utsavs.





Stories of Swami Vivekananda

Most of us at some time in our life have heard about incidents from the life of Swami Vivekananda (Narendra). He is one of the most important figures in shaping concepts of Hindu Dharma. He was full of virtues. Fearlessness, yogi, brave, kindness, strong, steady, great devotee, great poet, well versed with Vedanta and Upanishada, sacrifice and service were some of his virtues. Following are some incidents from his life that reflect some of his virtues.

Where is Ghost?

Generally, children get easily frightened. Sometimes in order to keep them in control, elders talk to them about ghosts. Narendra was courageous and very intelligent. Could such a trick work with him?

There was a huge tree. Narendra and his friends used to climb on the tree and play on its branches boisterously. The owner of the tree was tired of the noisy children. So, he decided to put an end to the nuisance by frightening them. One day he went to them and said: "Look here! There is a ghost haunting that tree. If you don't leave the place, the ghost will appear and devour you all." Except Narendra, all other children were scared and started slipping away. But Narendra remained unperturbed. Instead of getting frightened, he became more curious about the ghost. He became more playful. Swinging himself vigorously from the branches, he asked the owner of the tree, "Where is the ghost? I am curious to see him." Narendra understood that there wasn't any ghost and the owner just wanted to scare them away. Narendra then called his friends and told them not to believe in such silly things.



Helped an English Sailor

Narendra loved gymnastics. Not far from his house, there was a gymnasium. He used to go there with his friends. One day, at the gymnasium, there were setting up a swing. An English sailor went to help them. Accidentally, a pole fell on his head causing

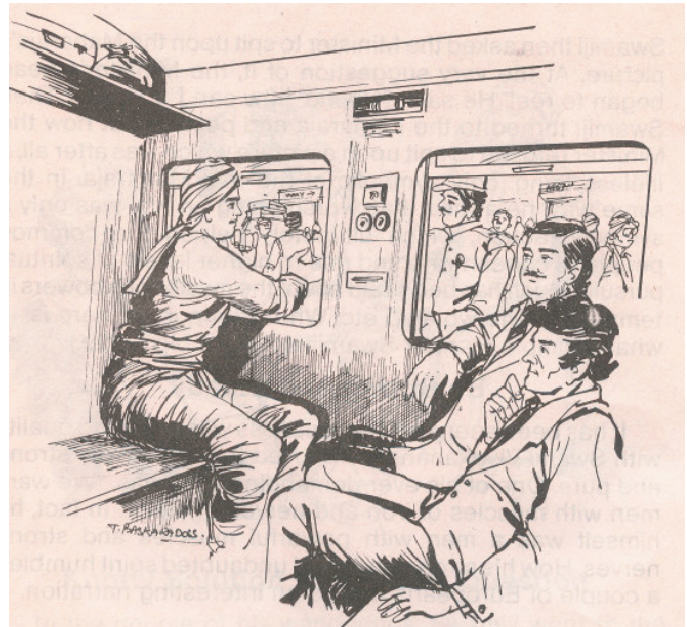
bleeding and wound. He fell on the ground. The sight of blood frightened and confused the boys around. They did not know what should be done next!! But, Narendra did not lose his presence of mind. Tearing off his shirt, he bandaged the sailor's head. Then, sitting by his side, fanned him. Very soon, the sailor came to normal. Narendra then collected some money from his friends and gave it to the sailor as a further help.



Strong and Steady

Once Swamiji was travelling by train. Two Europeans were seated near him. These two foreigners did not like the Indian co-traveller. They hated Swamiji's simple saffron clothing. They presumed that he must be illiterate. So, they freely indulged in loose talks about the Swamiji in English. They thought that he would not understand their talk. Swamiji also did not seem to take notice of their talk or mocking remarks.

After some time, Swamiji called the station-master and asked him for a glass of water, in English. The foreigners were shocked to discover that Swamiji was speaking English. They sensed that the Swamiji must have understood all they had talked about him. So, as if to tender apology, they asked him, "We were pulling your legs. Why did you remain silent all this time?" Swamiji immediately replied, "My friends, this is not the first time in my life that I met with fools." The two foreigners were annoyed at his answer but could not do anything looking at strong and iron body of Swamiji.



Swami Vivekananda's legacy continues today. His writings, speeches, thoughts, and life have inspired millions of Hindus around the world and will continue to inspire coming generations.





Stories of Swami Vivekananda

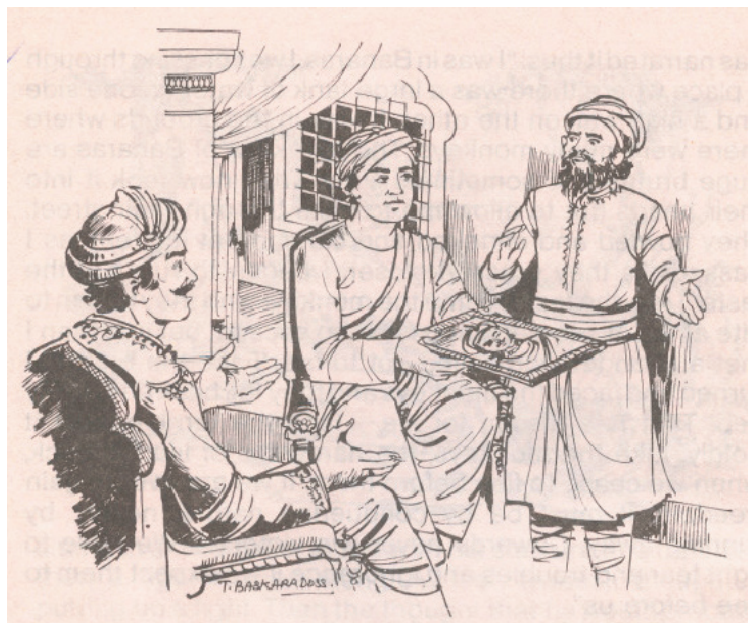
Most of us at some time in our life have heard about incidents from the life of Swami Vivekananda (Narendra). He is one of the most important figures in shaping concepts of Hindu Dharma. He was full of virtues. Fearlessness, yogi, brave, kindness, strong, steady, great devotee, great poet, well versed with Vedanta and Upanishada, sacrifice and service were some of his virtues. Following are some incidents from his life that reflect some of his virtues.

What is God?

Once some students of the Christian College went to see Swami Vivekananda. They wanted to corner him and have some fun. One of them asked him, "Sir, What is God? Can you show me?" Swamiji remained silent for a moment. He understood the mischievous plot. Suddenly he asked students, "Boys, what is energy? Can you show me?" Students were speechless. They could not give any answer. Swamiji then explained them energy as well as God with simple and small day-to-day examples.

Knotty solution to a knotty question

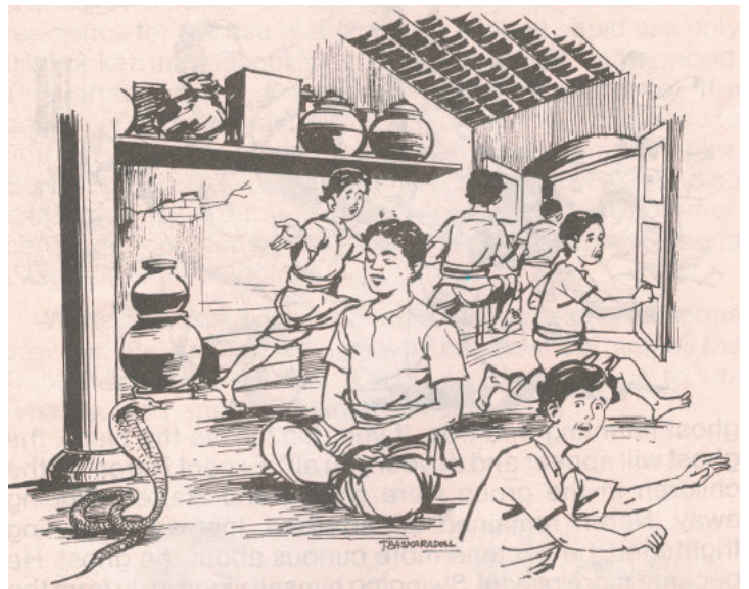
Once Swami Vivekananda went to the Alwar province of Bharat. He was received by the king with all royal honor. The king was young. He was not a believer of icon/image worship. While talking to Swamiji, he asked sceptically about the stone images being worshipped in the temples. Swamiji answered the king, "Worshipping through image is also a mode of worshipping God. People need something visible to concentrate and worship. There is no harm in it." But the king would not agree.



To demonstrate the spirit behind his approach, Swamiji turned to the Minister present there and asked him to bring to him to portrait of the king hanging on the wall. The Minister brought the picture and handed it over to Swamiji. Swamiji then asked him to spit upon the king's portrait. At the very suggestion of it, the Minister's head began to reel. He said, "Oh, no. I can't do that." Swamiji then asked king to do the same. Somewhat angry king also refused to do so. Swamiji then told them, "See!! This portrait is merely a lifeless picture. You still refused to spit on it. Because it is a symbolic of king himself." In the same line, he added, "Worshipping image is only a symbolic action. That helps people to concentrate." At last king and Minister were convinced. In such a simple manner, Swamiji explained the act of image-worship.

Yogi Vivekananda

In a way, Narendra was a born yogi. He was an expert at meditation. His power of concentration was very high. One day, Narendra was immersed in meditation. Suddenly, there appeared a cobra. It crawled over his body and slid down and went away. It was a moment full of fear and excitement to his little companions who ran off and watched the shocking and frightful scene from a safe distance. But Narendra was totally unaware of all that. His concentration was so deep that even the crawling of a cobra over his body did not disturb him.



Swami Vivekananda's legacy continues today. His writings, speeches, thoughts, and life have inspired millions of Hindus around the world and will continue to inspire coming generations.





Bharatiya (Indian) Flag

The Bharatiya (Indian) flag is in tri-color; deep saffron at the top, white in the middle and dark green at the bottom in equal proportions. It is called as Tiranga (tri-color). Each color has its own significance. Saffron color stands for courage, sacrifice and the spirit of renunciation. The white color stands for truth, purity where as green color stands for peace and prosperity. The Ashoka Chakra (wheel) represents the Laws of Dharma (righteousness).

Let us try to make our own Tiranga.

a) Purchase a white sheet of construction paper from any craft store. Cut it out in to a shape of horizontal rectangle.



b) Make three equal portions of the rectangle you made by drawing two horizontal lines. Using markers or crayons, color each portion of the rectangle; top portion with saffron color, middle portion with white color and bottom portion with Green color.

c) Draw a spinning wheel in the middle of the flag as shown in the picture.

d) Purchase small wood stick (similar to pipe-cleaners but little wider and longer) from a craft store. Glue that stick to the left back side of the flag as shown in the picture. Spare some portion of the stick from the bottom so that you can hold it.

Your "Tiranga" is ready!!!



-: Exercise :-

Fill up the blanks

- 1) Festival Makara Samkranti falls in the month of _____.
a) February b) January c) March d) April
- 2) _____ is one of the six Sangh utsavs.
a) Deepavali b) Mahashivratri c) Makara Samkranti d) None of these
- 3) Swami Vivekananda's other name was _____.
a) Keshav b) Narendra c) Madhav d) None of these
- 4) Kite-flying is a game generally being played during _____.
a) Deepavali b) New Year c) Makara Samkranti d) None of these

Questions:

- 1) Describe any two virtues of Swami Vivekananda.

- 2) Describe the significance of the three colors in the Bharatiya flag.

Shloka

कर्पूरगौरं करुणावतारं	karpūragaurā karuēāvatāraà
संसारसारं भुजगेन्द्रहारम् ।	saàsārasāraà bhujagendrahāram
सदा वसन्तं हृदयारविन्दे	sadā vasantaà hradayāravinde
भवं भवानी सहितं नमामि ॥	bhavaà bhavāné sahitaà namāmi

Meaning:

I salute to the Ishwara along with Bhavani (Shiva and Parvati), who is as white as camphor, an incarnation of compassion, the essence of this world, who wears a bhujagendra (roughly translated as serpent, but represent the ever changing, moving aspect of the Universe) around his neck and is ever present in the lotus abode of our hearts.

Subhashitam (Words of wisdom)

amantram aksharam naasti,
naasti moolam anaushadham |
ayogyaha purushaO naasti,
yojakaha tatra durlabhaha | |

Meaning: There is no letter that cannot be used in divine hymns; No root that cannot be used for medicine; There is no useless person; Scarcity is indeed for an organizer.

Amrutvachan (Quotes)

Whatever you THINK, that you WILL BE. If you think yourselves weak, weak you will be; if you think yourselves strong, strong you will be.

- Swami Vivekananda



Poem - Hindu Months

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True Friends

Hiranyaka, the mouse, and Laghupatanaka, the crow, were great friends. One day, the crow came calling on the mouse with eyes full of tears. Worried, the mouse asked,

"What's the matter? Why are you so sad?"

"I am thoroughly fed up with this country. I want to go elsewhere," replied the crow.

"But what is the reason for this sudden change of mind," asked the mouse.

"There is a famine here. People are dying like locusts. No one is offering cooked rice for the peace of the dead. So, I don't have food. Hunters are busy trapping birds in their nets. I have escaped narrowly. I don't know when my turn will come. I want to leave this country before it comes," said the crow.

"What are your travel plans then," asked the mouse.

"There is a big lake in the middle of a vast forest in the south. I have a friend there, a turtle whose name is Mandharaka. He is a great host who will feed me with fish, pieces of meat etc. I will spend my time happily with him daily discussing small and big things in the world. I don't want to die miserably in a hunter's net."

Laghupatanaka continued, "Elders have always said that they are happy who are fortunate not to witness the destruction of crops and the decline of the people. Nothing is impossible for a competent person. There is no land that does not respond to effort. For a scholar every country is his own country and there is no enemy for a sweet-tongued person. Learning and power are not the same. Remember that the king is respected only in his country but a scholar is honoured everywhere."



Hiranyaka said, "If that is so, I will also follow you. I am also very sad."

"Why are you sad?" asked the crow. "It is a long story. I shall tell you when I reach your friend's place," said the mouse.

"But how can you come with me," asked the crow. "I am a bird and can fly. You cannot do that," said the crow.

"That is no problem. I will sit on your back and we can fly off," suggested the mouse.

"That's an idea. I will be doubly happy there because I have the company of the turtle and also yours. Come, get on to my back. We will fly together," said the crow.

On a fine day, the crow with the mouse on his back flew to the great lake in the middle of the forest. His friend Mandharaka, the turtle, saw him with the mouse on his back and thought, "This crow is not an ordinary crow. It is better I hide from him." The turtle immediately ducked under water.

But the crow saw the turtle going down and understood that his friend did not recognise him. The crow then left the mouse at the bottom of a tree and flying to the top of it loudly addressed the turtle, "O Mandharaka, I am your friend Laghupatanaka. Come out and welcome me who has come to see an old friend after a long time."



Recognising his friend's voice, Mandharaka came out of the water and with tears of joy in his eyes, said, "O Laghupatanaka, I am so happy you have come. Come and hug me. We are meeting after a long time and that's why I could not immediately recognise you. You know the saying that you should not make friends with him whose power and pedigree are not known to you."

The crow then came down from the tree and the two of them embraced each other in joy. They began telling each other about what happened in the long interval of their separation. The mouse, Hiranyaka, too came out of the hole he was hiding in, greeted the turtle and sat by the crow's side. The turtle asked the crow, "O Laghupatanaka, who is this little friend of yours? Why did you bring him here on your back though he is your food."

"He is my friend Hiranyaka. I can't live without him. Just as you can't count the stars in the sky and the sands on the seashore, I can't recount his great qualities. He is fed up with this world. That is why he has followed me on my visit to you," said the crow.

"How nice of you! You brought me a new friend." replied turtle. "Both of you can live here with me." And all three friends lived happily together.





Wedding of the Mouse

Once upon a time, a sage Salankayana was doing penance at the bank of the river. During his penance, a female mouse came there, running away from the wicked bird. The female mouse then prayed Salankayana, "O sage, please give me shelter in your hermitage. Otherwise, this wicked bird will kill me."

The female mouse's prayer moved the sage but he thought that if he took her home, people would laugh at him. So, he turned the mouse into a beautiful girl and took her home.

"Who is this beautiful girl?" asked the sage's wife. Where did you bring her from?"

"She is a female mouse. She needed protection from wicked bird. I turned her into a girl and brought her home. I will make her a mouse again," said the sage.

"Please don't do that. Let this mouse be a girl." pleaded his wife, "You have saved her life and therefore you have become her father. I don't have a child. Since you are her father, she becomes my daughter." The sage accepted her plea.

The girl grew into a beautiful woman and became an eligible bride. Salankayana told his wife, "The girl has come of age. It is not proper for her to remain in our house.

"It's all right. Look for a boy," said his wife.

Salankayana immediately summoned the Sun and told him, "This is my daughter. If she is willing to marry you, get ready to marry her."

He then showed the Sun to his daughter and asked her if she would marry him. She said that the Sun was very hot and she would prefer someone else. The sage then summoned the God of Clouds, the God of Wind and the God of Mountains. The girl rejected every one of them on one ground or the other.

Then the God of Mountains told the sage, "The most suitable candidate for your daughter is a mouse. He is more powerful than I am."

The sage then turned her into a mouse and gave her away to a king of mice in marriage.

Salankayana murmured: "Crow is a crow and cannot become an owl!! This girl is a mouse, and the mouse she will be!!!"





Common Sense

Four friends lived in a city. Three of them were very learned in all sciences but had no common sense. The fourth boy named Subuddhi was not well-versed in scriptures or sciences but had a fund of common sense. One day all of them thought that there was no use of their learning unless it brought them money to live happily. Therefore, they decided to go out and seek the patronage of kings. They set out to meet patrons of learning.

On the way, the eldest of them pointing out to the fourth man told the others, "Friends, this fellow is an unlettered fool. He has common sense and nothing else. I am not going to share my earnings with this fellow. Let him go home." The second man also supported the eldest boy's suggestion.

But the third boy said, "Friends, it is not proper to send him back. We played together and he is one of us. Let us share our gains with him because elders have said: "He who has a narrow mind thinks this is mine, this is his. To a large-hearted person the whole world is his family." In the end, the other two agreed with the third boy's suggestion and let the common sense man accompany them.

As they continued to travel they reached a forest where they saw a heap of bones. One of them told the rest, "Look, here is an opportunity to test our learning. This animal is dead. Let us bring it to life using the knowledge we have acquired."

The first man said, "Okay, I will use my learning to assemble the bones into a skeleton." With the power of learning he ordered all the bones to come together and become a skeleton.

When the skeleton was ready, the second man commanded flesh and blood to fill the skeleton and skin to cover it. When the third man was about to bring life to the body, Subuddhi (fourth man), who had only common sense, warned him, "Look, this animal is a lion. If it comes to life, he will kill all of us."

The man who was to put life into the body of the animal told Subuddhi, "You are a fool. Do you think I will lose this opportunity to test my learning."

Subuddhi then told him to wait so that he could climb up a tree for safety and went up a tree. When the first man gave him life, the lion came alive and killed all the three learned men. At last, common sense of Subuddhi turned out to be superior.





Make your own Shiva-linga

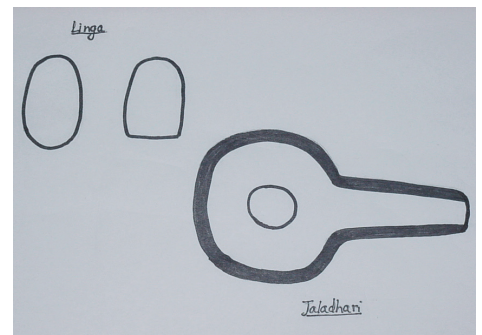
(This project may be little difficult. Take adult's help if needed. But this one becomes very strong once dried and is waterproof.)

Material Required:

White bread, Elmer's glue, black acrylic paint, small flowers, yellow color, etc for decoration.

Procedure:

Take off the crusts from 4 slices of bread and tear into very small pieces. Add 3 tsp of glue and 2 to 3 tsp of black paint and keep mixing until the dough has the consistency of chappati dough. Add a little more of glue or paint if required. Remove dough stuck to your hands and take a little of oil to knead it (like in chappati dough). Do not take more than 2-3 tsp of oil. Once the dough is kneaded smooth wrap it up in plastic wrap and wash your hands clean.



Now take 2-3 drops of oil and smear on your hands. Take 1/3 rd of the dough and roll into an egg shape, flatten one end. This is the Linga. Take a little more about 1 inch dough and keep aside. The rest flatten with a rolling pin and cut the shape of the Jaladhari as seen in the picture.

With the leftovers from the cut knead and roll into a rope so as to make the border of the Jaladhari. Place the Linga in the centre of the Jaladhari with some glue and set it firm. The Shiva-linga is ready. After this dries draw the gandha (yellow) and place some decorative flowers and a leaf cut as a bilwapatra. This project dries hard and is waterproof. A good keepsake!



-: Exercise :-

Fill up the blanks (Refer the poem - Hindu Months)

- 1) _____ is the first month of the Hindu Calendar.
 a) Chaitra b) Jyeshtha c) Magha d) None of these
- 2) _____ is the fifth month of the Hindu Calendar.
 a) Chaitra b) Shravana c) Magha d) None of these
- 3) _____ is the last month of the Hindu Calendar.
 a) Kartika b) Falguna c) Magha d) None of these

Questions:

- 1) What is the moral of the story - true friends?

- 2) What is the moral of the story - wedding of the mouse.

- 3) What is the moral of the story - common sense?

Shloka

सरस्वति वंदना (Praise of Goddess Saraswati)

सरस्वति नमस्तुभ्यम्	saraswati namastubhyam
वरदे कामरूपिणि ।	varade kämarupiëi ।
विद्यारम्भं करिष्यामि	vidyârambhaà kariñyâmi
सिद्धिर्भवतु मे सदा ॥	siddhirbhavatu me sadä । ।

Meaning:

Oh Bhagavati Saraswati, I bow to you, the fulfiller of my wishes. I begin my studies seeking your blessings so that I shall always be successful.

Subhashitam (Words of wisdom)

गुणाः सर्वत्र पूज्यन्ते ।

guNAaH sarvatra puujyante .

Meaning: Virtues are respected everywhere.

Amrutvachan (Quotes)

Yesterday is History. Tomorrow is a Mystery. Today is a gift, that's why we call it - The Present.

- Eleanor Roosevelt



Poem - Hindu Months

The Hindus, our seers have had a comprehensive study of time. They designed a calendar named Panchang or Kalaganana. The minute details covered by those fantastic minds in reckoning time is outstanding. There are twelve months according to Hindu calendar. Following poem helps to memorize those months and their significance.

Chaitra is first	Rama, Mahavira are born
Vaishakha is second	Buddha attaining Nirvana
Jyeshtha is third	Savitri saving Satyavana
Ashadha is fourth	Worship Guru giving Gyana
Shravana is fifth Tying Rakshabandhana	Krishna's birth in jail That shall never fail
Bhadrapada is sixth Halting ten days	When Ganesha arrives In procession he leaves
Ashvina is seventh Holidays of Diwali	With Dashahara fight Festival of light
Kartika is eighth	Guru Nanaka is born
Margashirsha is nineth	When Gita adorns
Pusha is tenth Bihu in the east	It is Sankranti day Pongal at the bay
Magha is eleventh	It is month of the Sun
Falguna is twelfth	Of Holi and fun.





The monkey and the crocodile

Once upon a time there lived a monkey named Red-face on a tree by the side of the sea. The tree was an apple tree and the fruits it bore were sweet as nectar. Once a crocodile named Ugly-Mug swam ashore and Red-face threw apples at him and asked him to taste them. Ugly-Mug started coming everyday ashore and eat the fruits thrown by Red-face and soon they became good friends. Ugly-Mug used to take some fruits to his home to his wife.

His wife was a greedy lady and asked him as to where he got the nectar filled apples. Ugly-Mug told about his friend the monkey. The lady was greedy and pleaded with her husband that she would like to eat the monkey's heart, as a person who gave such tasty fruits must have a heart filled with nectar. Ugly-Mug was angered and did not agree to deceiving his friend. But she then insisted on not eating anything till he brought her his friend's heart. Out of desperation, Ugly-mug started making plans for killing his friend.

He came back to Red-face and entreated him with an invitation to his house for supper stating that his wife would be thrilled to have him home and also that she was very anxious to meet such a nice friend. Poor Red-face believed the story but was asking his friend as to how he could cross the sea to reach the house of the crocodile on the other side. Ugly-mug then offered to carry him on his back and the monkey agreed.

In the middle of the sea, Ugly-mug took the crocodile deep into the ocean to kill the monkey. The monkey was frightened and asked the crocodile why he was doing this. Ugly-mug told him that his wife wanted to eat the monkey's heart filled with nectar. Red-face immediately asked it to take him back to the tree as he told him that he had left his other heart which was full of nectar back at the tree. The foolish crocodile then swam back to the tree and the terrified monkey jumped up the tree never to return. Upon being asked as to why she was not returning, the monkey answered to the crocodile that he had only one heart and he had been fooled and scolded his friend for misusing his friendship.

The crocodile was ashamed at what happened and asked the monkey if he could make any amends. And he was also scared that his wife would not let him back in because he had returned without the monkey's heart. Just then he heard that a huge crocodile had occupied the house of his. The monkey advised him to fight the he-crocodile and drive him out of his home and gain his wife's confidence. His advice the crocodile followed and he was back happy with his wife.

MORAL: Wit is superior to brute force.





The day dreaming priest

Once upon a time there lived a priest who was extremely lazy and poor at the same time. He did not want to do any hard work but used to dream of being rich one day. He got his food by begging for alms. One morning he got a pot of milk as part of the alms. He was extremely delighted and went home with the pot of milk. He boiled the milk, drank some of it and put the remaining milk in a pot. He added slight curds in the pot for converting the milk to curd. He then lay down to rest.

He was extremely delighted at the pot of milk he found and started dreaming about the pot of curd while he lay asleep. He dreamt that if he could become rich somehow all his miseries would be gone. His thoughts turned to the pot of milk he had set to form curd. He dreamt on : "By morning the pot of milk would set, it would be converted to curd. I would churn the curd and make butter from it. I would heat the butter and make ghee out of it. I will go to that market and sell that ghee, and make some money. With that money i will buy a hen. The hen will lay may eggs which will hatch and there will be many more hens and cocks. These cocks and hen will in turn lay hundreds of eggs and I will soon have a poultry farm of my own." He kept on imagining.

"I will sell all the hens of my poultry and buy some cows, and open a milk dairy. All the town people will buy milk from me. I will be very rich and soon I shall buy jewellery. The king will buy all the jewellery from me. I will be so rich that I will be able to marry an exceptionally beautiful girl from a rich family. Soon I will have a handsome son. If he does any mischief I will be very angry and to teach him a lesson, I will hit him with a big stick." During this dream, he involuntarily picked up the stick next to his bed and thinking that he was beating his son, raised the stick and hit the pot. The pot of milk broke and he awoke from his sleep. Only then did he realise he was daydreaming.

MORAL: There is no substitute for hard work. Dreams cannot be fulfilled without hard work.





The foolish lion and the clever rabbit

Once upon a time there lived a ferocious lion in the forest. It was a greedy lion and started killing animals in the forest indiscriminately. Seeing this, the animals gathered and decided to approach the lion with the offer of one animal of each species volunteering itself to be eaten by the lion everyday. So every day it was the turn of one of the animals and in the end came the rabbits' turn.

The rabbits chose a old rabbit among them. The rabbit was wise and old. It took its own sweet time to go to the Lion. The Lion was getting impatient on not seeing any animal come by and swore to kill all animals the next day.

The rabbit then strode along to the Lion by sunset. The Lion was angry at him. But the wise rabbit was calm and slowly told the Lion that it was not his fault. He told the Lion that a group of rabbits were coming to him for the day when on the way, an angry Lion attacked them all and ate all rabbits but himself.

Somehow he escaped to reach safely, the rabbit said. He said that the other Lion was challenging the supremacy of his Lordship the Lion. The Lion was naturally very enraged and asked to be taken to the location of the other Lion.

The wise rabbit agreed and led the Lion towards a deep well filled with water. Then he showed the Lion his reflection in the water of the well. The Lion was furious and started growling and naturally its image in the water, the other Lion, was also equally angry. Then the Lion jumped into the water at the other Lion to attack it, and so lost its life in the well. Thus the wise rabbit saved the forest and its inhabitants from the proud Lion.

MORAL: Wit is superior to brute force.





CD Wind Chime/Bell

Material Required:

2 CDs gone waste (shiny on both sides or printed on side), OM sticker, unfinished wind chime or a small bell (from the craft store or dollar store), beads, sequins etc for decoration, hot glue gun or any good bonding glue, thin golden lace about 15 inches.

Procedure:

Remove the upper show piece part of the wind chime. Keep the rods attached to its disc. Tie the two ends of the golden lace to the wind chime. Now you have the chime hanging on a 7 inch loop of the lace. Put OM stickers on the shiny side of the CD so as to cover the centre.

Take the 2 CDs with OM sides facing out and the printed side (if it has one) held facing each other. Lay one CD down with the golden lace on it in such a way that the chime is at the bottom and some part of the loop showing on top for hanging. Now put strong glue over it and place the other CD on top in the manner explained above. After it has dried, decorate around the OM. Our project is now ready to be hung anywhere you want.



Variation:

If you have a CD that is glossy on both sides take an adult's help to make 2 holes diagonally opposite near its edges. Make holes by heating a slim nail on a burner and piercing it thru the CD. Stick OM stickers to cover the centre of the CD on both sides. From one end you hang a chime or a bell and the other end to put some loop for hanging the project. Decorate around the OM.



-: Exercise :-

Fill up the blanks (refer the poem - Hindu Months)

- 1) _____ is the third month of the Hindu Calendar.
a) Chaitra b) Vaishakha c) Jyeshtha d) None of these
- 2) _____ is the tenth month of the Hindu Calendar.
a) Pusha b) Vaishakha c) Chaitra d) None of these
- 3) _____ is the sixth month of the Hindu Calendar.
a) Ashvina b) Bhadrapada c) Falguna d) None of these
- 4) _____ is the seventh month of the Hindu Calendar.
a) Ashvina b) Bhadrapada c) Falguna d) None of these

Questions:

- 1) What is the moral of the story - The monkey and the crocodile?

- 2) What is the moral of the story - The day dreaming priest?

- 3) What is the moral of the story - The foolish lion and the clever rabbit?

