



THEATRE

“एतद्रसेषु भावेषु
सर्वकर्मक्रियासु च ।
सर्वोपदेशजननं
नाट्यमेतद्भविष्यति ॥” ॥ 113 ॥

*Etadrasesu bhāveṣu
Sarvakarmakriyāsu ca |
Sarvopadeśajananam
Nātyametad-bhaviṣyati ||*

Meaning

Drama will be educative
to all, through the actions,
situations and emotions
arising out of it.

Source: *Natyashastra*, Chapter I



THEATRE FOR MIDDLE STAGE

Creative, Positive and Joyful

In a subject like theatre, which is about stories, expression and imagination, there will be no wrong answer. Encouraging students to think out of the box, experiment with ideas and express themselves in unique ways would be an ideal environment. A classroom that feels safe for a child to share their ideas freely, without being mocked at or laughed at is what will make a theatre class fruitful. Building this mindset in teachers as well as among the children to encourage mutual respect and support among classmates is a great way to foster holistic learning.

Connect Theatre to Real World Skills

As the children begin to understand more about the world around them, facing situations and handling emotions that are more complicated than before, theatre becomes even more relevant. Emphasising the skills gained through theatre becomes crucial. Emotional skills like empathy, gender and handling failure along with life skills such as public speaking, problem-solving and teamwork help students recognise the practical applications of theatre, beyond being an actor or a director.

Attend Performances

Encouraging students to watch live performances or bring guest artists and expose them to professional

theatre and inspire their own artistic aspirations would go a long way in theatre education.

Understand Individual Learning Styles

Recognise and accommodate diverse learning styles within your class. Some students may thrive with hands-on activities, while others may prefer written or visual learning. Provide an option for the child to choose their mode of communication (written or oral) and keep the focus on the conceptual understanding. This takes away the stress from the child's mind to allow free thinking and creativity.

Emphasise Collaboration

Theatre is a collaborative art form. Build in teamwork and communication skills by incorporating group activities, ensemble performances, and collaborative projects. This not only builds team skills, but also enhances individual character and aptitude.

Circle Time

A practice to be followed by the teacher in every class. The last 10 minutes of the period are allotted to this circle time. All children, along with the teacher sit together, for what seems like an informal reflection of thoughts and opinions. Children open up freely when they know there are no expectations, no marks or grades attached. This can be a source of crucial information that no test or exam can provide. But this is informal only for the child. The teachers are required to take notes for themselves, that can be applied in their next lesson plans.



CHAPTER 16

EMOTIONS UNVEILED!

SCENE 1

UNDERSTANDING EMOTIONS

As we start our first theatre class, write one word to describe how you are feeling.

We will now explore, experiment and play with emotions! Sounds like fun? Let us now get on the **HOT SEAT**.

Instructions: The default position is—heads down. Eyes closed. Pay attention.

You will hear a story. Listen to it carefully. Start imagining. Be fully involved in the story. The story suddenly stops and you will hear the word —‘LOOK’. You have to look up quickly and react to that situation in the story where it stopped.

Basic: Simple situation that ends in a dramatic reaction.



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Example 1

Default Position

School trip is announced and you are excited to tell your mother. You are walking on the road, it starts raining. You started running.



Since you cannot see well, you miss a step and fall into the drain ...
Now ... LOOK!



Advanced: Story continues after the first reaction. They **FREEZE** in the last reaction and continue to listen ... and react at **LOOK**. Many twists and turns can be brought into the story, asking for a reaction at every twist in the tale!

Concepts introduced

- Emotions in life, emotions in drama
- Indian and western views
- Mask making

Example 2

Default Position

You are the princess, who is riding a horse in the forest. When you hear a familiar voice, you turn back. That face looks very familiar.



You try really hard to recall ... and recall. It is the person in the ancestral photo which is 500 years old. Now ... LOOK!

Freeze

You then try to escape from this person. But he is following you. You go faster ... that person trips on a rock and something falls out of the pocket. The toy you were playing with yesterday! LOOK!



Freeze

'How did my toy from yesterday reach him? Oh wait ... I lost it in the bushes outside the palace.' Cousin who was playing with you must have stolen it. You take courage and pull the coat to reveal his true face. It is your naughty cousin! LOOK!

Extended: Children volunteer to create stories of their own and narrate with 'POSITION', 'FREEZE' and 'LOOK', while the other children react.



It is Circle Time!

- Make a list of all the emotions we experienced today.
- What do you think was the most complicated emotion? Why?
- Is there a feeling or emotion you can't name? Can you describe it?

You know, there are some situations when you can feel two emotions, at the same time. For example, you are playing with your friends and you



lose the game because one of them cheated. What are the two emotions? sad (for losing the game) and angry (a friend cheated).

What emotions would you feel when you see a puppy getting drenched in the rain, but you cannot go out to help because you have a cold and it is raining heavily.

_____ and _____

We all go through such combination of emotions. Sometimes it could be three emotions too! But that is fine, as long as you know what emotions you are experiencing. Since you can now not only identify your emotions but can also name them; it is very important to look within yourself in different situations and identify what you are going through.

All of us go through many emotions every day. People have been thinking about emotions for many centuries. We, by just playing a game, could list out so many names of emotions. Imagine how many they must have listed after having

worked on it for years! How many do you think they must have listed? 50? 100? More? Actually, it is ... NINE!

Just nine? How? What about the others? Who are these people?

After years of study, observation and analysis, the ancient *rishis* of our country classified emotions into the concept of '*Navarasa*'. Can you believe that all the emotions that we have discussed, can be categorised under these *nine rasas*?

This is primarily done on the basis of two fundamental elements — *rasa* and *bhava*.

Bhava

Dominant state of mind.
Based on perception, thoughts and attitudes, it does not change easily.

↓ leads to

Rasa

The emotional essence.
The resulting experience that is felt in a situation, feeling or sentiment.



Theatre










Have you noticed this—in a situation, what you feel is different from what your friend feels. The reason is the difference in *bhava* in both of you. Because you had a different *bhava* (different attitude or thought) it gave rise to a different *rasa* (feeling that was experienced).

Examples

1. You are watching a match of your favourite sport with your friend. Your team wins. You are thrilled. Your friend is happy but not very excited because his favourite player did not score well.
2. You are having lunch with your friend. A bully in class comes and makes fun of the both of you, laughs and goes away. You get irritated, but put it away and say 'who cares'. You notice that your friend is crying in a corner, feeling very hurt.

In both these cases, though the situations are the same, what emotion and experience rise (*rasa*) depends on what basic attitude or thoughts you have (*bhava*).

The great *rishis* of India, had thought of this in their work on emotions and the human mind. Based on their study, they classified the *rasas* (our experience) into *navarasas* (nine *rasas*).

 <p>Sringara Beauty, love</p>	 <p>Hasya Humour, happy</p>	 <p>Veera Heroic, courage</p>
 <p>Bhayanaka Fear, scary</p>	 <p>Karuna Sympathy, sad</p>	 <p>Bhibhatsa Disgust, ugly</p>
 <p>Raudra Anger, rage</p>	 <p>Adbhuta Wonder, surprise</p>	 <p>Shanta Peace, blissful</p>

Now, you can fit all the emotions that we have discussed, into one of these nine *rasas*! Try doing it.

Navarasa Game

Play this fun game to get familiar with the *navarasas*. Draw the *navarasas* in a circle in the centre of the room. All children go around the circle when the music is played. The music stops and the *rasa* that is nearest to the child should be expressed. The learner who will not be able to perform, will go out of the circle. Music is played again and so it goes on.

Alternatively, nine boxes can be drawn on the floor instead of a circle.

This concept of *rasa*, is a very small part of the big work on performing arts. It has everything from the most basic idea of how to read a story to the possibility of attaining *moksha* through the arts! It speaks about everything including make-up, costume, lights, music, dance, rehearsals, discipline, safety and responsibility of the arts towards the audience. This great work on the performing arts is called *Natyashastra*, written by **Bharata Muni**.



An interesting story of how it all began, called *Natyotpatti* (birth of performing art)



1 Brahma, the God of all Devas, noticed that the Devas had become very demotivated and lazy. They wasted time doing nothing.



2 Brahma then picks dialogue from *Rigveda*, movement from *Yajurveda*, music from *Samaveda* and emotions from *Atharvaveda*.



3 He created a unique book *Natya Veda*. He gives it to the Devas hoping they will like it and use it.



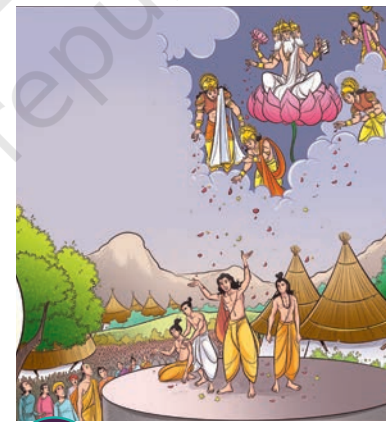
4 But the Devas don't understand anything in *Natyaveda*. They are very confused.



5 So, Brahma calls an intelligent Rishi — Bharata Muni and asks him to simplify the *Natyaveda* so that everyone understands this.



6 Bharata Muni then writes the *Natyashastra*. He gets his 100 children together to apply the *Natyashastra* and presents a performance.



7 The Devas are thrilled looking at the performing arts. They shower praises and appreciation and adapt it in their lives.

This story tells us that the *Natyashastra* is a book on the performing arts that includes the knowledge extracted from all the four *Vedas* and more! It is also called the fifth *Veda*! This story of *Natyotpatti* is how the actual book of *Natyashastra* begins. If you have read this story, it means you have started reading the *Natyashastra* itself! We shall continue learning more about it in the forthcoming classes.



SCENE 2: EXPLORING EMOTIONS

We have so far learnt about facial expressions. You have understood how every part of your face contributes towards showing what you are feeling inside. But why only the face? Haven't we learnt that there are two other important aspects which help us in communication? They are—voice and body language.

Let us try to explore the same *navarasas* through voice and body language!

Now, let us play the same game of *Hot Seat*. But this time, when you hear 'LOOK' you should use your voice and body language to react to the situation. Sounds fun?

Instructions: The default position is, heads down, eyes closed, pay attention.

Listen to the story carefully. Be fully involved in the story. The story

Example

Raudra — Anger or Rage

Make simple drawings for another *rasa*.

Name of the *rasa* _____

Face Expression	Body Language	All combined	Face Expression	Body Language	All combined
					

suddenly stops and you will hear the word — ‘LOOK’. You have to look up quickly and react to that situation with voice and action.

Basic: Simple situation that ends in a dramatic reaction.

Advanced: Story continues after the first reaction. They FREEZE in the last reaction and continue to listen... and react at LOOK. Many twists and turns can be done in the story, asking for a reaction at every twist in the tale!

Extended: Children volunteer to create stories of their own and narrate with ‘POSITION’, ‘FREEZE’, and ‘LOOK’, while the other children react.

It is wonderful to see how you are not only able to identify the emotion in the situation but also express to communicate it using your face, body and voice. Like we were wondering how people must have looked at and analysed emotions centuries ago and explored *navarasa* in India. We will now look at how emotions

in performance were looked at, in other countries.

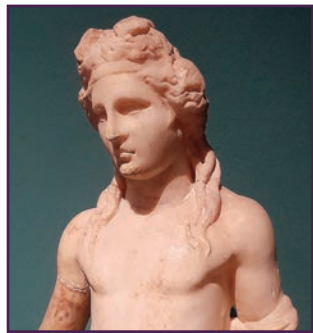


It is Circle Time!

- Make a list of emotions we experienced today.
- Was it easier when you added voice and action? Or were facial expressions easier?
- Is there a feeling you can't name? Can you enact it with voice, action or expression?
- Observe the emotion you feel repeatedly in one day.



Map not to scale
Artist representation



Dionysus — Greek God of
entertainment

An ode is a type of lyric poetry for glorifying an event or person.

The oldest known origin of performing arts outside of India, is the **Greek Theatre**, around fifth century BCE.

Dionysus, the God of entertainment, was responsible to maintain a good crop harvest of grapes — main agricultural produce in Greece. Back then, the people of Greece used to celebrate the Dionysian festival to please their God. During this, they used to sing hymns in praise of Dionysus and the chorus was called *Dithyramb*. As a part of the ritual, a goat was sacrificed while the songs were sung.

Songs sung during the goat sacrifice ritual (ode) led to the term 'Tragodia' (Trag — Odia), which means the 'Song of the Goats', which led to the term, **tragedy**.

Stories and performances based on this were the first plays. They were all tragic plays. They were serious and had a sad ending with the protagonist (the main character) of the play either being punished or dead.

More and more such stories were being performed and many years

later, (around fourth century BCE) the stories began to see changes where there were happy endings and enjoyment in the story. This was the beginning of comedy. The origin of the word comedy, similar to tragedy, is from the Greek terms — 'Komos' (enjoy) and 'Odia' (song). Comedy dramas have a happy ending. These include elements of humans, animals and Gods in their plays. They also included dance sequences and a dialogue directly with the audience or the playwright.

Observe this picture of a Greek theatre performance. What do you notice? All three actors are wearing masks.



A Greek play in action

Masks were an important part of Greek theatre. This is also linked to the reason why they preferred tragedy.

Tragedy is actually serious and sad. Did the Greeks like to be sad and cry all the time? No. It helped them to release their suppressed emotions and pain. This is called catharsis. You will learn more about it in higher grades. Masks helped in relating to the character and not the person acting.

You must have seen these masks many times, right? But what do you think they represent? You can guess from what we have studied.



Tragedy and Comedy

So the next time you see these masks, you know the story behind it.



It is Circle Time!

1. Share an example of how you observed the idea of *bhava* and *rasa* to understand a situation.
2. Try connecting the *Navarasas* (from ancient India) and tragedy-comedy (from ancient Greece).
 - What *rasas* can be included under tragedy and comedy?
 - Are there more emotions that cannot be classified under these?
3. Make a list of all the emotions that you had gone through in a day. Give each one the equivalent name of the *rasa*.
4. When you read a storybook, mark every emotional moment with the name that has been discussed.

ACTIVITY — MASKS AND EMOTIONS

Let us explore the emotions through masks. But masks cover the face and face is the way to show emotions. How can masks show emotions?

Masks are emotions and characters that you can wear and act!

Though there are numerous types of masks, we will explore two of them.

Be careful while using scissors and glue, use them under the supervision of your teacher!



Half mask



Full mask

Cardboard Masks (half):
(Cardboard, scissors, glue and colours).

- Draw the layout of the face, make sure you get the symmetry right. A simple way to achieve a symmetrical design is to fold the paper (see pictures).
- Mark the eyes and nose, this way both sides will come symmetrical, add different shapes and designs to bring out the eyes, nose and ears, or any other feature as desired.

- Add extra features creatively with colour paper and glue.
- To make the cardboard according to the shape of the face, make sure you bend it, cut out an angle and then paste it.
- Make two holes near the ear area of the mask to tie a thread or elastic.



Fold paper in half and draw the outline



Cut on the line with scissors



Use the edge of the table to slightly bend the cardboard



Decorate your mask with colours, shells, feathers or anything you want

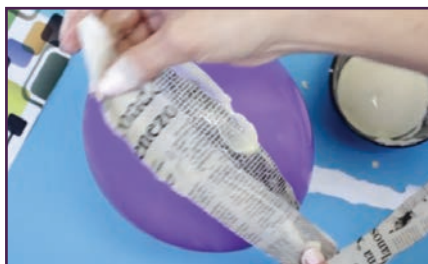


Paper Masks (full): (old newspaper, one balloon, glue, scissors, colours).

- Tear pieces of paper (newspaper or regular paper), wet it in water and apply it smoothly on the surface of the balloon.
- Cover half of the balloon as in picture. The paper must overlap on the edges. Reapply layers of wet paper to bring the different contours of the face.
- Allow it to completely dry, this process of applying a wet layer of paper, waiting for it to dry, reapplying layers and getting the desired shape might take around three days.

- Burst the balloon and cut the paper to define the shape.
- Paint the mask according to the characters, use different colours to bring out different emotions and expressions.

There are different purposes that a mask serves. The use of masks in performing arts is diverse and spans across various cultures and theatrical traditions. Whether conveying characters, cultural symbols or deeper meanings, masks are a powerful and versatile tool in the world of performance. India has more than 50 types of classical masks.



Pieces of wet paper on a balloon. 5–6 layers. Last layer with glue



After dries fully, burst the balloon to remove it



Cut outlines to define shape (take the help of an adult)



Decorate it with colours and any other material

Group Activity

- Make groups of 3–4 students.
- Pick a *rasa* from the *navarasa*.
- Identify designs from your local culture.
- Create a mask in that *rasa* (emotion) with your local cultural design.

Note: You can choose to make —

- Cardboard full mask.
- Paper mask with a balloon.

Examples

Culture: It has tribal design and *warli* art from Maharashtra.

Emotion: Eyebrow and eye design show an angry emotion (*Raudra*).



Here are some examples —

Show Emotions



Joy



Anger

Show Culture



Purulia Chhau
(West Bengal)



Chaam
(Laddakh)

