

Namo Ramana!

Family – A play

A few children are playing under a tree which is the backdrop for the scene. After a couple of minutes they sit down in the shade.

Rehman – Krishna, isn't this tree so loving and kind? It gives us shade under which we can play.

Krishna – Yes, Rehman. I feel it protects us like a loving mother.

Satya – Sorry to ask you Krishna, do you miss your mother a lot.

Rehman – O, what happened to his mother Satya?

Satya – Nothing. Just that his mother has to stay in their village in Bihar to look after his grandparents.

Mary – But because he can get such good education in our school, KECS, here in Bangalore, his father has brought him here.

Rehman – Actually Mary, my father lives far away. He has gone abroad to find his livelihood. So, I live with my mother. Maybe that's why when I look at the tree, I feel it protects us like a father.

Satya – Do you know, in our Bharatiya Sanskriti, in our culture we see the whole world as one family. It is called Vasudaiva Kutumbakam.

Krishna – And who is the mother and who the father?

Shubha – It is said that God is our father and mother. Jagatah pitarou vande, Parvathi Parameshwaraou says the poet Kalidasa. Salutations to the parents of the universe – Parvathi, the mother and Siva the father.

Veda – You may call God by any name. My grandfather tells me, That great power has no name and all names and That power can be called by any name and It takes care of every living being in the world.

Murugan – Veda, I understand what you are saying. I live with my grandmother. Actually, I sometimes feel she is like a father and sometimes like a mother and sometimes like a friend and sometimes she is my grandmother. She tells me God makes her act in the right way at the right moment.

Krishna – Actually, this tree under which we are sitting is like a whole family isn't it? It has all the qualities of each and every member of a family.

Rehman – Hey Krishna! That's a great idea. Maybe that's why when we are taught about what a family is, it is called a 'Family Tree'. What do you think of my idea Siva?

Siva – It's a great idea. Actually, the family tree diagram is a like an inverted tree. It starts from two people, our grandparents and then has a stalk which becomes the trunk, like our parents.

Shubha – Then the tree has branches, like our uncles and aunts. And there are leaves and fruits like all of us.

Veda – Yes Shubha. I also feel that through trees God teaches us what a family actually means. It means a set of people living together in harmony.

Satya – That’s a very sweet thought Veda.

Siva – In a family our necessities and health are taken care of as we help each other. We can say that the elders nurture and protect the younger members of the family.

Murugan – In fact we work in coordination for the good of the whole family as everyone feels a sense of identification and belonging that this is my family.

Rehman – We cooperate with one another, because we love and respect each other.

Mary – Everyone learns to work with discipline as we follow habitual practices. In fact, we learn many things by living with our family.

Krishna – Hey! I remembered that my father taught me a song of a tree that he heard at Ramana Thatha’s Asram which gives us this very idea. Shall I sing it? All of you can join in the chorus.

*The Tree song is danced by all the children.*¹

Siva – Krishna, you said your father learnt the song at Ramana thatha’s Asram. Who is Ramana Thatha?

Kaveri – Siva, I know about Ramana Thatha. Our country Bharatha is a land of many sages and saints. One who lived very close to our times is Ramana Thatha.

Veda – I too know about Ramana Thatha Kaveri. I just picked up a book from our library about Ramana Thatha. He stayed in a place called Tiruvannamalai. In his Asram we could see the truth of the statement, the whole earth is one family.

Kaveri – That’s wonderful Veda. Do tell us his story tomorrow. As it is getting dark, I think all of us need to get back home now.

Mary – Yes. Looking forward to hearing about Ramana Thatha’s big family tomorrow. Bye!

They wave each other goodbye and leave.

Note:

Family values mentioned in the school lesson – most of these have been incorporated in the dialogues (could be discussed with the children):

Health, affection, fulfilment of necessities, love, education, respect for elders, cooperation, identification, nurturing, position in society, habitual practices, living together, protection, coordination, improving relationships, blessings of elders.

¹ The Tree song is a special song for children produced by Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning.

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Class 6A – Citizen and Citizenship

The setting is of a quiz contest. Four teams are gathered, each consisting of two members. They are seated in the respective places. Two Judges of the contest are also at their desk. One of the Master of Ceremonies enters, greets the judges personally and commences his announcement.

Announcer 1: Welcome everyone. We are all very excited that today we have gathered for the final round of the All-India Civics quiz for children of class 6.

Announcer 2: Today we have one team from Aurangabad, one team from Assam, one team from Uttaranchal and one from Karnataka who have made it to the finals. Let us give them all a big hand.

(Applause)

Announcer 1: Today's quiz has a special theme, it is 'Citizen and Citizenship'. Over to the judges for the first round of today's quiz.

Judge 1: The first round will be a rapid fire round. The team to which the question is addressed gets to answer first.

Judge 2: If the team does not answer for ten seconds, the question will pass to the next team.

Judge 1: Okay, all set? Here we go. The first question to Aurangabad. What does the word 'citizen' mean.

Aurangabad: Citizens are permanent residents of a country.

Judge 1: Correct. Question to Assam. What is the difference between foreigners and citizens of a country?

Assam: Citizens of a country have some rights which Foreigners don't have.

Judge 1: Correct. Question to Uttaranchal. What is citizenship?

Uttaranchal: Membership of a country is citizenship.

Judge 1: Correct, but can you specify?

Uttaranchal: Pass

Judge 1: Karnataka?

Karnataka: Citizenship is like being members of one family. We are members of India's family.

Judge 1: Correct. Question to Karnataka. How can one get citizenship of a country.

Karnataka: By being born in a country or by giving up the citizenship of the country of birth and choosing to become a citizen of another country.

Judge 2: End of round 1 Aurangabad 10 points, Assam 10, Uttaranchal 5, Karnataka 15 points.

(Some people in the audience) Karnataka! Karnataka!

Judge 2: Next is a buzzer round. I will mention one word or one phrase and you must give the context. The team that gets to press the buzzer first will get to answer the question.

Judge 1: But don't be too much in a hurry to press the buzzer because if you don't answer immediately then there will be negative marking.

Judge 2: The time starts now. Obedience.

Karnataka: To the laws of the country.

Judge 2: Right. Next word – Regularly.

Assam: Paying taxes.

Judge 2: Right. Next – Participation

Aurangabad: In the Defence of the country.

Judge 2: Right. Next – Not paying

Karnataka: Bribes, and not receiving bribes.

Judge 2: Right. Next – Supporting

Assam: Welfare measures

Judge 2: Right. Next – Including

Uttaranchal: Family welfare schemes.

Judge 2: Right.

Judge 1: End of round 2. Karnataka is leading with 35 points. Next is Assam with 30 points. Aurangabad is 20 points and Uttaranchal is 15 points.

Judge 2: Now we come to the final round of today's quiz, the dumb charades round. We will present an action in mime and you must name the quality of the good citizen that is being depicted in the mime.

Judge 1: Ready?

(After 1st mime) Uttaranchal: Honoring the National anthem and the National flag'

Judge 1: That's right.

(After 2nd mime) Assam: Casting one's vote in the election.

Judge 2: Correct.

(After 3rd mime) Aurangabad: Concern for the environment of the country.

Judge 1: Yes.

(After 4th mime) Karnataka: Helping senior citizens.

Judge 2: Exactly.

And the winner is, Karnataka with 45 points. The first runner up is Assam with 40 points. The third place goes to Aurangabad with 30 points and Uttaranchal stands fourth with 25 points.

Audience: Yea! Well done, Karnataka!

The cup is given to them.

Karnataka: We thank our teachers and parents for this honor. But we are all one family, we are all Indians.

Announcer 1: Yes indeed. So let us celebrate our country with a dance that is a tribute to our Bharata.

Announcer 2: Every citizen of our Bharata must be a good citizen because our Mother Bharata, she is the embodiment of righteousness, dharma. Dharm rupi desh mera.

Aurangabad: Our mother Bharata is the embodiment of truth, Satya. Satya rupi desh mera.

Uttaranchal: She loves one and all. Prem rupi desh mera.

Assam: She shines bright always. She is a light to the whole world. Tej rupi desh mera.

'Bharat Desh hai mera'¹ song is danced by all participants

Note: The details and facts in the lesson have been evidently included in the play. In addition, inputs from our cultural heritage and the voices of sages about the glory of Bharata have also been incorporated to give the children insights into our hoary tradition.

¹ 'Bharat Desh hai mera' is a song composed and tuned by Dr.Ambika Kameshwar.

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RAISE KECS

9th Standard – Religious Reformers 1 - Basavanna

Some children are playing cricket on the beach. Basavanna appears from the sea (this is seen by the audience and not the boys on stage). He walks up near them and fields one of their balls.

Basavanna: Good shot!

He continues to participate in their game as a sort of onlooker.

Basavanna: Quick, run! You can take at least a single.

Basavanna: Boys, may I make a suggestion?

One child: Yes, what is it?

Basavanna: Can you see that boy there?

He points to a young boy who is selling peanuts.

Another child: Yes, he is selling peanuts.

Basavanna: Why don't you call him to play with you?

Third child: He wouldn't know the game.

Basavanna: You could teach him. You didn't know the game before you learnt it, did you? But have you wondered why he never learnt how to play?

Fourth child: Because he has to work. But if we call him to play now who will do his job?

Fifth child: I will do his job for him for a while when he is playing.

Basavanna: Great! Now you are talking! Now you have become like this sea!

Sixth child: Become like the sea? What do you mean?

Basavanna: Isn't the sea helping everyone always in some way or the other? Can you tell me in what way the sea helps us?

First child: We get water from the sea.

Second child: No, we don't, we can't drink sea water, it is salty. We can't even bathe in it.

Basavanna: That's true but where do we get our water from then?

Third child: From rivers and lakes.

Basavanna: And from where do rivers and lakes get water? Look, there is a river running into the sea, shall we ask her where she gets her water from?

Brief river song stating how the water comes from the sea.

River: From the depths of the sea I rise, as vapor I move to the sky, as clouds over land I fly, as rain on the earth I descend, as a spring I from the earth I ascend, and as a river I run back to the sea in the end.

Fourth child: The river gets water only from the sea!

Basavanna: Yes indeed! The sea is the only storehouse, the only original source of water that we have.

Fifth child: The sea has a limitless supply of water, but it doesn't give us the water easily.

Sixth child: Why such a big process to give us the water?

Basavanna: Maybe if we had the water all at once we would waste it and exhaust it.

First child: This way, though we keep wasting water, the sea keeps giving us water again and again through the water cycle, doesn't it?

Basavanna: Very true. Besides, God is teaching us through Nature not to be lazy. All the gifts of God are available to us in plenty but we have to put in our effort, we have to work hard to enjoy the fruits of God's gifts.

Second child: A tree gives us fruits but we need to plant the seed and help the tree to grow.

Third child: Yes, this body, the human body is a gift to us too, but we need to make proper use of it.

Basavanna: Exactly. There is one more lesson that we can learn from the way God has planned Nature. Can you tell me what it is?

Fourth child: Hmmm?

Fifth child: Is it working for the good of others?

Sixth child: Or working for the good of everyone?

Basavanna: Absolutely right.

First child: The sea does not drink water, it doesn't need water. Its water is only for everyone else. So many beings live it and move on it.

Second child: The clouds, the rain, the river, all of Nature works for the good of the whole earth.

Third child: Trees give shade, fruits and give us oxygen, they help all the other living beings on the earth.

Fourth child: It is really sad. As human beings we think that we are the best of living beings, but we don't seem to think of other living beings on earth.

Fifth child: We were not even thinking of other human beings, like the poor boy who sells peanuts. We were busy with our fun.

Sixth child: Thank you so much for sharing this knowledge with us. Who are you?

Basavanna: They call me Basavanna. I am here to teach people that the body is a temple of God and one must make the best use of the body and of this life. The best use is to help everyone, to do selfless service. That becomes true service to God.

First child: Basavanna? *(He is reminded of something and pulls out a book from his bag).* We have a lesson on religious reformers. Here it is. *(Reads)* Basavanna is the most prominent social, political, economic and cultural reformer of 12th century Karnataka.

Others also join him and read.

Second child: His father was Madarasa and mother Madalambike. He was born at Basavanabagewadi. This is presently in the district of Vijayapura.

Third child: He was revolutionary by temperament. He refused the sacred thread and went to Kudalasangama where he got educated.

Fourth child: Because of his good qualities and concern for the people he first became a Finance Minister to king Bijjala of Mangalawade and later the Prime Minister of Kalyana.

Fifth child: He established the 'Anubhava Mantapa' known as the world's first parliament at Basava Kalyana, presently in Bidar district.

Sixth child: He established new concepts like Work (Kayaka), Charity (Dasoha) and Chosen Deity (Ishtalinga)

First child: Vachanas are his unique contribution to Kannada literature which were written in the background of spiritual growth and welfare of the nation.

Second child: Vachana movement united the followers of Basavanna irrespective of caste, class and gender.

Third child: Prominent Vachanakaras are Satyakka, Aydakki Lakkamma, Siddarama, Channa Basavanna ...

Fourth child: Molige Maraiah, Ambigara Chowdaiah, Madiwala Machaiah, Madara Chennaiah, Samagara Haralaiah, Kinnari Bommaiah and others.

Fifth child: Uncle, did you say you are Basavanna? Is that your name or are you actually Basavanna?

Looks up to see that he has gone. All the boys look up and are equally astonished.

Sixth child: Where is he? Has he disappeared? Could all of us have had the same dream or did he come to teach us his path?

All of them go to the boy selling peanuts and buy peanuts from him and they begin to teach him how to play. The drama ends.

Note: Similar Plays have been written for the other religious reformers detailed in the lesson in the syllabus – Madhwacharya, Ramanujacharya and Shankaracharya. All these were performed by the students.