



Chinmaya Mission Saginaw, Michigan



Academic Year 2023-24



Hari Om!

What a blessing to have Chinmaya Mission Balvihar in Tri-city Hindu Temple. Learning & gaining the knowledge of our rich Indian culture & Vedanta and passing them to our next generations is our responsibility. We thank our founders & Administrators Manjusha Malewar ji & Rama Mulpuri ji for their continuous devotion and dedication to Chinmaya Mission Saginaw Chapter.

At Balvihar, we have 6 classes.

BV1 (Pre-school to Kindergarten) learned "Alphabet train".

BV2 (Grade 1st-2nd) learned "Ramayana".

BV3 (Grade 3rd-5th) learned "Symbolism in Hinduism".

YK1 (Grade 6th -8th) learned "Yato Dharmah, Tato Jayaha".

YK2 (Grade 9th -12th) learned "Hindu Culture."

Adult class continued learning Bhagavad Gita.



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Balvihar 2



Shyam Raghunathan



Jayatri Samatham



Riva Tanmayi Etha



Yash Sinha



Balvihar 3



Tweesha Gupta



Raghav Ramani



Riddhi Stephenraj



Vivaan Soni



Hithapratha Shankar



Swara Shahasane



Sheen Kaul



Dylan Surati



Raga Samatham



YK1 & YK2



Veehan Chokshi, YK2



Anish Vaidya, YK2



Anish Melgiri, YK1



Ameya Patki, YK1



Adult Class



Shubha Melgiri



Raghu Melgiri



Vicraant Kela

Teachers



Hiral Choksi
Prasad Coordinator



Aditi Soni & Ravi Viswanathan
BV1



Rohini Vaidya & Niranjana Raghunathan
BV2



Nidhi Poddar & Pallavi Shahasane
BV3



Rama Mulpuri & Rita Ratani
YK1



Piyush Soni
YK2



Dr. Karunakaran
Adult Class

Administrators



Rama Mulpuri



Manjusha Malewar



Sudha Nallani

Along with learning Balvihar curriculum, kids participated in different festival celebrations that took place in Tri-city Hindu Temple and they impressed everyone with their creativity and knowledge. Few celebrations are listed below.

Ganesh Festival on September 17th, 2023:

This year Balvihar students got an opportunity to make art & craft related to Lord Ganesh as Ganesh Festival took place after Balvihar started their classes. Even if Art & Craft is the student's favorite activity, dressing up tops the chart.



Gandhi Jayanti on October 1st, 2023:

Balvihar students dressed up as Mahatma Gandhi ji was the cutest thing we had seen, but listening to them talking about him totally impressed us!



Diwali Celebration on October 24th, 2023:

Festival of Lights remains one of the favorite festivals for Balvihar family. Diwali art & craft, trivia along with Bhajans & Presentations were performed by kids, but Diwali is incomplete without Fireworks & Sweets/Murukku.



Halloween on October 29th, 2024:

Celebrating Halloween Balvihar way was very interesting. Listening to kids what they dressed up and why was astonishing.



Makar Sankranti on January 15th, 2024:

Along with giving presentation, reciting Piano on Makar Sankranti, Kids enjoyed making kites and ate Sesame seeds ladoos. So much fun!



Ayodhya Ram Mandir Celebration on January 20th, 2024:

Hundreds of millions of Hindus celebrated the opening of a grand new temple in Ayodhya, India and we could not control our happiness and joined them with celebration in our Tri-city Hindu Temple. Kids enjoyed lighting up the Diyas and dressed up as Ram Parivar.



Ma Saraswati Pooja on February 18th, 2024:

During Ma Saraswati Pooja books were distributed to kids. It was great to see kids dressed up and performing a skit.



Mahashivratri on March 8th, 2024:

Kids recited Lord Shiva's bhajans and presented Symbol Description skit. Those mischievous yet knowledgeable Lord Shivas were adorable.



Gudi Padwa/Ugadi/Vishu/Puthandu on April 7th, 2024:

Incredible India! It was great to know how three different states celebrated their new year. Maharashtra celebrated Gudi Padwa, Tamil Nadu celebrated Vishu/Puthandu and Andhra Pradesh celebrated Ugadi. Learning the same was getting interesting, especially when they were sharing their home stories.



Essay competition on April 7th, 2024:

Announcement of Essay competition and topic is usually given one month prior which gives kids enough time to prepare. The topics were as per the curriculum. We had a great response, and Winners were declared on the day of Graduation.

Ram Navami on April 14th, 2024:

Listening to Preschoolers and Kindergarteners telling Lord Rama's stories totally melted our heart. It was for sure Aww moment!



Field trip to Gurudwara on April 14th, 2024

The field trip to Gurudwara was a very educational experience. Learning about the history and 5Ks- Kesh, Kangha, Kara, Kachera and Kirpan was very fascinating.



Pujya Gurudev's Birthday on May 12th, 2024:

We celebrated our Pujya Gurudev's birthday followed by Mother's Day. Each student shared Gurudev's quote, chanted stotras together. The life story of our beloved Gurudev was presented as well. What a divine experience it was. We showed our gratitude and took his blessings on his 108th birthday. He is helping us to become better human being every single day. After Gurudev's celebration, Mother's Day celebration took place with kids and mothers sharing some memories together or say creating more memories together. Lunch was served by kids.



Graduation Day on June 2nd, 2024:

Graduation day is all about showcasing what you have learned the entire year. Every class showcased excellent Presentation/Skit and it was great to see kids growing with cultural knowledge and spiritual wisdom. We had Pizza and Ice-cream. It was great treat to kick -off the Summer!

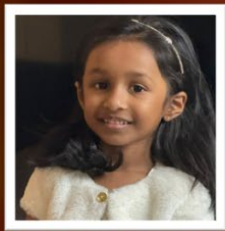
The Guest Speaker for this Graduation Day was Dr. Tushar Raiji & Dr. Bhargavi Raiji from Tapovanam, Flint. Tushar ji is an Internal Medicine Specialist whereas Bhargavi ji is a Radiologist. It was our Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda who inaugurated Tapovanam, Flint and told to all Balvihar Teachers to “Take care of my Children” and ever since then Tushar ji & Bhargavi ji have been committed to Balvihar. They have been instrumental in teaching all age groups and Tushar ji specially the high schoolers. Tushar ji highlighted that “Family that teach/learn together that sticks together”. Having parents attend adult classes while kids attend their own classes will help family bond together and spend quality time together besides learning. Bhargavi Ji has been taking classes for Gita Chanting competitions for both Saginaw and Flint Tapovanam students over Zoom. This has resulted in our BV3 student Raga Samatham competing into Nationals in July 2024. All the best Raga and Thank you Bhargavi ji.



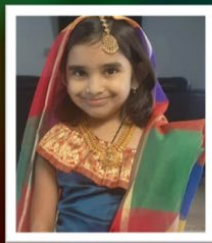


Essay competition winners, Perfect attendance for the year were announced along with Graduating students.

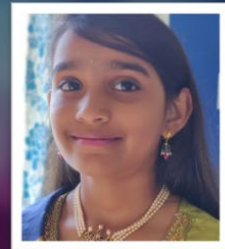
Essay Competition Winners



Ishaanvi Ghatasala
BV1



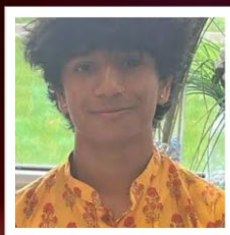
Jayatri Samatham
BV2



Raga Samatham
BV3



Anish Melgiri
YK1



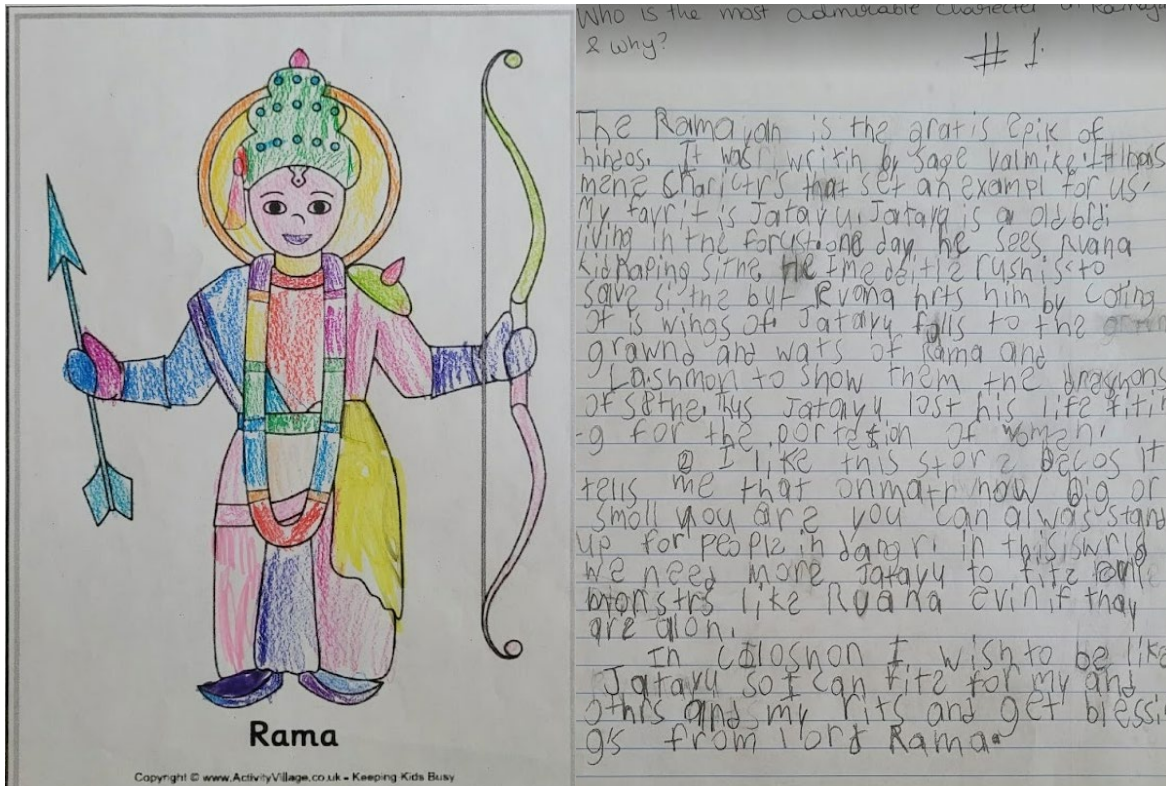
Anish Vaidya
YK2



Piyush Soni
Adult



Winners' essays have been shown below:



Ishaanvi Ghatasala

BV1

Jayatri Samatham

BV2

Which is your favorite god or goddess and why? #13

In hinduism, every new endeavor is traditionally started by saying a prayer to Lord Ganesha. This is because he is the remover of obstacles. This is also why he is called Vighneswara. Lord Ganesha has many such symbols, and symbols are meant to express abstract thought in ways our minds can comprehend. I choose Lord Ganesha for all the thoughtful and enlightening meanings his symbols carry.

One such symbol of Lord Ganesha is his pot-belly. His pot-belly symbolizes that we should digest and store all the knowledge that is given. If we don't digest and really understand knowledge, then what is the point of learning? Just like food is digested and assimilated into the body, knowledge has to be digested and assimilated into the brain to be used in the future. After all, we only learn to truly understand something. That is what this symbol means to me.

Another symbol of Lord Vinayaka is his elephant ears and big head. Both of these symbolize that we should listen, think and analyze all that is said to us. For example, here is a riddle. You are driving a bus, at the first stop 17 people get off and 3 people get on. At the last stop 1 person gets off and 6 people get on. What is the age of the driver? Most people would say that the age of the driver

was not given. But if we listen close we can hear that the riddle began with you are driving a bus. Meaning we know the answer all along. The answer is nothing old your age. This is why it is important to listen just like Bernard Baruch stated, "Most of the successful people I know are the ones who do more listening than talking."

The last two symbols of Lord Lambodara is his one tusk and his nose. It is said that Lord Lambodara made a promise to Sage Vyasa to write the Mahabharata. An interrupted, so Sage Vyasa began to speak and Lord Lambodara began to write. In the midst of the dictation, Lord Lambodara's feather pen broke and to uphold his promise he broke his tusk and wrote with that. This story shows us that we should evaluate and decide and the sacrifice made in the pursuit of wisdom. To put it in the words of British writer C.S. Lewis, "No great wisdom is reached without sacrifice." Lastly Lord Lambodara's mouse moshaka symbolizes that we should always obey elders. A good example is Lord Lambodara's story of birth. To cut it short, Lord Lambodara's head was cut off by Lord Shiva because he would not let Lord Shiva into the house. Later his head was replaced by that of an elephant. Upon knowing he was bound to his duties this is why we have to obey our elders.

Lord Ekdanta has many symbols such as these. And these symbols are not just symbols but life lessons. So use these lessons and attain supreme knowledge. So next time you pray don't think about just Lord Ekdanta think about his symbols and their meanings. Half Om and three Om's in Namaha.

Raga Samatham BV3

What are the main teachings of #23 Hinduism and how can you apply them to have a successful life?

Hinduism is one of the first religions to ever exist. Scientists believe it started sometime in between 2300 B.C. and 1500 B.C. Hinduism is a religion that has many gods, however there are three main gods. These gods are Brahma the creator, Vishnu the sustainer, and Shiva the destroyer. The teachings of Hinduism tell you to live your life the right way using Karma and Moksha, as well as how to break the endless cycle of death and rebirth called samsara.

One of the simplest teachings of Hinduism is Karma. Karma is the belief that your actions have equal reactions. This means that if you do something good you will be rewarded in the future, but if you do something bad you will be punished later in life. For example, say you donate to charity or help someone, later in life the money you donated might come back or the help you gave means that you will be helped when you need it. So, Karma teaches us to do the right things so you will be rewarded for it in the future.

Another teaching of Hinduism is Dharma. The belief of Dharma is to do the right thing in your life. When you live a life following Dharma you have to be patient, forgiving, honest, kind, etc. Dharma teaches you to do the right thing no matter the situation or consequences. For instance, if you get caught doing something bad like cheating or stealing, you should not lie about doing it and accept the consequences. Who knows maybe the good Karma from that will help you.

The Saratara Dharmas are 10 values that lead people through life. They show what you should do, it is up to you how to apply them in life. These 10 values of Saratara Dharmas are: 1, Dhiiti - For bearing, 2, Ksama - forgiveness, 3, Dama, control of sense organs, 4, Asteya - non-stealing, 5, Saucha - purity, 6, Indriya Nigraha - mastery of sense organs, 7, Dhi - using faculty of discrimination, 8, Vidya - knowledge, 9, Satya - truthfulness, 10, Akrodh - anger. I will be discussing 2 of these values, Asteya and Dhi.

Asteya means to not steal, right? It means stealing is wrong no matter what. However, what about farmers in the field killing livestock and taking crops out of the ground? He's stealing from the Earth. Though he's just trying to create a living. How about a homeless beggar who studied hard and tried his hardest to succeed? What if he stole some food from someone? Would it be wrong? I've come to the conclusion of, yes, it's wrong, but we have to do it in order to live.

Next is Dhi. Dhi is the faculty of discrimination. This is detecting right from wrong. But how do you do this? Is killing people right? What if they're trying to kill you? Is it right to kill him/her? What about war? It's all bad right? Well, we can look at some wars going on. What about Ukraine vs. Russia. Russia is in the wrong for starting the war, but Ukraine made it continue for a long time. So who's at fault here? I do not know.

Anish Melgiri
YK1

Anish Vaidya
YK2

What are the main teachings of # 23
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them to have a successful life?

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if you get caught doing something bad like
cheating or stealing, you should not lie about
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Hinduism just like all religions has an
accomplishment or goal. This goal is called moksha.
Moksha is the state of breaking the endless
cycle of samsara. Moksha can be achieved by
following the other teachings of Hinduism such
as karma and dharma to live a good life during
one of your lives in the endless cycle. So for
one of your many lives you must live doing
the right thing so that you can break the
cycle and move on.

So in conclusion the teachings of Hinduism
teach you how to live a good life by using
things such as karma and dharma, so that
you can achieve the state of moksha and
end the cycle of death and rebirth.

Piyush Soni
Adult Class

Perfect Attendance



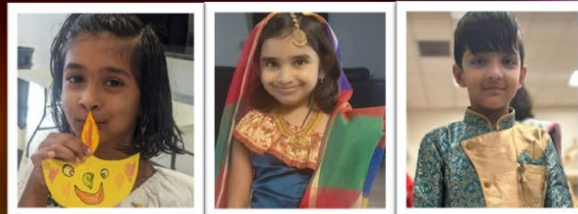
Shyam Raghunathan
BV2



Graduating Students from BV1 & BV2



Arnika Patki, Dhruv Selot, Ishaanvi Ghantasala, Joshi Kotta, Navya Mishra, Revansh Ramani, and Yuvaan Soni
BV1



Jayatri Samatham, Riva Etha, and Yash Sinha
BV2



Graduating Students from BV3 & YK1



Dylan Surati, Raga Samatham, Raghav Ramani, Swara Shahasane, Sheen Kaul
BV3

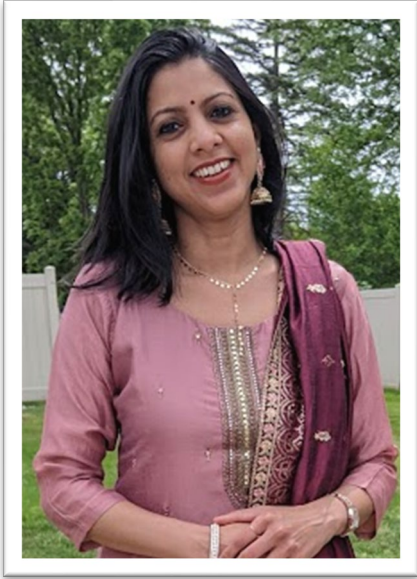


Ameya Patki & Anish Melgiri
YK1



Time Flies and one more year has successfully passed. We thank all our teachers, parents and kids for their devotion and dedication towards continuous learning. Thank you, Chinmaya Mission Flint-Tapovanam and Chinmaya West for providing all the support and help needed and our Pujya Guruji, we show our gratitude and seek your blessings!

Hari Om!



Pallavi Shahasane
Publisher of the yearbook