



CHAPTER 14

HARMONY IN MOTION

India boasts of a rich tapestry of traditional dances, each deeply rooted in the country's diverse cultural heritage. These dances are not merely an expression of movement, but also convey stories, emotions and spirituality.

A traditional dance may be *shastriya nritya* or *loka nritya*. The variety of dance in our culture spreads different fragrance that are unique in nature.

We have numerous instruments, properties, costumes, languages and cultural beliefs that are performed by several groups of people. Such traditional dances uplift our nation and reinforce societal and moral integrity.

Now, it is your responsibility to preserve and protect our rich cultural heritage of dance.



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ACTIVITY 1: OUR TRADITIONAL DANCE

Choose any traditional dance of your region and the song related to it.

Dance in a rhythm with the instruments used in your region.



Bihu



Sidi Dhamal dance from Gujarat

Example 1: *Bihu* of Assam uses an instrument called *dhol* and a unique wind instrument made of buffalo horn called *pepa*.

Example 2: *Sidi Dhamal* dance is from Gujarat. It uses big drums as an instrument during performance.

Are you ready to perform? Just wait for a moment. Have you discussed what props (if any like pots, sticks, rings...) you will use in your dance?

Do you have an idea of the costumes used in a particular dance that you are going to perform?

All dances in India are rooted in our cultural heritage. Not only does the dance consist of movement, rhythm, music but also includes costume, prop, make-up and stage position.

ACTIVITY 2: MAKING OF DANCE JEWELLERY AND PROPS

Discuss with your respective groups about the costumes required for the dance. Try to make it yourself using cardboard, coloured paper, decorative ribbons, etc.

Example: Dance jewellery like a necklace, a head dress, a Hanuman face mask and a queen's crown.



Earrings



Necklace



Headgear



Ghungroo

ACTIVITY 3: DRAW A JEWELLERY OR PROP OF YOUR CHOICE



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Try to make them by using paper, cardboard, fabric, etc.



Dancing with a net



Musicians sitting for a programme

ACTIVITY 4: KNOWLEDGE OF PERFORMANCE SPACE

Discuss the following in the class:

- Placing the required props on the stage without distracting the performance.
- Designing costumes that feel comfortable (lifting hands and legs, jumping, flipping, etc.) to dance in.
- Entry and exit from the stage through two sides. (Refer to the stage structure in the theatre section.)

Different dance forms have different props and stage decorations. Hope every element of dance is clear to all.

Till now, you have worked in small groups. Going forward, you will be working as a collective group consisting of all the members of the class.

Now, you are going to explore a new thing!

Dance Drama (*Natya*)

We are not only aware of the word 'dance' but also 'drama'.

Will it work if we combine both dance and drama?

Dance drama or *natya* is a form of creative expression where the participants use dance as a means to tell a story or convey a message using steps, body and *hastamudras* often accompanied by songs and music.



Dance drama requires—
coordination, expression and
collaboration among performers.

Coordination



Expression



Collaboration among Performers



Dance drama brings a narrative through the art of movement and acting in tandem. Dance dramas can be inspired by various themes, cultures or historical events, providing a rich and diverse platform for artistic exploration.

ACTIVITY 5: SHARING A STORY OF NATURE

Search and discuss a story related to nature or environment, or the freedom movement that conveys a moral value to society.

Examples

Stories related to—

- Avoiding plastic use.
- Saving waterbodies.
- Excessive use of a mobile phone.
- Organic farming.
- Equality in education.

Note: Choose a story from the English or any other language textbook.

Choose and share an appropriate story in the class that you can relate to your surrounding situation and region.

A script is a written document containing dialogues, songs, action, and direction for the performance or presentation of dance drama, *natya*. In dance, dialogue is mostly through *hastamudras* though words can also be used.

Think ...

Discuss ...

Write ...

For a selected story or a poem, try to write a script and share ideas with each other to create a *natya*.

While writing the script, think of dialogues with *hastamudras*, characters, costumes, props and stage requirements.

In this activity, you are giving life to all characters of the story.

Practice *hastamudras*, hand and body movements for *natya* performance.

Compile elements of rhythm, steps, movements, *hastamudras*, and postures into the poem and practice.

Also, identify dance with the rhythmic patterns using *bols* or *collukettus* (for example, *tha ka dhi mi*) and *sargams* (often learnt in music class) which are incorporated in *natya*.

Practice facial expressions which are a key element in *natya*. All of you have to work collaboratively for a systematic outcome of your *natya*.



ACTIVITY 6: CHOREOGRAPHY AND PERFORMING NATYA

Come together and choreograph a *natya* which comprises dialogues, rhythmic music, dance beats and movements by working as a team.



In this stage of choreography, we need to look into the props, costumes, jewellery, stage decoration and so on.

Practice with the props, beforehand while performing so that you can handle them comfortably.

Once the choreography is done, it's time to practice.

Practice! Practice! Practice!

The key element of success is practice ...

After practice of *natya*, now it's time to rehearse on the stage.

Well done!

Perform your *natya* in front of your class or a large audience.