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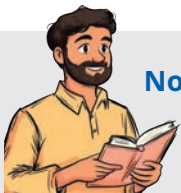


Natya is storytelling through performance. You have read the description of this earlier in the book and read about two *natya* traditions.

In this chapter, you will explore how dance elements can be incorporated into *natya*.

A story can be made into a performance with elements of dance and choreography, dialogues, musical elements with songs, musical instruments, and costumes and make up. Discuss about telling a story and how you can incorporate dance movements in *natya* with your friends. A story is given below for you to consider or you can choose your own story for presentation and have fun putting it together with choreography.

So, let us dive into this chapter by reading a story and then dancing to the story. That will be interesting and enjoyable.



Note to the Teacher: Do this activity according to your regional languages and practices.

One lazy afternoon, Grandma gathered the children to tell them the story of Krishna and the snake Kaliya. She began her story in a soft animated voice bringing the story alive with her dramatic narration.





“Long ago, on the banks of the river Kalindi, there lived a monstrous serpent called Kaliya Naag. He was a terrible creature, hissing and coiling, frightening everyone who came near him. Even birds would not fly over the river, and children were too scared to play by its banks. But one day, little Krishna arrived.”

“Now, Krishna was not afraid of anything. He saw the frightened children and decided to help them. He climbed the tallest tree by the river, flute in hand, and began to play it. The music was so sweet and enchanting that it flowed over the water like sunlight on ripples. Even Kaliya couldn’t resist. The great serpent rose from the river, swaying to the melody, his anger forgotten and his eyes shut in joy. Then, Krishna leapt onto Kaliya’s hood and began to dance. Oh, how he danced! His tender feet moved nimbly with such grace and rhythm that even Kaliya, fierce as he was, couldn’t help but join in. Soon, birds were

singing again, animals came out of hiding, and the children clapped and cheered. Kaliya calmed down and happily, slipped away into the river, never to trouble anyone again.”

The children listened with rapt attention and then excitedly asked grandma to help them enact this *natya*.

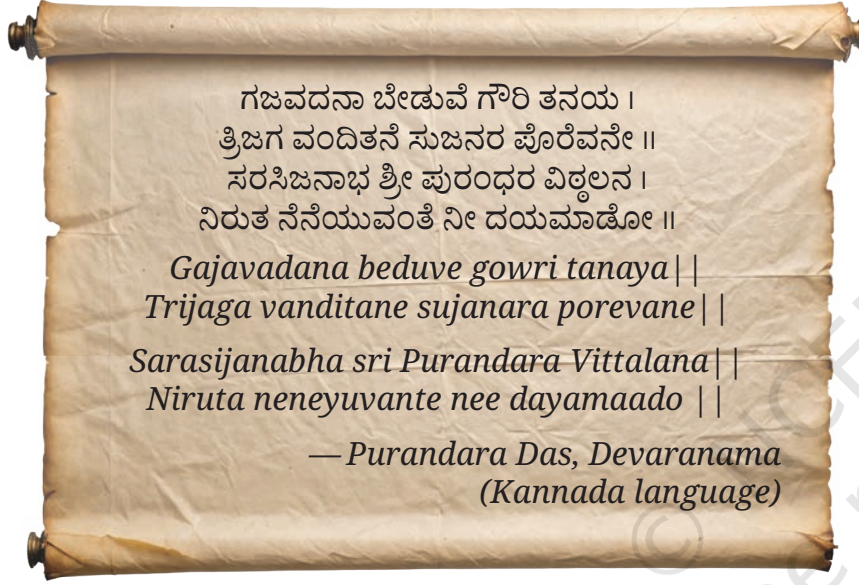
She replied, “Yes we have to plan and design the whole story, choreograph it with dance, music, enactment, costumes and stage design. You see children, through music and dance, even the wildest heart can be calmed. *Natya*—our beautiful art of storytelling—isn’t just for entertainment. It teaches, it heals, and it brings peace”.

All traditional performances begin with a salutation to seek blessings of the Almighty. Here you will see references of salutation and benediction with reference to *natya*.

She said, “In our traditions, every play begins and ends with gratitude. Before the performance, we seek blessings for its success—just as we start our day with a prayer or sing during the morning assembly at school. It helps us focus our mind and brings a sense of calm. The salutation is an essential part of any play’s preliminaries in the Indian *natya* tradition. Let us learn some prayers which can be recited as a salutation to the almighty and as benediction after the conclusion of the *natya*”.

Here is one example which you can use as a salutation in your performance or you can select your own.

SALUTATION



MEANING

Gajavadana—one who has elephant face (Ganesha)

Beduve—I pray

Gowri Tanaya—son of Gowri

Trijaga—the three worlds

Vanditane—worshipped

Sujanara — by good people

Porevane — protector

Oh elephant faced god! I pray for you. You are the Son of Goddess, Gowri (Parvati). You are worshiped by all the three worlds. You are the protector of all good people such as sages.

MEANING OF LAST STANZA

Sarasija Nabha — one who has lotus in his navel

Sri Purandara Vittalana — Lord Vishnu (pen name of purandara daasa)

Niruta — always

Neneyuvante — make me remember

Nee — you

Dayamaado — shower blessings

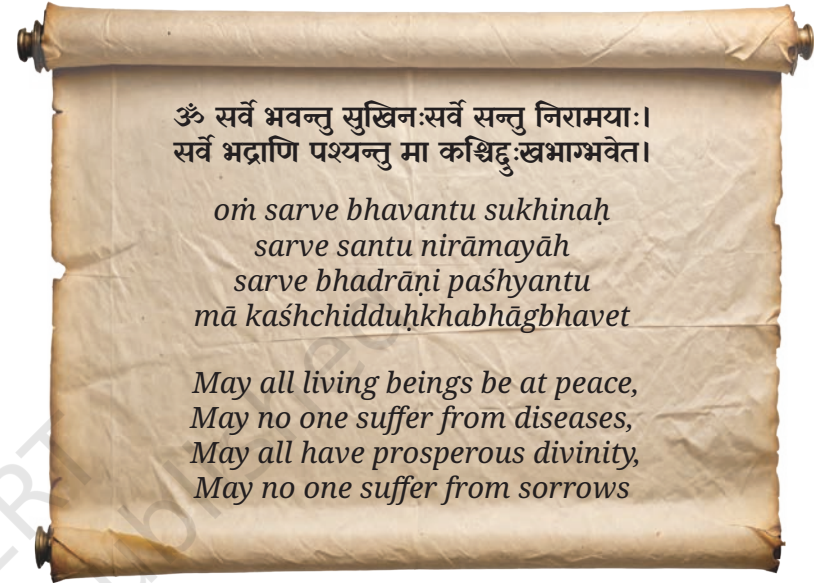
Oh Lord Vishnu (*Purandara Vittala*) the one who has lotus in his navel, shower your blessings to remember you at each and every movement.

BENEDICTION

Similarly, all performances ends with a benediction. She ended by saying, “And when the play ends, we bow to the audience to thank them for their time, and attention. After all, what is a performance without those who come to watch

it? This exchange of respect is what makes *natya* so special—it is not just about the story but about the connection it creates between those who perform and those who watch.”

Here is an example of a benediction.



ACTIVITY 14.1: PLANNING THE PERFORMANCE

You will note down all dance elements that can be incorporated into this *natya* format.

Divide yourselves into groups. Each group will work out certain dances for the story. The different sections can be:

MOVEMENT SELECTION

Think and discuss the appropriate dance movements to express emotions, and enhance the *natya*. Following must be added to the performance—

- ❖ Steps
- ❖ Rhythm and different beats (like 5, 6 and 7 beats) for appropriate scenes.
- ❖ Navarasa (*bhayanaka* for children, *raudra* for Kaliya, *veera* for Krishna, etc.)
- ❖ Appropriate body movements: Upper and lower torso, hip movements, and so on
- ❖ Hand gestures, animal *hastas*, jumps and spins

An example of how sections can be divided in reference to the story is given below.



Choreography

SECTIONS

- ❖ **Salutation:** Generally a salutation happens with dance movements. So choose a song and choreograph a salutation like a prayer dance.
- ❖ **Dance of Krishna and friends:** What steps and rhythms can you use here?

- ❖ **Movements of Kaliya and reactions of the children:** Can you use the twisting and circular hip movements for Kaliya. How will the children show fear?
- ❖ **The fight between Krishna and Kaliya:** Which steps and rhythm can be suitable for a fight sequence? Which jumps, spins and *hastas* can be added here?
- ❖ **Celebration after the defeat of Kaliya:** How will you compose a celebratory dance? You can use a song or *bandishes* from your music class to choreograph this.
- ❖ **Benediction:** Compose a benediction using *hastas*.

Now, you can discuss.

MUSIC SELECTION

Correct music elements need to be selected for various sections. Discuss which section can have percussion or vocal, etc. Choose the music or song that is traditionally used in your region.

COSTUMES AND PROPS

Decide on different props and costumes for the character. For example,



Peacock feather



Flute



Dhoti for
Krishna character



A blue *dupatta* to
symbolise the river



Masks for animals

ACTIVITY 14.2: PRACTISE AND PRESENTATION

Now comes the fun part, use your creativity to put together the movements worked out by each group, and perform your story with dance and movement as a grand finale.



ASSESSMENT

CHAPTER 14: NATYA

CG	C	Learning Outcomes	Teacher	Self
3	3.1	Understands storytelling		
3	3.1	Actively participates in making of <i>natya</i>		
3	3.1	Shares and collaborates with eagerness		
3	3.1	Imaginatively uses all aspects of performance in making this presentation		

Teacher's Comments and Student's Observations

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

	Examples of Assessment	Criteria for Assessment
Individual	❖ Show body postures in relation to geometrical shapes with a <i>hasta</i> like a sculpture ❖ One sequence of dance movement in rhythm ❖ Make one sentence using <i>hastas</i> ❖ Project work	❖ How many postures can they demonstrate with proper understanding and correlate accurately with sculpture ❖ Whether dance movement sequence is done with understanding the patterns practised ❖ Proper use of hands for conversation ❖ Content of project work
Group of 3 or 4	❖ Comfort and coordination in using hip movements. ❖ Putting together a performance with a story.	❖ Creativity ❖ Collaborative attitude

Teacher's Comments and Student's Observations

Doodles and Notes

