

**ACTIVITY 1. MOTHER EARTH APPROACHES LORD VISHNU FOR HELP**

**Summary:** Once there were many demons on the earth. They used to trouble innocent. Mother Earth was very disturbed. She, along with Lord Brahma and Shiva, approached Lord Vishnu for rescue. Lord Brahma sat in meditation and received Lord Vishnu's message: "The supreme personality, Krishna, will appear on the earth very soon. He will eradicate all the evil and restore peace on the earth".

**Cast:** Narrator, Mother Earth (*Prithvi*), Lord Brahma, Lord Shiva, Lord Vishnu, Goddess Lakshmi, Others [Surya (Sun), Chandra (Moon), Vayu (Wind), Varuna (Rain), Agni (Fire), Akasa (Sky)]

<b>SCENE 1</b>	(Conversation between Mother Earth and Lord Brahma seated on a lotus)
<i>Narrator</i>	More than 5,000 years ago ..... Mother Earth was disturbed by the atrocities of the demons and was very sad. She approached Lord Brahma with tears in her eyes.
<i>Mother Earth</i>	Respected Brahma, I have bad news to share. There are many sinful people on the earth. They are torturing innocent people and sacred animals. The situation has become too difficult for me to bear. Please rescue.
<i>Narrator</i>	Lord Brahma thoughtfully furrowed his eyebrow.
<i>Brahma</i>	Mother Earth, It is very unfortunate to know about the troubles caused by the demons. Only Lord Vishnu can rescue us now. O Lord Shiva and other protectors of this universe, let us proceed to the abode of Lord Vishnu.

<b>SCENE 2</b>	(Lord Vishnu lying down on Ananta Shesh in Shwetadvipa and Goddess Lakshmi sitting on his side with admiration)
<i>Narrator</i>	Shwetadvipa is a white island in the ocean of milk. Lord Vishnu looked majestic in jewels. Lord Brahma and others felt grateful and blessed to see Lord Vishnu. They offered prayers to Lord Vishnu.
<i>Mother Earth</i>	Hey Lord Vishnu, the sustainer of this Universe, We've gathered here today to pray for the rescue from demons.
<i>Narrator</i>	Though Vishnu smiled and did not speak a single word, all knew that their prayers have been heard. Awaiting on the shore of the ocean, they silently kneeled. The message from Vishnu was revealed.
<i>Vishnu</i>	It's time for me to appear on the earth. I will take birth in Yadu family soon to protect my devotees. The rule of demons must cease now. I will re-establish faith and remove burden on the earth. I would like all of you to assist me in this effort.
<i>Narrator</i>	Mother Earth was very satisfied after listening Lord Vishnu's message. All others also felt happy and returned to their places thinking about the appearance of Lord Vishnu as Krishna.

**Activity: Group Performance (Play)**

Enact the above story as a group performance. Use your imagination to prepare simple costumes. Add creative sounds and settings for special effects.

**ACTIVITY 2. SPOT-THE-DIFFERENCES**

The two pictures below of Lord Vishnu resting in the ocean of milk with Goddess Lakshmi sitting on his side look alike but there are 10 dissimilarities. Can you identify them?



**ACTIVITY 3. PANCHA MAHABHUTA**

According to ancient Vedic scientific thinking, all matter in the Universe is comprised of five elements, *apo*, *thejo*, *vayu*, *pruthvi*, and *akasha*. These are known as pancha mahabhuta. The word "element" in this context either refers to a state of matter (e.g. solid/Earth, liquid/water, gas/air, plasma/fire) or a type of energy or force rather than the chemical elements of modern science. All five elements are vital and have a key role in our lives, since our bodies are composed of these elements. These five elements could be interpreted to have the following functionalities.

<b>Element</b>	<b>Functionality</b>	<b>Sensory organ</b>
water ( <i>apo</i> )	creates the sensation of taste ( <i>rasa</i> )	tongue
fire ( <i>thejo</i> )	creates the visual impute of color ( <i>rupa</i> )	eyes
air ( <i>vayu</i> )	creates the physical sensation of touch ( <i>sparsa</i> )	skin
Earth ( <i>pruthvi</i> )	creates the sensation of smell and odor ( <i>gandha</i> )	nose
space ( <i>akasha</i> )	creates the sensation of sound ( <i>shabda</i> )	ear

The modern scientific states-of-matter, and, to a lesser extent, also the periodic table of the elements and the concept of combustion (fire) can be considered successors to such early models. As vital as these, pancha mahabhutas can also create natural disasters with deadly force. Think of tsunamis, wildfires, hurricanes, earthquakes, and thunderstorms.

In Hindu scriptures, the Sun (Surya) is also notably mentioned as the visible form of supreme power. A well-known Hindu mode of worship of the devotional movements of the Surya is done at the rising of the Sun, known as Sūrya Namaskāra (Sun Salutation). Twelve yogic postures are assumed in successive flowing movements to complete one namaskar and twelve sacred mantras are uttered.

We look at the Sun rising and setting every day. It's bright, it's big, and it warms us up. Our Sun happens to be the brightest object in our Universe and naturally we are really curious to know more about it. With advances in scientific understanding, we have slightly better quantitative understanding of the characteristics of the Sun. Here are a few facts.

- The Sun is a
  - star
  - satellite
  - planet
  - unidentified object
- Sun gives
  - light
  - energy
  - heat
  - all of the above

It may seem that energy comes from other sources such as electricity and gasoline but the ultimate source of energy for the Earth is nothing else but the Sun. Sunlight on the surface of the Earth is attenuated by the Earth's atmosphere so that less power arrives at the surface. This energy can be harnessed via a variety of natural and synthetic processes — photosynthesis by plants captures the

energy of Sunlight and converts it to chemical form (oxygen and reduced carbon compounds), while direct heating or electrical conversion by solar cells are used by solar power equipment to generate electricity or to do other useful work. The energy stored in petroleum and other fossil fuels was originally converted from Sunlight by photosynthesis in the distant past. Without the Sun, life on the Earth would not exist. It would be so cold that no living thing would be able to survive and our planet would be completely frozen. It defines the seasons, the harvests, and even the sleep patterns of all living creatures on Earth.

3. The Sun is at the center of our solar system and plays the role of a big anchor, which creates \_\_\_\_\_ force. This force keeps our planet and the other planets of the solar system in a small space called \_\_\_\_\_ galaxy. Without the Sun's binding, all the planets in our galaxy would simply fly off loose into the universe.
4. The Sun is the \_\_\_\_\_ star to the Earth. The Sun is 93 million miles away from the Earth!
5. The Earth orbits around the Sun. TRUE or FALSE
6. The Sun is way bigger than the Earth. The radius of the Sun is about \_\_\_\_\_ times bigger than that of the Earth. In fact, the Sun accounts for about 99.8% of our solar system mass!
7. Don't even think of touching the Sun. It's extremely HOT! The Sun's average surface temperature is 10,300°F. Compare that to the Earth's average temperature, which is \_\_\_\_ °F. The core temperature of the Sun is several million degrees!
8. We know that the Earth's structure consists of different layers. The Sun also has layers, but unlike the Earth, there is no solid surface. The surface of the Sun primarily consists of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ gases.
9. The Sun generates its energy by \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ nuclei into \_\_\_\_\_. The Sun is in a state of hydrostatic equilibrium, neither contracting nor expanding over time.
10. The Sun emits \_\_\_\_\_ light which has antiseptic properties and can be used to sanitize tools and water. It also causes Sunburn and has other medical effects such as the production of Vitamin D. The Earth's ozone layer strongly attenuates so that the amount of UV varies greatly with latitude and has been responsible for many biological adaptations.

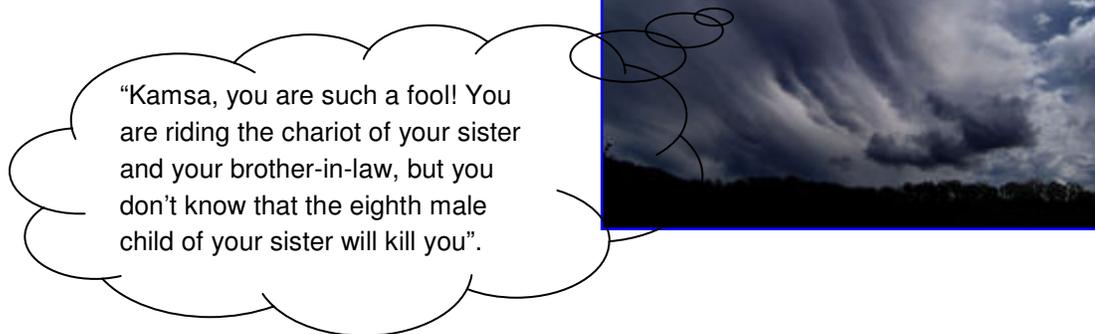
#### ACTIVITY 4. THE VOICE FROM THE SKY

Once upon a time, there was a king named Sura. He was a leader of the Yadu family. He ruled Surasena. His son, Vasudev, married Devaki, the daughter of king Devaka and the niece of King Ugrasena who ruled the city of Mathura (a city in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh).

Kamsa, the son of Ugrasena, was present at the marriage ceremony of his sister Devaki. After the wedding, Vasudev along with his wife Devaki, sat on his chariot to return to his home. Kamsa himself rode their chariot to please his sister and brother-in-law.

The chariot started moving forward. There were elephants, horses, hundreds of chariots decorated with gold ornaments, and well dressed people following them in a grand parade. On the way, musical instruments like conchshells, bugles, drums and kettledrums were being played. The atmosphere was very auspicious and joyful.

Suddenly a loud voice vibrated from the sky:



Kamsa was shocked to listen to the voice from the sky and turned very angry. To protect himself, he got ready to kill his own sister. He caught Devaki's hair and tried to slay her with his sword. Vasudev was shocked at Kamsa's wicked behavior. He tried to calm his cruel shameless brother-in-law. He said, “Kamsa! You are the most famous king and valiant warrior. How is it that you are ready to kill a woman, your own sister, at the time of her marriage? Why should you be so much afraid of death? Everyone has to die sooner or later.” Vasudev gave many good reasons to Kamsa to refrain from his atrocious action. But Kamsa was unmoved because he was always in the association of demons who never cared for good instructions.

Finally, to protect his wife, Vasudev offered a deal to Kamsa: “My dear brother-in-law, you are in no danger from your sister. Per voice from the sky, the danger is yet to come from the children of your sister. If there are any children born to us, I promise that I shall present all of them to you and you can do whatever you like”.

Kamsa knew that Vasudev always kept his promises. Hence he accepted Vasudev's deal and left Devaki unharmed. Vasudev was pleased with Kamsa's decision and he returned home with Devaki.

#### Activity: Draw a Picture

Draw a picture that illustrates the story “The Voice from the Sky”.

**ACTIVITY 5. VASUDEV KEEPS HIS PROMISE**

A son was born to Devaki and Vasudev a year after their marriage. Vasudev remembered his promise to Kamsa. With a heavy heart, he handed over his newly born son to Kamsa. Kamsa was very pleased. He said: "My dear Vasudev, you need not present this child to me. I am not in danger from this child. The voice from the sky said that the eighth male child born of Devaki would kill me. You can take this child back". Vasudev returned home with his first child. However, he knew that Kamsa is a wicked person and can't be trusted.

At that time, sage Narada visited Kamsa. Narada wanted the birth of Lord Krishna to take place as soon as possible to stop atrocities of Kamsa. He told Kamsa that king Nanda and all the residents of Gokul, Vasudev, Sura and all his relatives in the Yadu family are waiting for the appearance of the Lord. Narada warned that all of them had come to earth to take part in the Lord's pastimes.

Kamsa and his friends were all demons. Demons are always afraid of truth. Kamsa understood that since the gods had already appeared, Lord Krishna would be coming soon. Kamsa's demon friends misguided him. He was so wicked that he imprisoned even his own father, Ugrasena. He imprisoned Vasudev and Devaki and shackled in iron chains. Year after year, Vasudev and Devaki gave birth to a male child. Thinking each of them to be an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, Kamsa killed them one after the other.

*Vasudev kept his promise to Kamsa even though it was very painful.  
What value did you learn from Vasudev?*



*Write a sentence on how you kept your promise.  
e.g.: I promised my parents that I will clean my room.*



*Write a sentence on how you failed to keep your word.  
e.g.: I promised to complete my homework in time. But I forgot.*



**ACTIVITY 6. BALARAMA'S APPEARANCE**

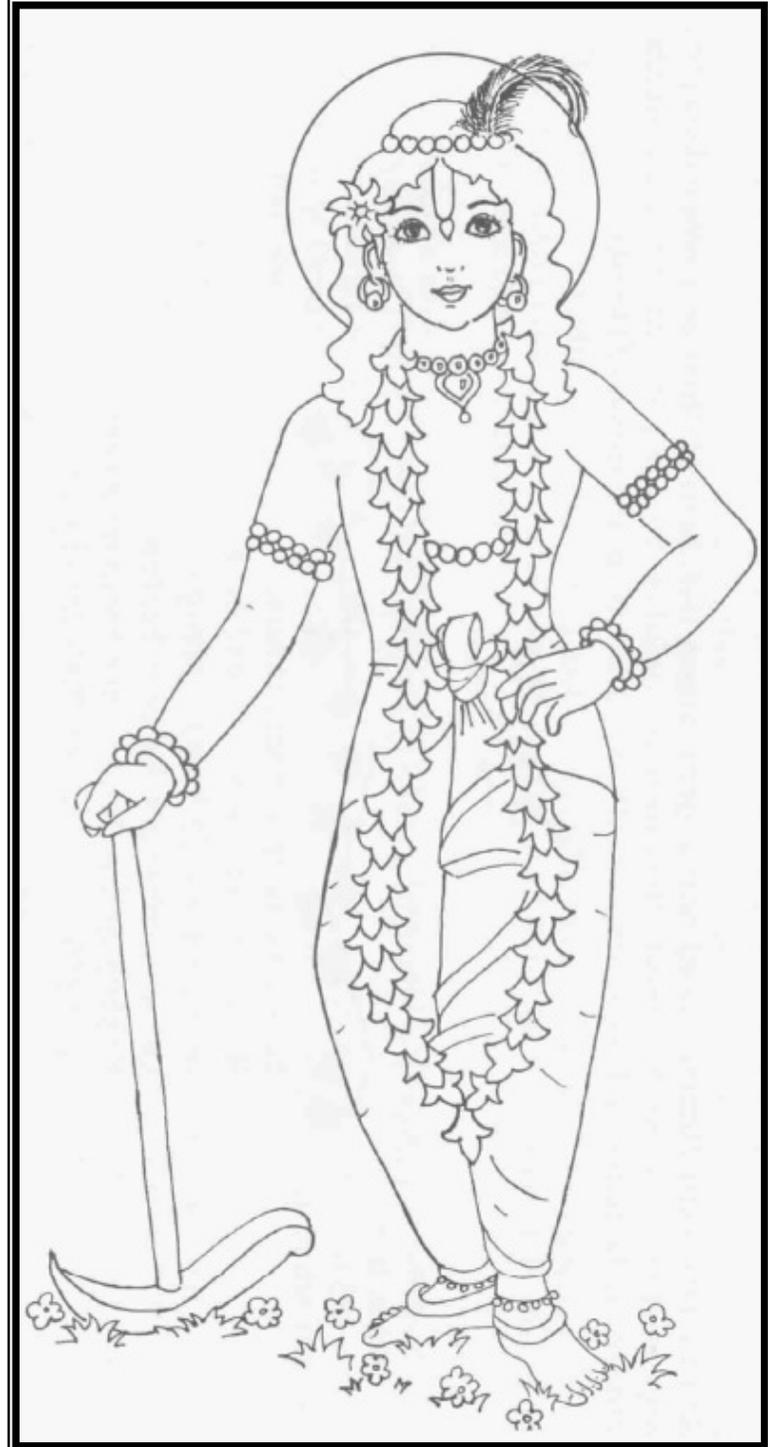
Kamsa became friendly with many other demon kings and turned to be a powerful king. He became the most deadly enemy of the Yadu dynasty in which Krishna was about to take birth. Due to Kamsa's atrocities, members of the Yadu and Bhoja families were displaced and took shelter in different locations. Some were even living in the mountain caves in fear of Kamsa.

When Devaki's seventh child was about to be born, an expansion of Krishna known as Ananta Shesh appeared within her womb. The Lord called Yogamaya and said: "My expansion Ananta Shesh is in the womb of Devaki. Arrange the transfer of Ananta Shesh from the womb of Devaki to the womb of Rohini, second wife of Vasudev. The child born to Rohini will be known as Balarama. *Bala* in Sanskrit means not only the physical strength but also spiritual strength by which devotional service can be performed. Rama means who brings joy. I will personally appear in the womb of Devaki and you shall appear as the daughter of Nanda and Yashoda".

After this arrangement, Krishna entered the womb of Devaki. With Lord Krishna in her womb, Devaki became peaceful and her beauty enhanced. Kamsa noticed some changes in his sister and was scared. He was expecting the eighth child of her to be the threat for him and decided to wait. In his fear, he started to think of Krishna all the time, but as an enemy. Lord Brahma, Lord Shiva, sages like Narada, and others made an invisible appearance in the house of Kamsa to offer prayers to Lord Krishna in the womb of Devaki.

**Activity: Coloring**

Color the picture of Lord Balarama.



**ACTIVITY 7. LORD KRISHNA APPEARS**

It was time for the appearance of Lord Krishna. The rivers were flowing full of water. The lakes were beautifully decorated with lotus flowers. The forests were full with beautiful birds and peacocks. The birds were singing melodiously. The peacocks were dancing in joy. The wind was blowing pleasantly carrying the aroma of different flowers. The sages and residents of all the planets were offering prayers to the Lord. The angels were dancing in ecstasy. On the eighth day of the waning moon, Lord Krishna appeared.

Vasudev saw Lord Krishna, a wonderful child born as a baby with four hands holding conch-shell, club, disc, and lotus flower. He was decorated with the mark of Shrivatsa and necklace of Kaustubha stone. He was dressed in yellow silk garments and appeared dazzling like a blackish cloud. He was wearing a crown bedecked with diamonds and other precious stones.

Vasudev was very happy to see this baby. He began to offer prayers: "My Lord, in spite of being the supreme controller, you are kind to appear in my home. The purpose of your appearance is to eradicate demons in the form of royal princes and restore peace in the universe. Although you appear as a child in the womb of Devaki, you are always in your abode, Vaikunth. You can simultaneously expand yourself in millions of forms". Devaki expressed her motherly affection with many prayers. She prayed, "I am thrilled that you imitate the activities of ordinary human beings to please your devotees. Out of fear of Kamsa, I request that you conceal your four-armed form and assume the form of an ordinary child".

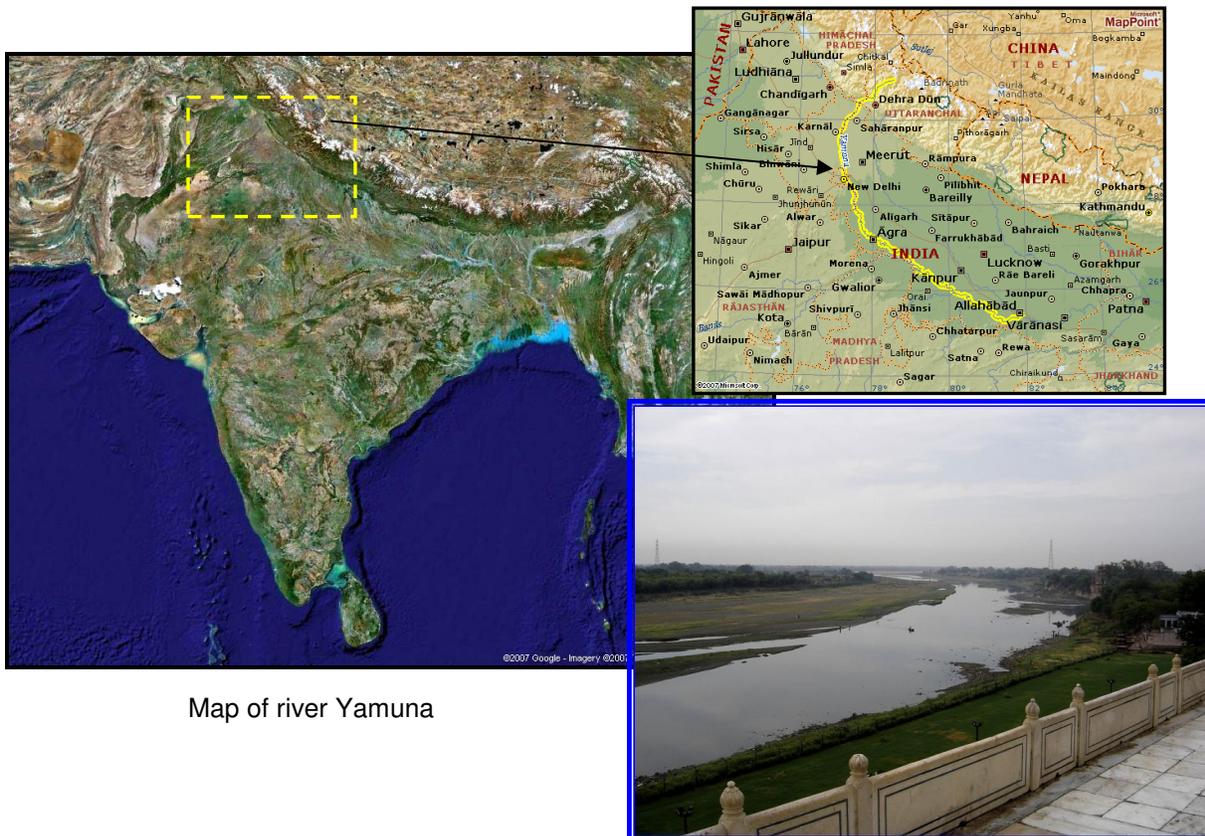
Match the three columns based on the story on Krishna's appearance.

1. The birds	blowing	prayers
2. The wind	dancing	pleasantly
3. The rivers	dancing	melodiously
4. The lakes	decorated with	lotus flowers
5. The sages	filled with	in joy
6. The peacocks	flowing	in ecstasy
7. The forests	offering	full of water
8. The angels	singing	birds and peacocks

### ACTIVITY 8. CROSSING THE RIVER YAMUNA

The Lord was pleased to hear the prayers of Devaki and Vasudev. He replied, "In the age of Svayambhuva Manu, your name was Prishni and Vasudeva was Sutapa, one of the Prajapatis. Both of you performed many sacrifices. You were able to control your mind and senses. You were always thinking of me in your heart. After many years, I appeared before you just to fulfill your desire. At that time you wished to have me born as your son. I gave you the benediction that I would take birth as your son three times. I appeared as your son named Prshinigarbha. In the next age, you took birth as Aditi and Kashyapa and I became your child named Upendra. At that time my form was like a dwarf. Therefore, I was also known as Vamanadeva. Now, for the third time, I have appeared as your son Krishna."

Krishna asked Vasudev to carry him to Gokula and exchange him with the daughter born to Yashoda. Krishna turned into an ordinary child. By the influence of Yoga Maya, Vasudev's shackles opened, all the residents of Kamsa's palace fell into a deep sleep, and all the palace doors opened. When Vasudev was carrying Krishna in a straw basket, the darkness disappeared. It was raining. Lord Shesha, in the form of a serpent, spread his hoods over the head of Vasudev to protect Krishna from rain. When Vasudev reached the bank of the river Yamuna, the river was flowing full. Then an amazing incident happened. The river gave passage so that Vasudev could easily crossover to the other side. Vasudev went to the house of Nanda Maharaja in Gokula. Everyone was asleep there. Vasudev silently entered the house, kept baby Krishna on Yashoda's bed and picked up the baby girl born to her. Then he returned to the prison of Kamsa and put the girl on the lap of Devaki. The palace doors closed automatically and Vasudev's handcuffs were locked. Everything is back in place so that there were no signs for Kamsa to doubt that something has happened.



Map of river Yamuna

View of the River Yamuna from the terrace of the Taj Mahal.

**ACTIVITY 9. STORY READING WITH EMBEDDED PICTURES**

Take a note of the pictures below and remember them.



Devaki and Vasudev



Nanda and Yashoda



Kamsa



Gokula



Krishna



Baby girl



Lord Shesha



Straw basket



Cloud or rain



doors closed



doors opened



Guards awoke



Guards slept



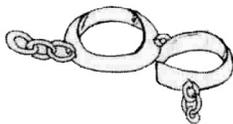
ornaments



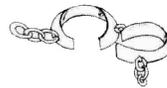
Palace



Peacock feather



handcuffs locked



handcuffs opened

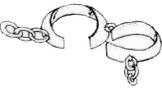


Vasudev carried baby girl



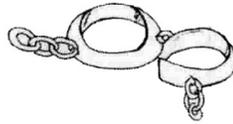
River Yamuna

The following story has embedded pictures illustrated in the previous page. Read the story by replacing pictures with words.

 were happy to see  in the form of a wonderful baby. Baby  was dressed in yellow garments and decorated with shining . His complexion was like a  and there was a  on his hair.  asked  to carry him to  and exchange him with the  born to . By the influence of Yogamaya, all the  in the  of , the palace , and 's .  put baby  in a  and went out. The darkness disappeared. At that time it there was a heavy .  spread his hoods on the head of  to protect them. When  reached the banks of the , the waves were rising and falling. Then a wonderful thing happened. The  gave passage and  could easily cross the river.  reached the house of  in . Everyone was sleeping. He silently entered the house. He put baby  on Yashoda's bed and picked up the  born to her. Then  and returned to the  of . He went inside the jail. The  put the



on the lap of Devaki. Then his



. Everything happened so quietly that



did not know so many things had happened. After sometime, the



and heard the



crying. The guards informed

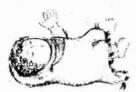


. He came running to kill the baby.



begged "My

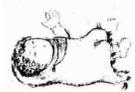
dear brother, please do not kill this



". Cruel



did not listen. He grabbed the



and tried to smash her on a stone. The



slipped out of his hands and rose into the sky. She

appeared in a beautiful form with eight arms. She was younger sister of lord Vishnu. She said: " ,  
how dare you want to kill me? The child who is going to end your atrocities, has already born somewhere

else in this world before me. Don't be so cruel to your poor sister



".



was frightened and

released



. He begged them to pardon him for his bad actions.



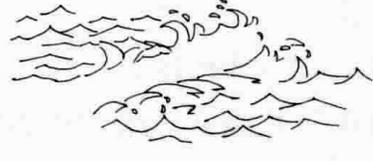
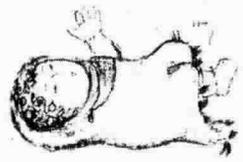
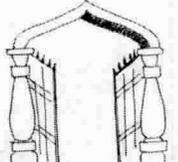
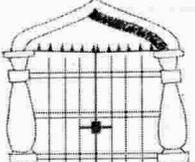
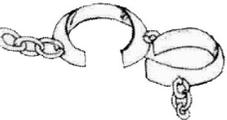
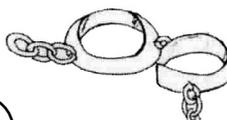
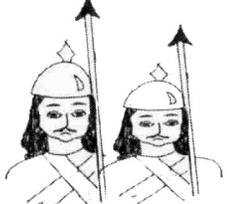
forgave



and returned to their home.

**ACTIVITY 10. STORY SEQUENCING**

You just read the story on how baby Krishna was transferred from Madhura to Gokula. This story sequence is depicted in the following pictures. However, these pictures got mixed up. Could you number them in the correct sequence and write a brief sentence for each picture?

 <p>○</p>	 <p>○</p>	 <p>○</p>
 <p>○</p>	 <p>○</p>	 <p>○</p>
 <p>○</p>	 <p>○</p>	 <p>○</p>
 <p>○</p>	 <p>○</p>	 <p>○</p>
 <p>○</p>	 <p>○</p>	 <p>○</p>

**ACTIVITY 11. KAMSA REPENTS**

Vasudev adjusted all the doors and gates and sat down. The gatekeepers awoke and heard the newborn infant crying. They informed Kamsa immediately. Kamsa got up from his bed and exclaimed, "Now the child that threatens my life is born". Devaki, on seeing her brother, begged, "Do not kill this female child. The omen was that you will be killed by a male child. My dear brother, you have already killed many of my children. Please spare this baby girl". Cruel Kamsa did not listen. He grabbed the child and tried smash her on a stone mercilessly. However, the child slipped out of his hands, went up in the sky and appeared as Goddess Durga, the younger sister of Vishnu. She was beautifully decorated. In her eight hands, she held a bow, lancet, arrows, bell, conchshell, disc, club, and shield. Everyone offered her gifts and prayers.

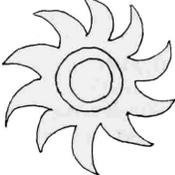
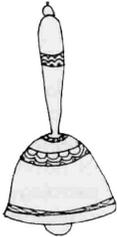
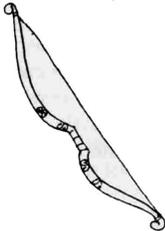
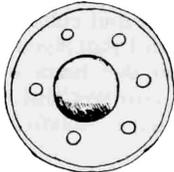
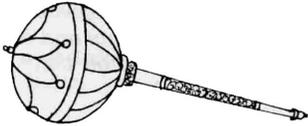
Goddess Durga said, "You are such a fool. The child who will kill you is already born before me somewhere within this world. Don't be cruel to your sister". Kamsa was scared with the voice of Durga and released Vasudev and Devaki from the prison. He begged mercy from them for all his bad deeds. When Devaki saw her brother so repentant she became pacified. Vasudev also forgave Kamsa. He explained that all his cruel activities were due to so much attachment to his body.



Next day, Kamsa called all his ministers and told them everything that happened. Since all of them were demons, they gave foolish advises to Kamsa. They suggested to kill all the children born within the last ten days everywhere. Following the bad advice, Kamsa ordered to harass saintly persons.

Krishna and Yogamaya appeared as brother and sister. Yogamaya has many expansions such as Durga, Ambika, and Vijaya. Unscramble the following words that represent the paraphernalia of Goddess Durga.

Unscramble the following words based on the clues shown in pictures.

	LEBL	.....		
	SIDEHL	.....		
	OWB	.....		
	ROWRAS	.....		
	LHSNOCHCLE	.....		
	CIDS	.....		
	BCUL	.....		
	NTELAC	.....		
				

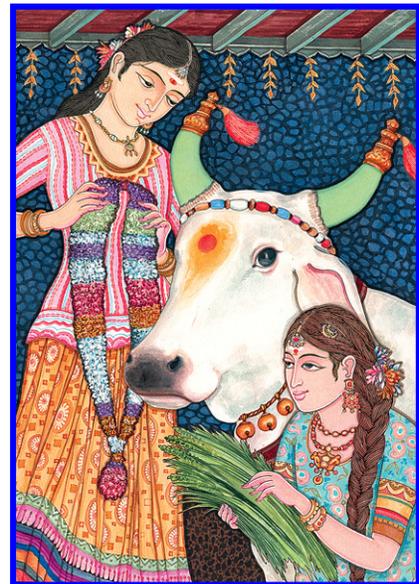
### ACTIVITY 12. CELEBRATION OF KRISHNA'S BIRTH (NANDOTSAV)

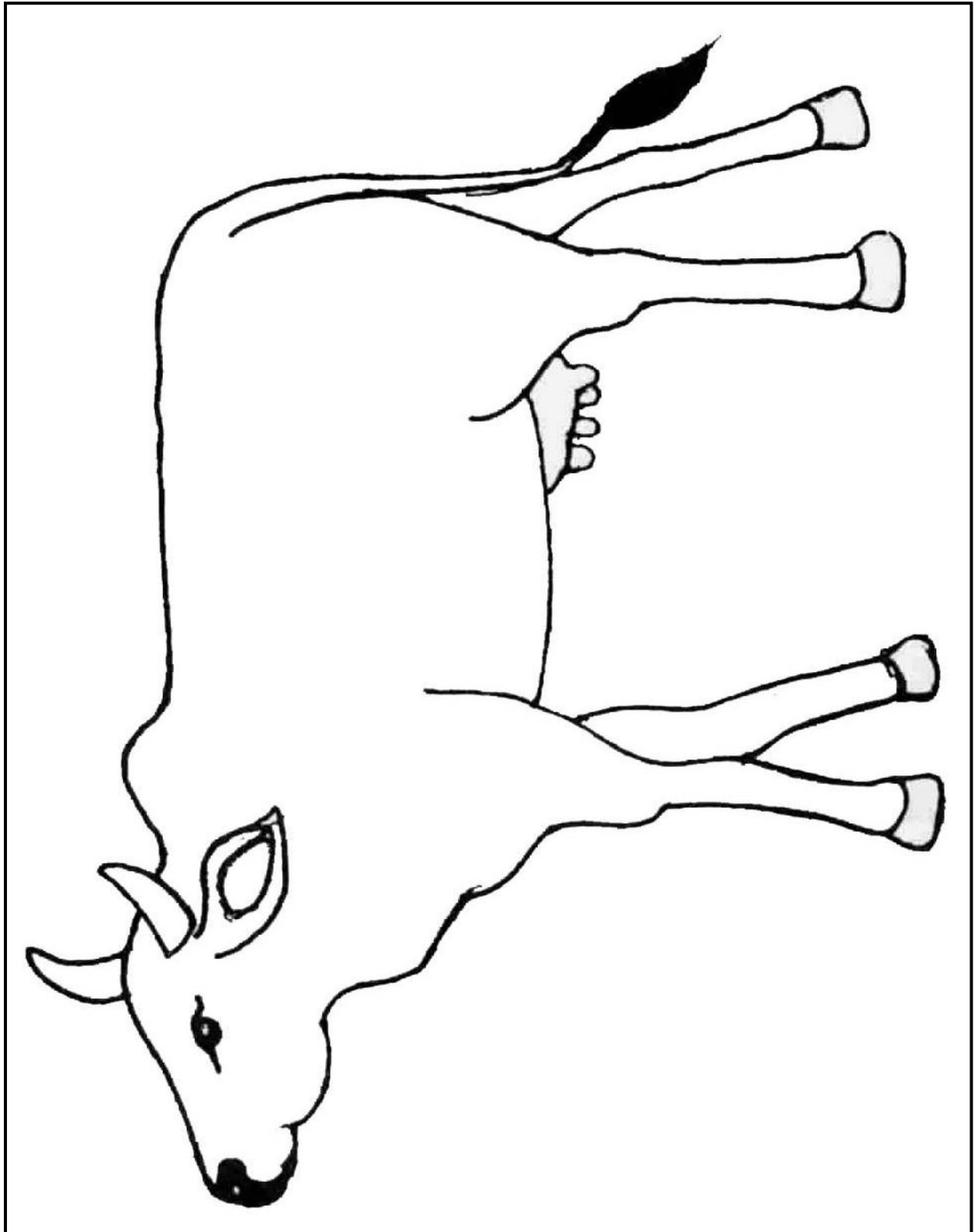
At Gokula, Nanda Maharaj celebrated the birth of Krishna with joy. It was declared that a male child was born to Yashoda. The birth ceremony was performed according to Vedic customs. Famous astrologers and pundits were invited. The astrologers calculated the moment of the birth of Krishna and prepared the horoscope. For the next ceremony, the family members bathed and decorated themselves with ornaments and flowers. They assembled to hear about the future of the child. Auspicious mantras were chanted to invoke good fortune. Nanda Maharaja distributed 200,000 well decorated cows. He also distributed grains and many ornaments. Varieties of artistic paintings were created. Scented water was sprinkled on the streets. Ceilings and roofs were decorated with different kinds of flags, festoons and green leaves. Entrances were decorated with green leaves and flowers. The cows, bulls and calves were smeared with a mixture of oil and turmeric. When the cowherd men heard that Nanda Maharaj was celebrating the birth ceremony of his son, they became joyful. They dressed in colorful garments and ornaments. They wore turbans on their heads. They approached the house of Nanda Maharaj with presents for the child. When the cowherd women, known as Gopis, heard that mother Yashoda had given birth to a child they also were excited with joy. They decorated themselves in colorful dresses and sparkling ornaments. They all visited the house of Nanda Maharaj and blessed the child. Nanda Maharaj was very happy seeing all these loving pastimes. Many expert musicians were playing different musical instruments. Some singers were reciting great verses from the Upanishads and Puranas. Gokula is a small village and the residents generated wealth by raising cows and cultivating crops. They were all living prosperous lives. When Krishna appeared everything became auspicious.

#### Activity: Coloring

In Hinduism, the cow is considered sacred and is symbolic of motherly qualities. Cow is representative of abundance, of the sanctity of all life and of the earth that gives much while asking nothing in return. Hindus respect the cow for her gentle qualities and providing nurturing milk and its products. It holds an honored place in society, and it is part of Hindu tradition to avoid the consumption of beef. Cow milk is a rich source of calcium and Vitamin D. Dairy products (curds, cheese, ghee butter, etc.) made from cow milk are delicious and nutritious. Cow dung (produces methane rich biogas) is a major source of renewable and stable energy for households in rural India to generate electricity and heat, and is also used as a fertilizer.

Decorate the cow in the next page using different colors and ornaments.





**ACTIVITY 13. NAMING CEREMONY OF KRISHNA**

Vasudev requested his family priest and astrologer Gargamuni to visit Vrindavan and perform naming ceremony of his two boys. Nanda Maharaj welcomed Gargamuni with great respect and offered him a warm reception. The ceremony was performed in secret due to fear of Kamsa. Gargamuni named Rohini's son as Balarama. He was also given other names, Sankarshana and Baladeva Looking at Yashoda's son, Gargamuni said "This boy has had many other names and activities in his pastimes and he will be called Krishna in this incarnation. He has appeared in every age. This child will be very powerful and will have all supreme qualities".

Both Balarama and Krishna were growing and began to crawl around. Their mothers were pleased with the precious baby moments. The bells tied to their waists and ankles sounded fascinating while they were crawling. Sometimes, just like ordinary children, they would be frightened by others and would rush to their mothers for protection. Sometimes they would fall into the mud of Gokula and would approach their mothers with full of clay on them. Sometimes the naughty babies would crawl into the cowshed to catch



the tails of calves and stand up. The calves being disturbed would immediately begin running around and the children would be dragged over clay and cow dung. To see this fun, Yashoda and Rohini would call all their gopi friends and they all were enjoying childhood pastimes of Lord Krishna. Both Krishna and Balarama were always restless. Their mothers Yashoda and Rohini would try to protect them from cows, bulls, monkeys, water, fire, and birds while doing housework. In a short time, Krishna and Balarama began to stand up and walk. They along with other friends of the same age used to give pleasure to their mothers and gopis by doing naughty actions. The elderly gopis used to come to mother Yashoda with many complaints "Krishna and his friends left the calves and they drank up all the

milk. We have to return with empty pots. Krishna and his friends have stolen our butter. Sometimes, they even used to feed butter to monkeys. They break our pots and pinch our babies to make them cry. If we hide the butter, they find it even in the dark". The gopis used to complain this way, but they all loved Krishna very much, and enjoyed these pastimes. Lord Krishna with his brother Balarama performed all kinds of childhood pastimes in order to increase love of all the residents of Gokula.

Based on the clues in the picture below, seek the 16 words hidden in the grid.



Ugrasena



Chariot



demons







C	G	O	K	U	L	A	N	O	S
H	I	A	N	E	S	A	R	G	U
A	K	C	O	N	C	H	S	S	A
R	A	L	O	T	U	S	N	Y	D
I	V	W	O	R	R	A	O	E	O
O	E	G	U	A	R	D	M	K	H
T	D	R	I	V	E	R	E	N	S
K	R	I	S	H	N	A	D	O	A
A	S	M	A	K	C	O	W	M	Y
S	A	N	D	A	L	W	O	O	D

sandalwood





**ACTIVITY 14. MISSING WORDS**

Some words in the following poem have slipped to the bottom. Can you pick them up and put them in the right places?

Yashoda and Rohini dress their boys with great care,  
 Krishna has a peacock feather in his curly \_\_\_\_\_  
 Krishna's garments are of a yellow hue,  
 Balarama's clothes are a bright \_\_\_\_\_  
 Shining jewels and sandalwood paste,  
 Little silver bells on ankles and \_\_\_\_\_  
 Their mothers are happy to see them crawl,  
 These naughty babies give joy to \_\_\_\_\_.  
 On hands and knees they move around,  
 Ankle bells ringing with a sweet \_\_\_\_\_  
 Holding a calf's tail they are dragged everywhere,  
 Seeing the fun, the gopis gather \_\_\_\_\_  
 The cows give milk so creamy and sweet,  
 The gopis make butter that's delicious to \_\_\_\_\_  
 Singing songs they churn the milk merrily,  
 Storing the soft white butter \_\_\_\_\_  
 Once the brothers learned to walk and run,  
 They started having even more \_\_\_\_\_  
 Krishna and Balarama, naughty little butter thieves,  
 Quietly enter the houses of the \_\_\_\_\_  
 They eat as much as they possibly can,  
 Sharing the rest with \_\_\_\_\_  
 When the pots are high ..., Oh! they have many tricks  
 Breaking the pots with stones and \_\_\_\_\_  
 If the jars are hidden and can't be found

They trouble the babies and litter the \_\_\_\_\_

"We must go and complain", the gopis say

but seeing Krishna's face their anger melts \_\_\_\_\_

Krishna looks scared and pretends to cry

"Oh we love him so much" the gopis \_\_\_\_\_

"We make butter everyday

just so that Krishna can steal it \_\_\_\_\_

Clues

all	carefully	gopis	sound
away	monkeys	ground	sticks
away	eat	hair	there
blue	fun	sigh	waist

**ACTIVITY 15. KRISHNA WANTS THE MOON**

One night, the full moon was shining in the courtyard of Nanda's house. Mother Yashoda was in conversation with elderly gopis. Krishna was playing nearby. He happened to look up in the sky and observe the moon. He started crying. Yashoda and gopis asked Krishna what he wants. Krishna pointed to the moon and said "I want the freshly churned butter". The gopis started laughing. Krishna was upset. He started kicking his legs and was crying loud. A gopi told him that it is not butter and it is a royal swan gliding across. Another gopi told him that it is the moon hanging in the sky. Then Krishna asked her to get the moon so that he can play with it. Mother Yashoda placed her crying son on her lap and comforted him. She embraced him and spoke in a gentle sweet voice.

*Yashoda:* O My dear son, this is neither swan nor moon. It is freshly churned butter. I can't give it to you since it has a few poisonous spots on it. No one can eat it.

*Krishna:* Why does it has poison?

*Yashoda:* Listen carefully. Once, there was an ocean of milk.

*Krishna:* Ocean of milk? How many cows made that ocean?

*Yashoda:* My dear son, the milk ocean was not made by cows. The one who gave the cows the ability to produce milk can also make milk without cows.

*Krishna:* Who is he?

*Yashoda:* He is the lord. He is the cause of the creation. He is everywhere. Once, when the devatas and demons had a fight, the lord wanted to help devatas. He churned the ocean of milk using the mandara mountain as a churning rod. Vasuki, the king of the serpents offered his body as a rope.

*Krishna:* Did they churn the milk the way gopis do?

*Yashoda:* Yes, my son. But the churning produced a poison called kalakuta. Lord Shiva drank the poison. The piece of butter you are seeing in the sky is made from the milk ocean. That is why the moon is spotted with drops of poison.

*Krishna:* This story is interesting. But I still want the moon to play.

Yashoda is aware that moon can't be brought down. She wanted to play a trick to pacify Krishna. Yashoda got a mirror and kept it in the courtyard facing the moon. The reflection of the moon in the mirror made Krishna believe it is in his reach. He played with the moon for some time and fell asleep. Mother Yashoda laid him on a beautiful golden bed with a soft fluffy mattress.

**Discussion**

Imagine that the moon disappeared from our solar system one day. Can we live on the earth without the moon?

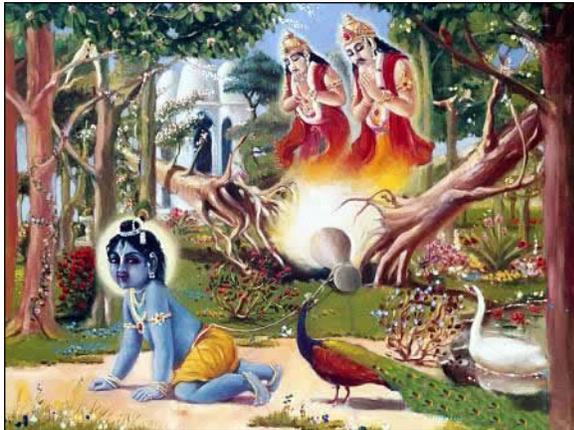
The real answer is that we would almost certainly not have evolved without the moon. Experts give three main reasons

- i) The stability of the earth's rotational axis – always remains nearly 23 degrees – is due partly to the moon's presence. Without moon, the Earth's axis would wobble violently, so that the seasons would be far more severe. This wobble would occur over thousands to hundreds of thousands of years, but that might have been enough to affect evolution dramatically. We could even, from time to time, orbit on our backs like the planet Uranus!
- ii) The length of the day might have been much shorter. If the moon was taken away, there would also be an effect on the earth's rotation. Without the moon's significant gravitational pull, the earth would rotate faster, perhaps much faster, making days on earth shorter. Speedy rotation would cause faster winds, many reaching hurricane proportions.
- iii) There would be greatly reduced ocean tides or tidal reaches so that the development of much of marine life, and certainly the development of amphibians and the settlement of dry land, would have been greatly affected, perhaps prevented.

### ACTIVITY 16. BABY KRISHNA AS DAMODARA

Nalakuvara and Manigriva were two sons of Kubera, who is a devata in charge of wealth. These young boys were proud of being rich and inculcated many bad habits. One day, they were drunk and playing in the waters of the Ganges. Sage Narada was passing by and watched the boys. They did not show any respect to Sage Narada and did not even pay attention. Narada was shocked to see the bad behavior of Kubera's sons. He wanted to teach them a lesson and cursed them that they both become trees for several years until Lord Krishna touches them and showers mercy. Both Nalakuvara and Manigriva turned into twin tall pine trees. Thousands of years passed by.

One day, Yashoda was churning butter. Her bangles and earrings were making melodious tinkling sound. Baby Krishna was playing around. He climbed onto mother Yashoda's lap and she was feeding him milk. Suddenly she saw that the milk on the stove is boiling over. She quickly put down Krishna and ran to take care of the overflowing milk. Baby Krishna was still hungry. He broke a butter pot with a stone and started eating the butter. When Yashoda noticed him, Krishna ran away in fear. Yashoda chased him all around the house and finally caught him. She decided to restrict him. She collected a big rope and tied him to a huge wooden mortar. She went back to complete the work of churning butter. In the meantime, baby Krishna dragged the wooden mortar out of the house and entered the woods in the

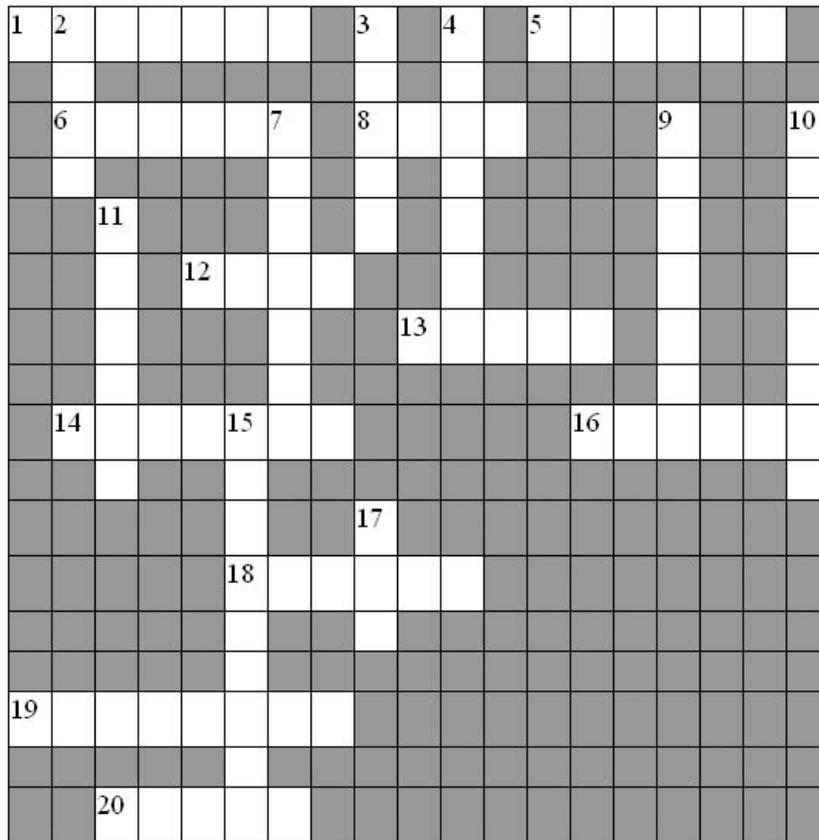


backyard. He dragged the mortar in between the two

pine trees. The mortar got struck and Krishna pulled it with great force. The trees fell down with a loud crash. As the trees fell down, Nalakuvara and Manigriva appeared there. They bowed down in front of Krishna and offered wonderful prayers to him for saving them. They realized that the curse had helped them to become humble devotees. After receiving Krishna's blessings, they happily returned to their heavenly abode.

*Damodara* = *dam* + *udara*. In Sanskrit, *dam* means rope and *udara* means stomach. *Damodara* means one whose stomach is bound by rope. Krishna has many such names in his pastimes.

**CROSSWORD**



Complete the crossword based on the clues below.

**ACROSS**

- 1 To restore peace on the earth, Lord appeared as
- 5 Vasudev transferred Krishna by crossing the river
- 6 A dangerous substance
- 8 Krishna wanted to play with the
- 12 Narada is a
- 13 Kamsa was scared of
- 14 Krishna and Balarama fed butter to
- 16 Churning converts yogurt to
- 18 Mother earth was troubled by
- 19 Krishna's brother
- 20 Some Yadu families lived here in fear of Kamsa

**DOWN**

- 2 Yashoda tied Krishna with a
- 3 Devaki's wicked brother
- 4 Vasudev always kept his
- 7 Baby Krishna was very
- 9 Kamsa drove Devaki and Vasudev in a
- 10 Another name of Krishna
- 11 Yashoda brought down the moon with a
- 15 Lord appeared on the earth to ---- evil.
- 17 Sacred Hindu animal

**ACTIVITY 17. KALIYA MARDHANA**

In the river Yamuna was a huge lake;  
 There lived Kaliya a wicked snake  
 He spread his poison everywhere;  
 Dangerous black fumes filled the air  
 The boys and cows drank that water one day;  
 Krishna found their bodies along the way  
 His loving glance received them in a moment;  
 He knows everything past, present, and future  
 Krishna climbed a big Kadamba tree;  
 And tied his waist belt tightly  
 Like a blue lotus, speckled with gold;  
 Krishna's beauty was a sight to behold  
 Jumping into the water, He swam around;  
 Kaliya was furious hearing the sound  
 Swimming like a powerful elephant;  
 Enraging the envious gigantic serpent  
 From Kaliya's nostrils great flames blazed;  
 From his many hoods cruel eyes gazed  
 He caught Krishna in his coils so tight;  
 This was the beginning of a very long fight  
 The cowherd men were full of grief;  
 Mother Yashoda trembled like a leaf  
 The cows, bulls, and calves shook with fear;  
 To everyone's heart Krishna was very dear  
 The struggle went on for very long;  
 Kaliya's grip was very strong  
 The Brijavasis had all gathered there;  
 Only Balarama was watching without a care  
 He told the Brijavasis "Do not lament;  
 Listen to my words and be patient

Krishna will smash Kaliya's pride;  
He is stronger than death personified"  
In a moment Krishna did slip;  
Out of cruel Kaliya's vicious grip  
He gave the devotees a loving glance;  
And then began an amazing dance  
Krishna jumped from hood to hood;  
Like a graceful dancer he stood  
Kaliya's anger was like red hot coal;  
But now Krishna was in complete control  
The heavenly beings played music so sweet;  
As he crushed Kaliya's pride with his lotus feet  
The Nagapatnis felt sad and began to pray;  
"Krishna please save our husband today  
You have purified him with your dance,  
now bless him with your merciful glance"  
Hearing the prayers of his devotees;  
Krishna smiled and felt very pleased  
Kaliya had become humble and meek;  
In a gentle voice he began to speak  
"O lord my anger was like blazing fire,  
Now punish me or save me as you desire"  
Kaliya was ordered to leave without delay;  
Thus Krishna forgave him and sent him away  
The Yamuna water became clear and pure,  
The cowherd boys played there once more

### ACTIVITY 18. KRISHNA SWALLOWS FOREST FIRE

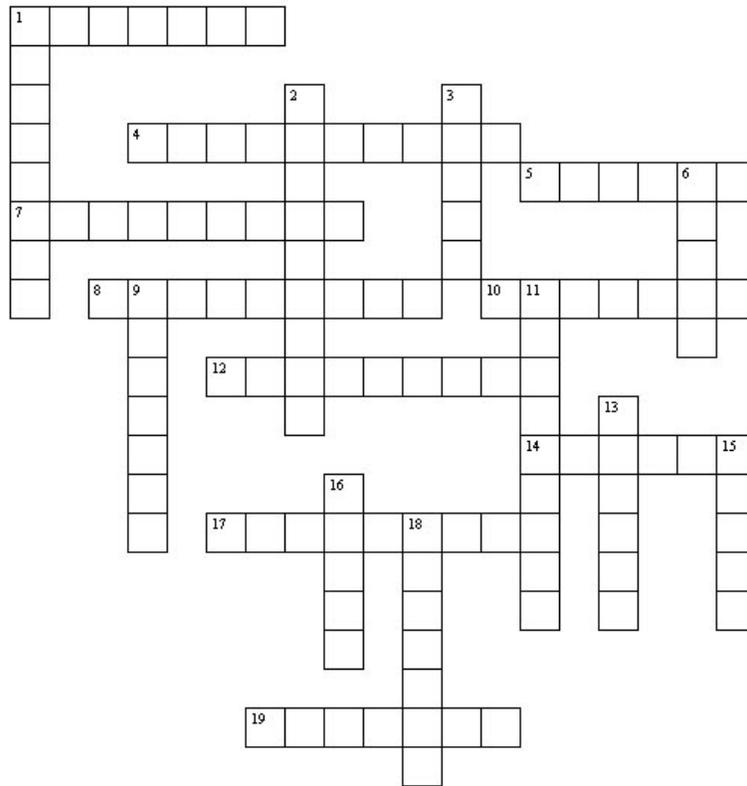
Grown up Krishna and Balarama used to enjoy the work of taking cows to the forests of Vrindavan. They were accompanied by many other boys with their herds of cows. The forests of Vrindavan were very beautiful filled with huge shady trees and lush green grasses. Waterfalls and streams were keeping the place cool and fresh. Breezes blowing over the lakes and rivers carry the fragrance of flowers. Many species of birds and animals were living in the forests. Krishna and Balarama used to decorate themselves with peacock feathers, flower buds, and colored minerals. They used to enjoy dancing, singing, and wrestling. They used to play flutes. They used to play many games such as hide and seek, blind man's buff, leaping, and mock fighting. Sometimes they used to jump like frogs, swing from one tree to another using branches like monkeys, and imitate sounds of animals. They used to wander in the rivers, hills, valleys, bushes, trees, and lakes of Vrindavan.

One day the boys were busy having fun. They did not notice that the cows had wandered deep into the deeper part of the forest looking for more grass. Suddenly the boys realized that the cows were missing. At first, they were panicky and confused. Feeling anxious, they set off search for their cows but had no idea which direction to search. They quickly found a trail of footprints and partially eaten grass and followed the trail. Finally the boys reached the Munja forest and found their lost cows. The cows were also frightened for being lost and they were happy to see the boys. Forgetting their own hunger and thirst, the boys herded the cows onto the path back home.

Suddenly, a wild forest fire appeared on all sides. Strong winds were fanning the flames spreading them in all directions. It seemed as if the huge flames were about to destroy all the creatures in the forest. Seeing this terrible forest fire, the boys and cows were very frightened. They called Krishna and Balarama for rescue. Krishna told them to close their eyes and not to be afraid. With full faith in Krishna, the boys closed their eyes. Krishna, the master of mystic powers, opened his mouth and swallowed the great fire saving everyone from danger. The boys opened their eyes and were amazed to find that the fire has disappeared. They all returned to their homes with cows happily.



**CROSSWORD**



**ACROSS**

- 1 How Krishna swallowed wildfire is a
- 4 Sudden drop of water from a height creates these
- 5 The cows were in \_\_\_\_\_when fires surrounded them
- 7 Several boys used to \_\_\_\_\_ Krishna to forests
- 8 Aroma
- 10 Synonym of gulp
- 12 Forests in Vrindavan were
- 14 Krishna with other boys took cows to a
- 17 When the boys opened their eyes, the fires
- 19 Missing cows made the boys

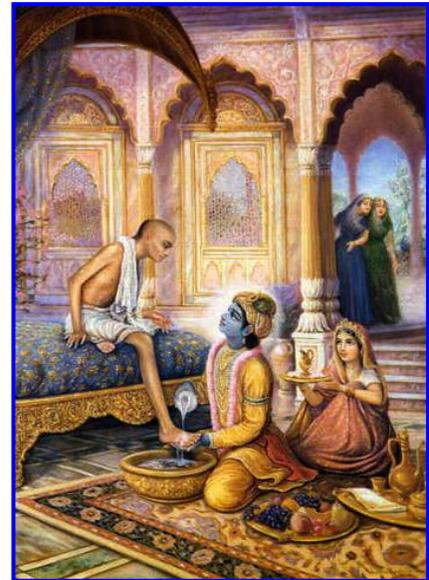
**DOWN**

- 1 Ruby, diamond, pearl, etc are different
- 2 Place where Krishna spent his childhood
- 3 A musical instrument
- 6 Krishna and Balarama used to \_\_\_\_\_ the trips to forests with cows.
- 9 Krishna \_\_\_\_\_ the cows from fire
- 11 Common natural disasters in forests
- 13 Gentle wind
- 15 These provide cool breeze and shade
- 16 The boys had immense \_\_\_\_\_ in Krishna.
- 18 Krishna wears a feather of this bird.

### ACTIVITY 19. KRISHNA AND HIS BEST FRIEND SUDAMA

Sudama was Krishna's best childhood friend. He was a great devotee of Krishna. Eventually Krishna became King and built a golden kingdom on the western coast of India. Sudama was devout but very poor, married to a poor but noble wife; they had several children. When hard times came, there was no food and the children were on the verge of starvation. Sudama's wife reminded him of Krishna, "He was your great friend in school and now he is King of Dwaraka. Why don't you meet him and ask for help." Sudama was reluctant to ask for money or food from Krishna. He intends not to spoil their loving friendship by asking aid. But Sudama's family is in real desperate need, so Sudama finally agreed to go and meet Krishna. Before leaving home, he told his wife, "I can't go empty-handed to see my childhood friend after a long time. I should take something, as an offering at least." So she tied some puffed rice into a cloth and tucked it into his waist, saying, "This is all we have to offer him." Sudama remembers that puffed rice is Krishna's favorite food and decided to offer this as a gift to Lord Krishna.

Sudama walked all the way from his village and after a few days reached the golden city. But once outside Krishna's palace, he felt very shy and berated himself for coming. "I might have been his friend in school, but now he's King and I am an ordinary person. What merit do I have even to meet him, let alone ask him for anything?" Sudama wrestled back and forth in his mind, but since he had traveled so far, he finally sent a message to Krishna that Sudama, his childhood friend, had come. But when his message reached Krishna, Lord immediately came running to meet his friend. Sudama stood there in a simple dress and Krishna came and embraced him as if no time had passed between them. Sudama was amazed and said, "Krishna, I am not worthy of this". But Krishna told him, "You are my best and honest friend, you deserve it" and took him inside the palace. Krishna's queen, Rukmini, then came, they both gave a very warm welcome and together they washed Sudama's feet with respect.



Sudama was made to sit on a plush, velvet-covered seat and they fed him a delicious meal. Afterwards Krishna had Sudama sit by his side and inquired, "Tell me, what can I do for you, Sudama?" By that time Sudama was melting. He could not comprehend what he was seeing and experiencing, how Krishna could treat him so tenderly. He was very humbled, so much so that he forgot all about why he had come. He could not ask for anything. Meanwhile, Krishna asked Sudama, "Did you bring anything for me?". Now Sudama was so shy, so modest, he could not even respond. There he was in Krishna's palace, being served on plates of silver and gold, and all he had brought was a handful of puffed rice! But Krishna knew everything. Sudama tried to say, "I didn't bring anything," but Krishna understood Sudama's hesitation. "You have brought one thing," he said, and with his own hands caught hold of the bundle of puffed rice, opened it and enjoyed eating it.

Sudama by that time was totally melted. Krishna asked him again, "What can I do for you? Just tell me." But Sudama was shy and simply said, "I have your love and your friendship. That is more valuable to me than anything." Krishna told him, however, "When you return home, your days will now be better." When Sudama returned home, where his simple hut had stood was a mansion, and his wife and children were very happy. Sudama's family was blessed with wealth and they lived happily for the rest of their lives. That is how Krishna solved his dear friend Sudama's problems.

Takeaways from Krishna and Sudama friendship:

- This story illustrates that Lord does not differentiate between people based on their wealth and he will always reward his devotees.
- Do not expect anything free in life (“No pain – No gain”). You will have to earn your rewards with your good deeds and hard work.
- Never trade devotion (bhakti) or friendship for anything in return. Sudama did not ask Krishna for anything. Despite being poor, Sudama had given Krishna everything he had. Hence in return Lord gave Sudama everything.

The story of Sudama and Krishna contrasts the difference between how Krishna treated Sudama and how Drupada treated Drona. Drona spent his youth in poverty, but studied religion and military arts together with the then prince of Panchala, Drupada. Drupada and Drona became close friends as students and Drupada, in his childish playfulness, promised to give Drona half his kingdom on ascending the throne of Panchala. The two students later parted their ways. Drona later married and had a son. For the sake of his wife and son, Drona desired freedom from poverty. Remembering the promise given by Drupada, he decided to approach him to ask for help. However, drunk with power, King Drupada refused to even recognize Drona and humiliated him by calling him an inferior person. By contrast, Krishna never forgot his friend Sudama and treated him with utmost respect.

**WORD SEEK**

Look for the following words that describe qualities of good friends in the word grid below. They can be up, down, forward, backward, or diagonal.

ADVENTUROUS

FUN

NICE

BRAVE

FUNNY

OPTIMISTIC

COMMITTED

GENEROUS

PATIENT

CONFIDENT

HAPPY

RELIABLE

COURTEOUS

HONEST

STRONG

CREATIVE

IMAGINATIVE

SURPRISING

ENCOURAGING

INSPIRING

TALENTED

ENTHUSIASTIC

KIND

UNDERSTANDING

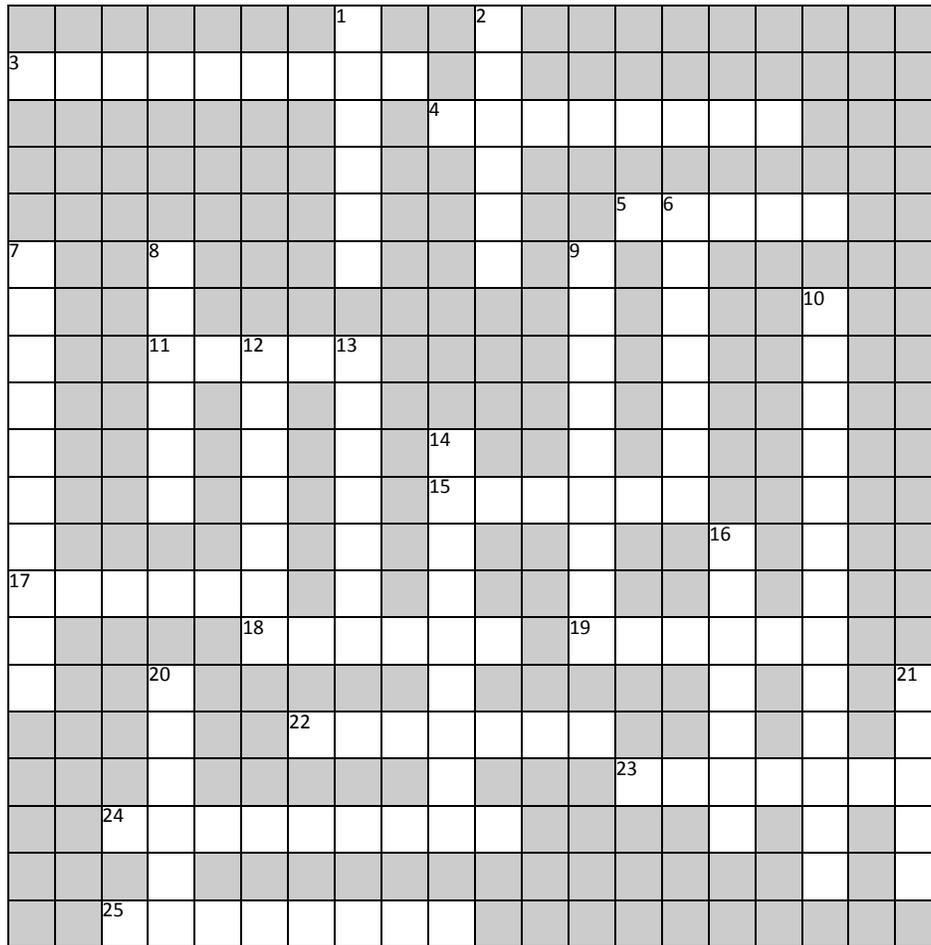
EXCITED

LOYAL

UNITED

U	G	X	A	G	N	I	G	A	R	U	O	C	N	E
N	N	B	D	E	T	T	I	M	M	O	C	O	E	D
I	I	D	V	N	I	C	E	L	F	C	I	C	L	E
T	S	E	E	E	I	Q	V	S	O	S	T	N	I	T
E	I	T	N	R	K	K	A	U	T	Y	S	M	M	N
D	R	I	T	O	S	W	R	E	L	I	A	B	L	E
H	P	C	U	U	B	T	B	C	W	G	I	L	T	L
Y	R	X	R	S	E	E	A	O	I	N	S	H	M	A
N	U	E	O	O	N	V	N	N	F	I	U	A	D	T
N	S	Z	U	D	K	I	A	F	D	R	H	P	N	N
U	V	S	S	C	I	T	S	I	M	I	T	P	O	E
F	R	W	M	N	I	A	H	D	G	P	N	Y	V	I
I	Q	A	G	V	Z	E	F	E	A	S	E	G	F	T
H	O	N	E	S	T	R	O	N	G	N	H	U	G	A
H	F	Y	D	R	E	C	C	T	W	I	N	M	D	P

**ACTIVITY 20. CROSSWORD ON KRISHNA AND SUDAMA FRIENDSHIP**



Complete the above crossword using clues below from the story of Krishna and his best friend Sudama.

**ACROSS**

- 3 Friendship between Krishna and Sudama is
- 4 Puffed rice is Krishna’s \_\_\_ food.
- 5 Synonym for faith
- 11 Sudama’s wife was
- 15 Do not \_\_\_ anything free in life.
- 17 Sudama is a \_\_\_ person.
- 18 subtract or withhold
- 19 Krishna’s childhood friend
- 22 Sudama \_\_\_ himself for visiting Krishna.
- 23 Krishna’s queen
- 24 Sudama visited Krishna in \_\_\_ need.
- 25 Sudama’s family was \_\_\_ due to poverty.

**DOWN**

- 1 A friend in need is a friend
- 2 Krishna blessed Sudama with plenty of
- 6 Treat others with
- 7 Krishna and Sudama story illustrates values of
- 8 Sudama was a very \_\_\_ friend.
- 9 Be \_\_\_ to your friends.
- 10 Krishna had a quick \_\_\_ of Sudama’s purpose of visit
- 12 Krishna \_\_\_ Sudama for his devotion
- 13 Krishna \_\_\_ Sudama’s offering.
- 14 Sudama was \_\_\_ to ask Krishna for help.
- 16 Krishna was king of
- 20 Sudama was \_\_\_ through out his life.
- 21 antonym of hesitant

**ACTIVITY 21. KRISHNA AS GIRIDHARI**

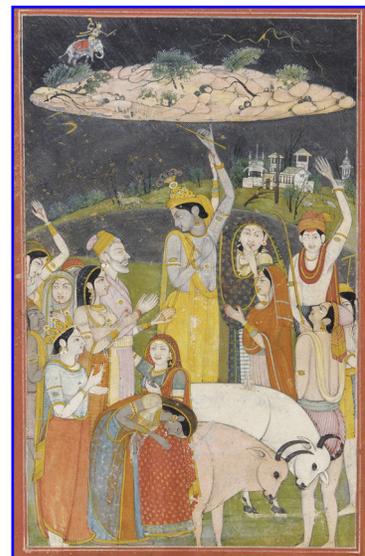
One day, Krishna and Balarama noticed that the residents of Vrindavan were busy preparing for a sacrifice. Krishna asked Nanda, "Dear father, I see that everybody is busy. What is going on?". Nanda remained silent thinking that Krishna is too young to understand the effort they are initiating. Krishna said, "I may be young to understand what you are going to do. But please answer my question without keeping it secret". Nanda replied, "My dear son, all our wealth comes from the crops and cows in Vrindavan. They both depend on the mercy of rain. Rain comes from the clouds which are controlled by Lord Indra. Without rain, we can't form or produce grains. We show our gratitude to Lord Indra by performing an elaborate sacrifice". Krishna said, "I think you don't need to perform sacrifice to Lord Indra. He is pouring waters everywhere, on the lakes, rivers, ponds, and oceans where there is no need for water. We must actually pray the hill Govardhana who is kindly providing our cows with the best grass and drinking water. The austere residents of Vrindavan headed by Nanda accepted Krishna's suggestion.

Krishna told them to collect grains, milk, fruits, and vegetables, prepare delicious dishes as offerings, feed everyone, invite vedic scholars to chant slokas, decorate the cows, and feed them. The residents got excited and started preparing for the Govardhana festival.

Soon the grand festival started. Everyone brought offerings for Govardhana. There were scholars, singers, and dancers gracing the occasion. It was a majestic sight. Krishna knew that Indra was feeling proud of his position and therefore he wanted to help his dear devotee overcome his pride with a lesson.

Indra, sitting in his palace, noticed that the residents of Vrindavan were offering their sacrifice to the Govardhana hill instead of him and got very angry. Indra thought, "Look at these residents, they are following the instruction of a child. They impudently stopped my sacrifice. Now, I will show them the consequence of this action". In a fit of a rage, he called out the clouds and instructed them to pour down torrents of rain upon the universe to destruct the Vrindavan. With thunderous sounds, the clouds started downpour causing flooding and submerging of the entire village of Vrindavan.

The residents of Vrindavan reached Krishna in panic and prayed, "O Krishna, please protect us from this devastation". Krishna understood that Indra was showing his pride and anger in the form of this storm, thus misusing his power. Krishna told the residents that he will use his mystic powers to protect them from Indra's action. He lifted the entire Govardhana hill on his left little finger and asked all the people and animals to come under the umbrella of the hill. The inhabitants of Vrindavan remained under the hill for seven days without thirst, hunger, or discomfort. Seeing this extraordinary mystic power of Krishna, Indra was amazed. He realized that, because of his pride, he committed a great offence. He arrived at the Govardhana hill to beg forgiveness from Krishna. Krishna told him, "Dear Indra, I told the residents of Vrindavan to stop sacrifice to you to remind you of your pride. Now that you realized, please resume your duty as the king of heaven". Indra bowed down humbly, prayed, and returned to his abode. The joyful celebration of Govardhana puja continued. This tradition is celebrated every year.



In the previous story, we learned about Indra's pride and how Krishna taught him a lesson.

Pride is the name of an emotion which refers to a strong sense of self-respect, a refusal to be humiliated as well as joy in the accomplishments of oneself or a person, group, nation or object that one identifies with. To think of self higher than anyone and everyone else is also referred to as pride. It is considered one of the seven deadly sins. There are two kinds of pride – one associated with the word "foolish," which means an over-estimation of one's capacities, and the other equated with self-respect and honor. While pride harms only the proud man, arrogance due to overbearing pride brings contempt for others. An arrogant person is often rude and very fond of offending his friends, relatives, colleagues and everyone else who comes in contact with him.

We often come across pride in some form or the other. When we are proud, we think only of ourselves. We must try to put ourselves in other person's shoes and think what would be your action. Consider the following situations. Select an answer and provide your rationale for the selection.

1. Gopal just had a wonderful birthday party and is sharing his joyful moments with friends. You are one among the audience. What would you do out of the following?
  - A) Immediately walkaway from Gopal without listening.
  - B) Listen for a minute, interrupt Gopal, and start describing your own birthday party.
  - C) Encourage Gopal to talk and share his joy with others.
  - D) Listen quietly without any expression on your face.
2. In a running competition, you came second. What would be your reaction?
  - A) You are disappointed and distressed for not winning the first place.
  - B) You tell others that you did not come first because the person who came first had better shoes than yours.
  - C) You develop grudge on the person who won the first place.
  - D) You are happy to take part in the competition with sportive spirit, tried your best, analyze your mistakes, and try for the first place next time.
3. You are walking on a sidewalk and accidentally bump into a person. What would you do?
  - A) Say sorry, move on, and pay more attention next time.
  - B) You shout at the other person, "Are you blind?".
  - C) Get into an argument on whose fault it is.
  - D) Never walk on that sidewalk again.
4. You and your best friend had an argument due to a simple difference of opinion. You stopped talking to each other due to this. What should you do?
  - A) Be proactive, resolve the difference quickly, and become friends again.
  - B) Say nothing and wait for things to become normal again on their own.
  - C) You expect your friend to say sorry first.
  - D) Start complaining to others about your friend.

**ACTIVITY 22. GURUKULA**

Once upon a time, in a holy and peaceful place in ancient India, there was an *Ashram* (derived from the Sanskrit word *aashraya*, which means protection). An Ashram is a hermitage where sages live in peace and tranquility. Traditionally, ashrams were located far from human habitation, in forests or mountainous regions, amidst refreshing natural surroundings conducive to spiritual instruction and meditation. Spiritual and physical exercises, such as the various forms of Yoga, were regularly performed by the residents of ashrams. Other sacrifices and penances, such as *Yajnas* were also performed. Many ashrams also served as *Gurukulas* or residential schools for children. Attached to the Ashram of our story is a Gurukula managed by an old Guru. He had seven students (*sishtyas*). They were living in the ashram learning about Hindu scriptures and life skills while helping their Guru in maintaining the ashram. The guru was becoming weak due to old age and he realized that soon it would be time for him to handover the charge of running gurukula to one of his students. He initiated the efforts to assess his students on their capability to run the gurukula while maintaining unity and integrity.

Several devotees used to visit the ashram to worship and practice spirituality. They used to offer donations in support of the maintenance of the ashram. One day, a devotee donated a precious diamond to the ashram as a token of gratitude. Guru used this opportunity for assessing his students. He asked his students what would they do with the diamond. "I think we should sell it and use the money for our ashram", one sishya said. "No, No, No!" another sishya shouted, "We should decorate the Lord in our ashram with this diamond". Another sishya expressed his opinion, "It would be far better if we cut into many small pieces and make a beautiful necklace for the Lord". All the sishyas were expressing totally different opinions and the disagreement extended into a fight among them.

The Guru did not interfere with their fight for sometime and he wanted to teach them a lesson. The Guru said, "That's enough. Now each one of you go to the woods and bring back a thin foot long stick". The seven disciples stopped quarrelling and followed the instruction of their Guru. They all went out into the woods and each returned with a stick. The Guru collected their sticks and tied them firmly using small pieces of ropes to form a bundle of sticks. He then asked his sishyas, "Who can break this bundle?". All the sishyas tried hard using their maximum power, but none of them could break the bundle. They reached the conclusion that the bundle is too strong to break. The Guru exclaimed, opened the ropes, and gave the sticks individually and asked them to break. They all could break the individual sticks very easily.

The Guru explained, "You are all like a bundle of sticks. If you stay united and help each other, cooperate and work together, you will be strong. But, if you divide and fight, you will become weak like these individual sticks. Remember, united we stand, divided we fall. I am getting old and soon it would be time for me to leave. I would like you to stay united and maintain the ashram and gurukula without any problems." Realizing their folly, the seven sishyas agreed that setting the ruby in a gold ring and decorating the lord would be the best thing to do. The Guru was happy to see the unity of his disciples and felt comfortable to handover the charge of ashram to them. Later, when devotees visited the ashram, they often asked, "How did the Lord get such a beautiful diamond ring?" The sishyas always used to answer, "By the strength of a bundle of sticks".



