

A PRESENTATION OF DANCE AND CHOREOGRAPHY



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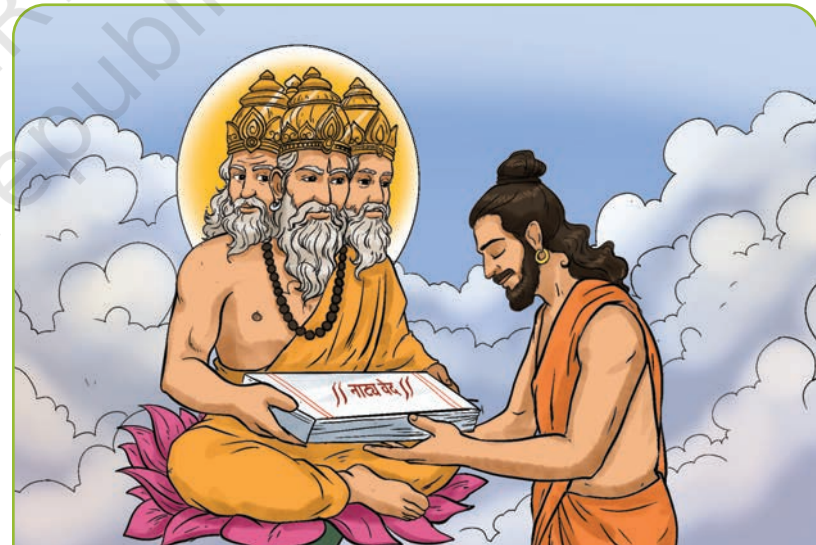
You are familiar with the *Nāṭyaśāstra* and the *Abhinaya Darpaṇam* now. In ancient times, when they were written, dance was usually called *ṛtta* and *ṛitya* or *nartana*, whereas dance-drama was called *nāṭya*.

Have you ever wondered how dance originated?

If you refer to your Grade 6 Arts textbook (Theatre), you will recall an interesting story about the birth of the performing arts. Similarly, you will learn about the birth of dance from the *Abhinaya Darpanam*.



Brahma Deva, derived from all four *Vedas*, is said to have created the *Nāṭya Veda*, often referred to as called the fifth *Veda*.



Brahma Deva gave *Nāṭya Veda* to a Rishi, Bharata Muni, who studied and mastered all three aspects of *ṛtta*, *ṛitya* and *nāṭya*.

Bharata Muni along with his group of Gandharvas (heavenly musicians) and Apsarās (heavenly dancers) presented their first performance.

At the time, the great dancer Mahadeva was also in the audience.



He was so pleased to see the performance that he offered Bharata Muni special lessons with his best *ganas* (attendants) in the rigorous form of dancing called *tandava*. Mahadeva's *gana*, Tandu taught *tandava* to the sages who taught it to the humans.



On the other hand, Devi Parvati trained Bharata Muni in the more graceful form of dance called *lasya*.

Devi Parvati also taught *lasya* dance to Usha, the daughter of King Bana. And Usha taught the dance to the *gopis* (milkmaids) of Dwarka who then taught it to the women of Saurashtra.

And so, more and more people learnt dance, and that is how dance reached the earth.



Legends are a rich source for storytelling in the Indian dance forms. Stories from the *Puranas*, *Jataka Tales*, *Panchatantra*, etc., offer narratives that make for beautiful visual spectacles and have a deep moral message.

These stories are relevant even today when interpreted according to the present times.

You have learnt about the descent of Ganga from heaven to Earth in Visual Arts. It is a powerful tale of the importance of rivers in nourishing life on earth. But if you read it more closely, you will realise that it has a deeper meaning and teaches values.

The story showcases:

- ❖ The strength and resolve of a woman, in this case, Devi Ganga.
- ❖ How different elements of nature, including Gods, have to work together to make good things happen, for instance, how Mahadeva helped Ganga in controlling her force before descending to Earth.
- ❖ King Bhagirath as a great example of unwavering faith and perseverance.
- ❖ The present day plight of rivers and how they are polluted.
- ❖ How rivers must be respected and kept clean and pure.

What if you were to bring this story into a dance production?

ONCE UPON A DANCE... CREATING YOUR DANCE PRODUCTION

Think of a legend or historical tale that you can bring to the contemporary world. Interpret it in present times and plan a dance production to perform the story.

PHASE 1: PLANNING AND PRE-PRODUCTION

TIME FOR BRAINSTORMING IDEAS!

1. *Theme and Storyline*

- What is your production about?
- Choose a myth, legend or historical story and give it a twist to fit today's world.
- Will you write a script or use an existing one?
- Will each dance tell part of the story?
- How many dances will you include?

2. *Style of Dance and Groups*

- What style or styles of dance would you include? Make sure it fits the theme.
- How many dance groups will you have, and how many people per group?
- Would you like to use any props?

3. Music Selection

- Pick music that suits your theme and dance styles.
- You can use recorded tracks, compose your own or even include live music performed by students.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Choreographer:** Designs the dances, leads rehearsals.
- **Performers:** Dancers and actors.
- **Director or Co-ordinator:** Keeps everything running smoothly.
- **Script writer:** Writes dialogues and narration.
- **Music Director:** Creates or chooses music and effects.
- **Set and Prop Designer:** Designs backdrops and props.
- **Lighting and Tech Crew:** Manages lights, sounds, and tech.
- **Costume and Make-Up Designer:** Plans the look of characters
- **Marketing Team:** Spreads the word about your show!

5. Use your learning from other subjects!

- **Theatre:** For scriptwriting, acting and dialogue.
- **Visual Arts:** For set design, costume, make-up and props.
- **Music:** For live instruments, songs, and background score.
- **Maths and Computing:** To plan budgets, timing, or lighting cues.

6. Venue and Dates

- Where will the show be? (School hall, stage, outdoors)
- Set your rehearsal schedule and performance date.

PHASE 2: CHOREOGRAPHY AND REHEARSALS

1. Choreographic Stages

- Break your story into scenes or moments.
- Explore movements and emotions for each character or scene.
- Use elements from your dance form *sthānas*, *chāris*, *hastas* and add creative touches.
- Think about breath, rhythm, silence; they're all part of the story!

2. *Rehearsals and Teaching Choreography*

- Schedule regular rehearsals with clear goals.
- Teach the dances group by group.
- Try interesting formations and group patterns.
- Keep entrances and exits smooth and connected.
- Watch, review and tweak the dances as needed.

3. *Production Design*

- Finalise props, costumes, lights and sounds.
- Do a dress rehearsal with full costume and music.
- Have a technical rehearsal to practise all the backstage elements.

A lot of this work in Phase 2 can happen simultaneously. But remember, planning and pre-production are crucial before venturing into any creation. Similar to a construction site, you first take the time to dig a deep foundation. If your foundation is set, then it is easier to build a structure and you can work on all the raw materials at different times before assembling them together.



PHASE 3: PERFORMANCE

- ❖ **Grand Rehearsal:** This is a critical rehearsal, just like a whole show on the main stage that you will perform. Invite a few people to give feedback and make notes of anything that went wrong (although by this point there should be no mistakes).

- ❖ **Final Performance:** Enjoy the show!
- ❖ **Reflections:** Post-show feedback.

Now that you've learned so much about this beautiful art, even created your magical performance and shared it joyfully, it is time to take a bow, smile brightly and let your heart dance on!





Kathak



Dollu kunitha from Karnataka



Kathak



Innovative choreography



Santhali from Jharkhand

ASSESSMENT

CHAPTER 14: A PRESENTATION OF DANCE AND CHOREOGRAPHY

CG	C	Learning Outcomes	Teacher	Self
1	1.2	Engages in collaborative work with enthusiasm, sharing ideas and supporting peers throughout the creative process.		
3	3.1	Actively participates in all stages of a dance production, including: - Planning and pre-production - Choreography and rehearsals - Final performance		
3	3.2	Demonstrates an understanding of the mythological and cultural narratives surrounding the origin of dance.		
3	3.2	Applies imagination and creativity in utilising all elements of performance—movement, music, costume, space, and expression—to enhance the final presentation.		

Teacher's Comments and Student's Observations

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

	Examples of Assessment	Criteria for Assessment
Individual	❖ Demonstrate a movement sequence incorporating posture (<i>sthiti</i>), movement (<i>gati</i>), and breath integration. ❖ Perform one <i>nṛitta</i> (pure dance) sequence and one <i>nṛitya</i> (expressive storytelling) sequence. ❖ Express two emotions (<i>bhāvas</i>) using appropriate <i>hastas</i> and explain the thought process behind them. ❖ Complete a dance-related project.	❖ Clarity and awareness in the execution of movement, posture, and mindful breath integration. ❖ Understanding of movement sequencing, rhythm, and expressive storytelling. ❖ Comfort and fluency in expressing emotions with accurate use of <i>hastas</i>. ❖ Depth, creativity and relevance of content in the project work.
Group of 3 or 4	❖ Collaboratively choreographs a dance sequence addressing the relevant or current social issue. ❖ Develops and presents a story-based performance as a group.	❖ Originality and creativity in concept, choreography, and presentation. ❖ Evidence of effective collaboration and teamwork.