



बालप्रतिभा BAALA PRATIBHA

A quarterly magazine on dharma and Indian values,
by children for children

Volume 1, Issue 1
Jan-Mar 2026



Published by
BAALA BHARATI

An Educational Initiative of the Dakshinamnaya Sri Sharada Peetham, Sringeri,
Dedicated to Nurturing Children with the Timeless Values of Sanatana Dharma

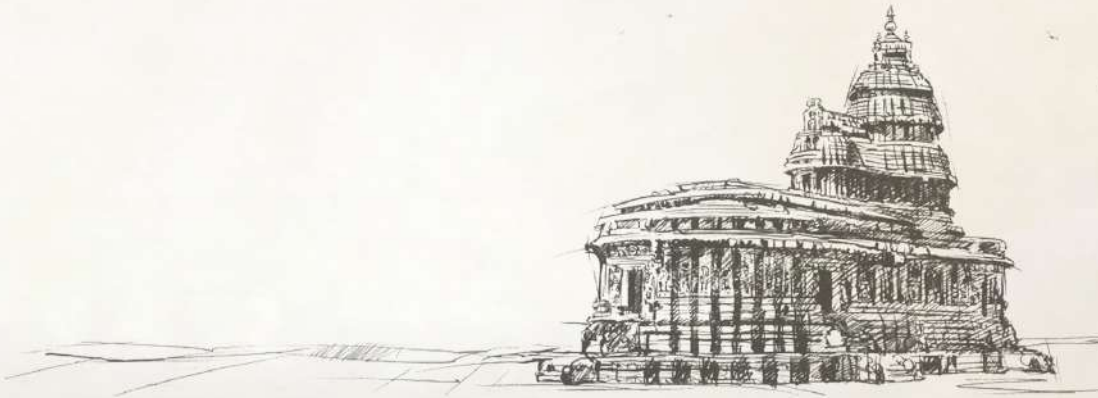


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Released as part of
“Vajrotsava Bharati”



Celebrating 75 years of Jagadguru Shankaracharya
Sri Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahasannidhanam, 36th Shankaracharya
of the Dakshinamnaya Sri Sharada Peetham, Sringeri



Nurture Children the Dharmic Way



Benedictory Message by Jagadguru Shankaracharya
Sri Sri Vidhushekhara Bharati Sannidhanam, 37th Acharya of the
Dakshinamnaya Sri Sharada Peetham, Sringeri



Sanatana dharma is a remarkably eminent culture. This culture has prevailed in our nation since time immemorial. This is what we refer to as Indian culture. This is a culture which serves as a beacon of guidance to the entire world. People of good discernment and wisdom across the world fold their hands with reverence towards our culture. Such is the preeminence of our nation's Sanatana dharma.

The lofty wisdom propounded in the Vedas, Puranas, Itihasas and Shastras of our culture are immensely beneficial to every person. The wisdom in these texts propels us towards a position of eminence. Therefore, if such exalted insights are understood and adhered to right from childhood, it is possible to reach a position of eminence. Not only will we reach an exalted position, but also earn the respect of one and all.

No matter the challenges that confront us, this culture gives us the strength of character to overcome those difficulties and move forward. Such is the remarkable wisdom propounded in our culture. Several people come from foreign lands and study our culture, and document its wisdom in texts authored in their respective languages. They also follow this culture and reap its benefits. In this manner, our nation's culture serves to guide the entire world.

If children are taught our culture from a young age, they will grow into distinguished citizens. The children will benefit and the society will also benefit in all respects. There is no doubt that the life-path of such children will be groomed in a manner that will be remembered by people for all times. There is therefore a need for disseminating such exalted and spiritual wisdom as contained in our culture right from childhood. Cultivating such samskaras (inclinations) are most essential during childhood.

We see in our Puranas that great personages such as Prahlada, Dhruva, Nachiketa and Markandeya imbibed these elevating samskaras at an extremely young age - at an age where other children only engage in play. These great personages are glorified by all to this day and we mention their names with great respect.

Prahlada was a great devotee. The fact that Bhagavan Himself incarnated solely for his sake is indicative of the depth of Prahlada's spiritual practices, devotion and persona. Similarly, we have the story of Dhruva in the Puranas. Even at a very young age, Dhruva worshiped Bhagavan with utmost faith. Bhagavan Himself manifested before Dhruva, blessed him and gave Dhruva a position of eternal glory in the world. This is why, in everyday conversations even to this day, people cite the 'Dhruva Star' as a reference for eternity.

Next, Markandeya engaged in special worship of Bhagavan at a young age and overcame the clutches of Yama Dharmaraja (God of death). Bhagavan Parameshwara Himself protected him from Yama Dharmaraja! It is no small feat to conquer Bhagavan Yama (death). Markandeya achieved that at a young age. Similarly, Nachiketa attained knowledge of the Supreme (Brahman) at a young age and is glorified as a Jnani (realised being). In this manner, we see many such young personages in the Vedas and Puranas who have acquired spiritual inclinations at a young age and attained a place of eminence.

If such inclinations were to be instilled in children from a young age, they will develop immense competence. While it may not be possible for all to attain the same level of eminence as those Mahapurushas, even just a fraction of their goodness will sanctify us. Such inclinations are thus of utmost necessity for children.

The 'Baala-Bharati' initiative has been undertaken to bring awareness to students of all age-groups regarding our culture. Through this initiative, children must develop their personality, become ideal citizens and lead an exemplary social life.

— Excerpts from the benedictory message by Jagadguru Shankaracharya Sri Sri Vidhushekhara Bharati Sannidhanam on the launch of Baala Bharati on Guru Purnima day, 2024.



Baala Bharati: Orienting Children and Dharma

With the blessings of Jagadguru Shankaracharya Sri Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahasannidhanam and Jagadguru Shankaracharya Sri Sri Vidhushekhara Bharati Sannidhanam, and under the divine guidance and directive of Jagadguru Sri Sannidhanam, Baala Bharati was launched on Guru Purnima day in 2024. Since its launch, Baala Bharati has strived to impart to children the sacred values of our eternal dharma, through online and offline learning modules, shared festive observances and shloka chanting programs.

A flagship initiative of Baala Bharati has been the Vajrotsava Bharati Rolling Shield, launched in July 2025 as an annual inter-school cultural competition, to instill in children the sacred values of our dharma through curated study of our Itihasas and Puranas. 'Srimad Ramayana' was chosen as the theme for the first edition of the Vajrotsaava Bharati Rolling Shield competitions, with over 50 Bengaluru-based schools and nearly 8000 students participating in the contests. The contests included both written and oral examinations at the individual level and also a host of cultural competitions at the group level.

On the occasion of the prize distribution ceremony of the Vajrotsava Bharati Rolling Shield 2025 (on Jan 29, 2026), the first issue of Baala Bharati's e-magazine **Baala Pratibha** has been released by Jagadguru Sri Sannidhanam. With the blessings of Jagadguru Sri Sannidhanam,

Baala Pratibha has been conceptualised as a means to empower children, the torchbearers of our future, to reflect upon and bring into expression varied aspects of our hallowed dharma. Through this initiative, we want children to delve deep into our sacred culture, gather its treasured wisdom and in turn share their learnings with other young readers.

Envisaged therefore as a publication by children for children, it is Baala Bharati's humble endeavour to offer **Baala Pratibha** as a platform through which the wisdom and wonder of children, tempered with the values of our dharma, find a voice.

The first issue of **Baala Pratibha** carries a section of articles and other features by the top performers of the individual inter-school Ramayana examination. Subsequent issues will continue to feature such articles. These top students were selected over a series of written, oral, discussion and activity-based rounds, all themed on the Ramayana. The theme for this first edition is therefore the Ramayana and the examination itself, featuring the students' thoughtful responses to questions in the final assessment round of their examination and their learnings from the epic.

For subsequent issues of **Baala Pratibha**, any child between classes 4-10 is welcome to contribute.

Call for articles will be made through schools associated with Baala Bharati and also announced on <https://baalabharati.org/>.

The theme for every issue will also be announced.

May the children of today bloom into fine ideals and uphold our eternal values. Invoking the grace of Sri Sharadamba and Ubhaya Jagadgurus of the Peetham upon all children, Baala Bharati offers **Baala Pratibha**.

In Service,
Baala Bharati Team



Baala Bharati: Frames of 2025



Baala Samskriti weekend classes at Sringeri Shankara Math,
Shankarapuram, Bengaluru



Vajrotsava Bharati Rolling Shield 2025- Inter-school Contest

Quarter-finals, Semi-finals and Finals of the
Ramayana examination on Nov 8 and 9 at
Sringeri Shankara Math, Chamarajapet, Bengaluru



Finals of the Vajrotsava Bharati Rolling Shield 2025 Inter-school
Cultural Contest on Nov 23 at Sringeri Shankara Math,
Chamarajapet, Bengaluru



Top 8 Winners of the Vajrotsava Bharati Rolling Shield 2025
Ramayana Examination, outside Guru Nivasa at Sringeri



L to R - Satvik, Isha, Gangothri, Samana, Smriti, Meenaakshee,
Yogesh and Dheemaan

The Ramayana Inspires



At the finals of the Inter-School Ramayana Examination, Baala Bharati had posed this question to the top 20 finalists:

Which character in the Ramayana inspires you the most and why?

Responses from the Top 8 winners of the examination are featured in this issue.

Lord Hanuman inspires me the most. This is because after reading the story of him crossing the ocean upon discovering his true potential, I realised that I have also been ignorant about my true potential and wasting it. Now, every single day, I seek to uncover my true potential. I was also inspired by the emotional intelligence shown by him while talking to Devi Sita. His words of wisdom and intelligence made me look up to a part of my own self which I always ignored, which is the rational part.

— Dheemaan Pramanik, Class 9
Poornaprajna Education Centre

I love the character Sita Devi in Ramayana, she inspires me the most. She is the supreme devotee of Lord Rama and is his Shakti (energy). She inspires me to remember the Lord always, in great difficulty or in ecstasy or in separation. She inspires me to tolerate pain and be kind

and calm. She inspires me to be pure in thoughts, emotions and actions along with speech, and also to remember God, think about God, speak about God and serve God. Most importantly, to love God like your own!

— CM Gangotri, Class 9
Jaigopal Garodia Rashtrothana Vidyalaya

Vibhishana in the Ramayana inspires me a lot. He shows that even being on the opposing side, one can give up the unrighteous path and surrender to Bhagavan. He followed dharma and fought for dharma. Even though there were many obstacles he faced, he overcame them through the path of dharma. This also shows that Sri Rama was liked even by the enemy side.



— Isha Prashanth, Class 8
Jnanodaya Institutions

Lord Hanuman in the Ramayana inspired me most, because of all his exceptional qualities like Bhakti towards Sri Rama, humility, presence of mind, speech, bravery and compassion. I am inspired by how he brought the whole of Rishabha mountain in confusion and also how he overcame his despair and continued searching for Sita in Lanka. His ideology ‘जीवन् भद्राणि पश्यति’ has helped me face many obstacles and challenges in life. It has brought me out of the harshest of times. Hanuman is my role model and I aspire to be like him.

— Meenaakshee Shyam, Class 10
Vidyaniketan Public School

I am inspired by Bharata the most. He embraced Bhagavan by Padasevana Bhakti. He was humble and despite being offered the throne of Ayodhya, he requested Sri Rama to take the throne. Sacrificing all luxuries and greed, he lived in simple attire when Sri Rama refused. He put the padukas of Sri Rama on the throne and never took any gifts or inessentials.

— Samana Karanam, Class 9
Jnanodaya Institutions

The character in Ramayana which inspires me the most is Lord Hanuman, who is always calm, noble and wise. When Sugriva forgot his promise to Sri Ram, Hanuman only reminded Sugriva about it. When Angadha misguided the vanaras upon seeing the large ocean, it was Hanuman who corrected him. Hanuman used his powers in the right way. When he faced several challenges while crossing the ocean, he wisely faced them and not least, his devoted service and devotion towards dharma and Sri Ram (which I love the most).

— Satwik Hegde, Class 9
RMS International School

Sita Devi, the chaste Pativrata, devoted wife of Sri Rama, inspires me the most - because of her chastity, purity and devotion to her Lord. Because of her nobility, kindness, grace and compassion. Because of her tolerance in enduring suffering. “पतिः स्त्रीणां परायणम्॥” – Sita says, no one but her husband is a woman's ultimate refuge.

— A Smruthi, Class 10
Vivekananda Kendra Vidyalaya

Sri Rama inspires me the most in Ramayana because he is not only excellent in Kshatriya skills but also a great follower of dharma. His life teaches me how to live and maintain composure even during the most difficult situations. He excels in all good qualities and is ready to do anything his father wants. Sri Rama teaches me how to live my life following dharma.

—Yogesh Santosh RM, Class 8
Vagdevi Vilas School (Whitefield)



Morals from the Ramayana

— By Harshitha Pradeep, Class 8
Jnanodaya Institutions

From the Baala Kaanda:



There is an incident in the Baala Kaanda, where Maharshi Vishvamitra takes Sri Rama to the forest to kill the demons who are wreaking havoc in the sacred ashram. The stunning fact here is that Sri Rama was only 16 years old at that time and, without any fear, he effortlessly subdued those demons!

Here we can learn from Sri Rama that we must never be fearful to do the right thing. In our modern world, we cannot slay demons physically. The demons are present in us in the form of anger, greed, jealousy, and all the bad virtues. So, in today's life, being fearless to do the right deed can sometimes mean doing something completely different than many people!

From the Ayodhya Kaanda:

Did you know what Sri Rama's reaction was when his father told him to go to the forest for 14 years instead of becoming the king? Sri Rama was extremely calm, and he at once agreed to go to the forest! He was not disturbed by the fact that the next day he was supposed to be the king, but he just obeyed his father because he respected him and his stepmother so much.

The scenario teaches us that we should always respect our parents, as they would have a lot of experience, far more than us. Respecting and following the orders of elders is a dharma, or duty that we must follow, whatever it may be.

From the Aranya Kaanda:

After kidnapping Sita Devi and shoving her into the Pushpaka Vimana, Ravana flew off towards Lanka. Jatayu, the grand old eagle who was extremely devoted to Sri Rama, vowed to rescue Sita Devi from the



cruel Ravana. He fought a bloody battle with Ravana and in the end, his wings were cut from his body by the cruel demon. By his sacrifice, he attained Moksha, ultimate salvation, and the infinite presence of Sri Rama.

Let us now reflect upon how we can implement this virtue in our daily life. If we must give up something for a greater good, we must always be ready to do it, just like Jatayu sacrificed his own life. We need not sacrifice our life itself for something, but if there is a chance to give up something we have which is unimportant, we should sacrifice it.

From the Kishkindha Kaanda:

When introducing themselves to each other, Sri Rama and Sugriva got to know a few facts about each other. Sugriva got to know that Sri Rama had been exiled to the forest for 14 years, that Ravana had kidnapped his wife Sita Devi, and that Sri Rama was on an expedition to find her. Sri Rama got to know that Sugriva's elder brother Vali had snatched the throne away from him and had forcefully taken his wife, Ruma.

Sugriva promised to help find Sita. In return, Sri Rama offered to help Sugriva gain his rightful throne, by killing Vali for a greater good. Initially, Sugriva forgot about his promise. But when Lakshmana came with an angry reminder, he remembered his oath and at once planned to search for Sita Devi.



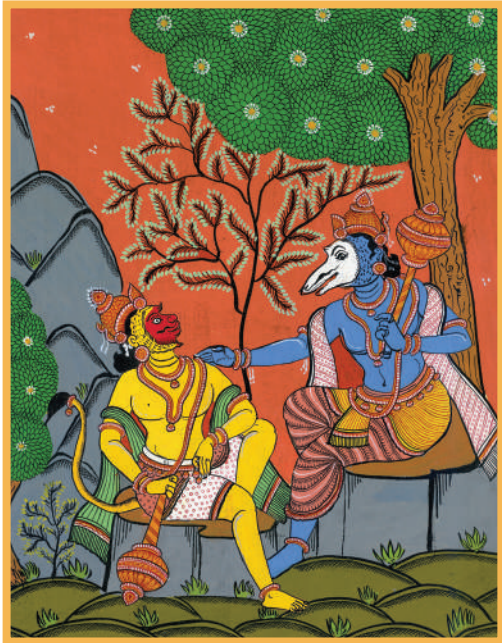
In today's world, we can implement the moral of the above story by honoring our promises and keeping our word. If your elders get angry at you, think that they would have scolded you for a worthy cause. Hence, always keep track of the promises you make. Never forget about them.

From the Sundara Kaanda:

After Jambavan reminded Hanuman of the great powers he had, Hanuman at once grew to his full size and leapt across the ocean. As soon as he entered Lanka, he began searching for Sita Devi. He first checked in Ravana's private quarters and found a lady who was sleeping peacefully (Mandodari, Ravana's wife). He first thought it was Sita Devi, but then realized that she could not have slept so peacefully beside her kidnapper. His instincts and logical reasoning led him to

the Ashoka Vana, where Sita Devi was being tormented by demonesses.

After leaving Ravana's court and being caught, Hanuman set fire to the whole of Lanka, including the Ashoka Vana where Sita Devi was staying. Later, he realized his mistake and the consequences of anger. What if Sita Devi was burnt to ashes? He hurried back there and found that Sita Devi was safe. As Sita Devi herself was like fire, she was not harmed. Fire cannot burn fire. Hanuman heaved a huge sigh of relief.



Nowadays, we cannot conduct a rescue mission like Sugriva. But confidence and self-motivation are needed to achieve a task. Just as Hanuman had to be reminded of his powers, we need to remind ourselves that we have the power to do something.

Before we jump to a conclusion, we must first think of every other possibility available, just like Hanuman did in Ravana's private quarters. If Hanuman thought that the sleeping lady was Sita Devi, there would have been dire consequences.

We should also keep in mind that nothing can be achieved by becoming angry. Take a few deep breaths and try to analyze the situation so that you can find a better solution. If you commit a mistake due to anger, make sure you set it right.

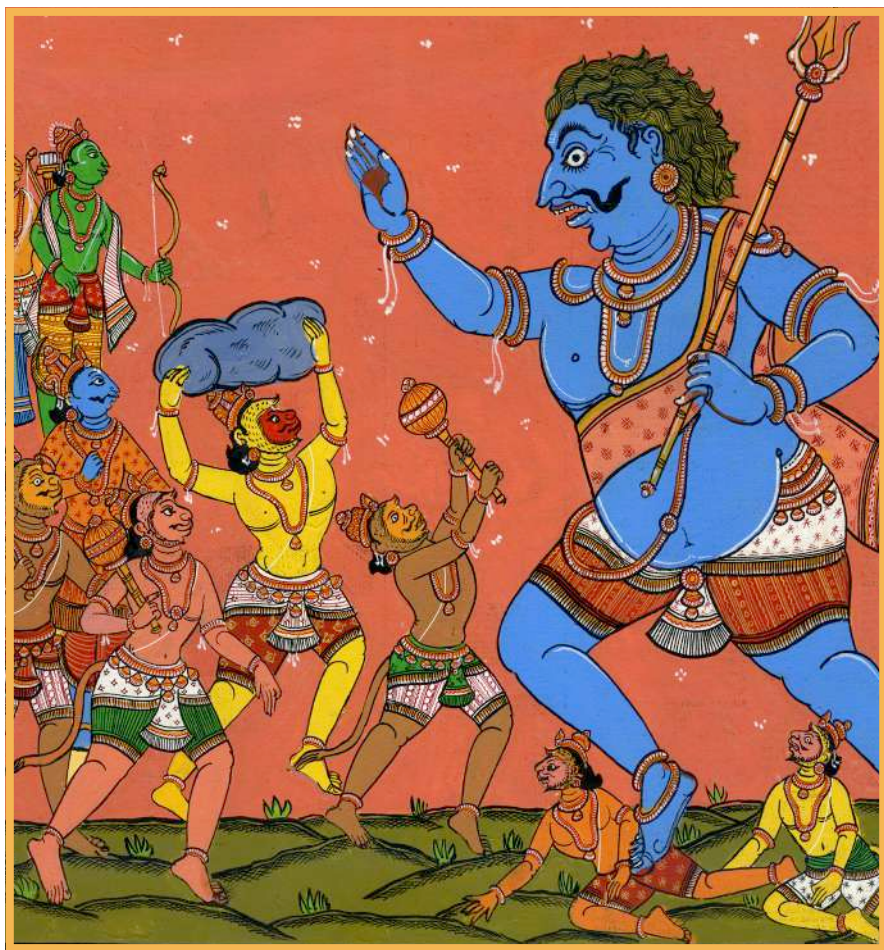
From the Yuddha Kaanda:

When Vibheeshana understood that Ravana would not return Sita Devi to Sri Rama, he decided to leave Ravana and seek refuge in Sri Rama instead. He knew that being on the wrong side would lead to destruction. He also knew that Sri Rama was the supreme Lord and seeking refuge in him would mean that he would attain salvation.

When Ravana noticed that his army was on the losing side in the battle, he thought it was the perfect time to involve his younger brother, Kumbhakarna. Even a demon like Kumbhakarna advised Ravana, telling him to return Sita Devi back to Sri Rama. As usual, Ravana did not listen. Finally, Kumbhakarna entered the battlefield and was killed by Sri Rama.

What can we understand from these situations? In the first scenario, Vibheeshana made the right decision by surrendering to Sri Rama. He was not killed and later he became a chiranjeevi (immortal)! Similarly, we should also choose the path which is correct and adheres to dharma.

When Kumbhakarna recommended Ravana to do the right thing, Ravana did not even pay heed. It led to his destruction. In the same way, we must listen to our well-wishers and their advice. It will only be for our good. Follow their words, and you will gain success in life.



Pilgrim Thoughts: On Sringeri & Ayodhya



Finalists of the Inter-School Ramayana Examination
were asked the following questions as a part of
their multi-round finals assessment:

**If you are in the top 8, what will you do when you go to
Sringeri?**

**If you are in the top 3, what will you do when you go to
Ayodhya?**

All the 20 finalists gave heartwarming responses reflecting
profound devotion, maturity and gratitude. Responses from the
Top 8 winners of the examination are featured in this issue.

When I go to Sringeri, I would firstly pray to Sri Rama for blessing
me with the opportunity. I would try to follow dharma despite the
circumstances and would be inspired by Sri Rama.

When I go to Ayodhya, I would feel blessed to place my foot on this
sacred land where Sri Rama was born. I would pray at the feet of Sri
Rama and try to follow dharma always.

— Yogesh Santosh RM

I will thank Goddess Sharada and Sri Adi Shankaracharya for the
knowledge they blessed me with. I will pray that not just me, but

everyone in the world should attain supreme divine knowledge.

I will be extremely delighted to just get the darshana of Ram Lalla! I would also pray that my friends and I should get Jnana (divine knowledge), bhakti (devotion) and vairagya (detachment from worldliness).

— Smruthi A

I would personally, along with my parents, love it because it is an “Adisthala”. I would love to have darshan of Sringeri Sharadamba and Lord Ram, listen to Bhajans, and listen to upadeshas of Sri Mahasannidhanam and Sri Sannidhanam.

Since the construction of Ram Mandir, I wanted to visit but could not. Now if I get a chance, then along with my parents who also wanted to, I will have darshan of Sri Ram and experience the place, ‘Janmabhoomi Ayodhya’.

— Satwik Hegde

I really want to visit the temple in Kigga for I have heard so much about its divinity and also go to the Narasimha Vana, a place with immense positive vibes.

Having never visited Ayodhya till now, I wish to see the attractive Ram Lalla murti and chant Rama Raksha strotram in the Avarana of the temple.

— Samana Karanam

If I am to be in the top 8 and go to Sringeri, I would first do pranams to Sri Mahasannidhanam and Sri Sannidhanam and pray to them to give me staunch devotion to Sri Rama and belief in dharma. I would pray to Sri Sharadamba and Sri Vidyashankara to bestow divine grace to all good people.

If Sri Rama wants me to be in the top 3, I would feel utterly blessed and lucky. I would be grateful to Bhagwan for extending his kripa-kataksha to me, a sinner, and grace me with his darshana. If I go to Ayodhya, I will feel that I have attained fulfillment in life, for there is nothing greater than Sri Ram Lalla's darshan.

—Meenaakshee Shyam

If I am in the top 8, the first thing I would do as I step into Sringeri is pay my salutations and gratitude for being able to come this far. I would also want to visit the Shivalinga where Maharshi Rishyashringa gave up his earthly body.

If I were in the top 3, then I would be truly grateful that I got an opportunity to witness the Sri Rama Janmabhoomi Temple. There is no greater thing than getting to see my Prabhu Sri Ram. Going to Ayodhya would be one of the best things that ever happened to me.

—Isha Prashanth

If I would go to Shringeri, I would be ecstatic to get the blessings of Goddess Sharada and this time, I will scan the entire temple walls for I got to know that they bear (sculptures of) the great epics Ramayana and Mahabharata. There is Kartaveerya Arjuna, so I will beg him with silent prayers to help me find my lost Jagannath locket as it is very dear to me.

I have a burning desire to go to Ayodhya. I have travelled to Vrindhavan and had darshan of Lord Krishna, but my wish would never feel complete without darshan of Lord Ram. When I go there, I will feel ecstatic and cry saying, “O Lord! You finally fulfilled my desire!”. I will donate some money for local temples to develop there.

—Gangothri CM



It would be my first visit to Sringeri. I would first feel and enjoy the sanctity and natural beauty of Sringeri. Then I would visit the ancient temples and I would visit the sacred Dakshinamnaya Sri Sharada Peetham. There I would pray to God that dharma should be protected.

I would first visit and enjoy the sanctity of Ayodhya. Then I would visit the Ram Janmabhoomi temple and Sundar Sadan at Ayodhya.

—Dheemaan Pramanik

Reminiscing the Ramayana Journey



In the following thoughtful essays, select students reminisce about their journey with the Ramayana, from preparing for the examination to internalising the essence of the immortal epic. As a part of their prize package, the top 8 winners, along with their parents, also visited Sringeri on January 3 and 4, 2026. The essays also track their experience of the pilgrimage to sacred Sringeri.

MY EXPERIENCE REGARDING THE RAMAYANA EXAM AND THE SRINGERI TRIP



— Essay by Dheemaan Pramanik,
Class 9, Poornaprajna Education Centre

I begin this reflection with a deep sense of gratitude. I feel truly fortunate to have been given the opportunity to participate in the Ramayana examination conducted by Baala Bharati at Shankara Matha and to later visit the sacred town of Sringeri as one of the Baala Pratinidhis*. This experience was not merely an academic event or an educational trip—it was a journey that slowly shaped my thoughts, strengthened my inner discipline, and brought a sense of calm and clarity into my life. I consider myself blessed to have been part of an initiative that blends learning, culture, and spirituality in such a meaningful way.

*Recognising the commitment, knowledge and achievement of the top 20 students, Baala Bharati has chosen these students as the first set of 'Baala Pratinidhis' - student-ambassadors to help Baala Bharati spread the message of dharma and culture amongst children.

The Ramayana Exam —Learning Values, not just memorizing facts

The Ramayana examination was a unique experience in itself. It was not a single test, but a series of thoughtfully designed rounds including a mobile-based examination, written tests, discussions, and interactive formats. Each stage tested not just memory, but understanding, clarity of thought, and the ability to reflect. Preparing for the exam required consistency, patience, and sincere effort. At times, the syllabus felt vast, but as I progressed, I realised that the intention of the exam was not to overwhelm us, but to help us engage deeply with the values of the Ramayana.

While studying, I did not approach the Ramayana as a text meant only for examination purposes. Each episode, character, and situation offered lessons that felt relevant even today. The life of Lord Rama taught me the importance of self-control, righteousness, and calm decision-making. Hanuman's devotion reflected the power of humility combined with strength. Sita's resilience showed quiet courage, and Lakshmana's loyalty highlighted the beauty of selfless service. Through these characters, I slowly began to reflect on my own behaviour—how I react under pressure, how I treat others, and how I handle responsibility.

One of the most valuable lessons the exam taught me was the importance of staying calm. During the preparation and the actual examination, I learned that clarity comes only when the mind is composed. Rushing through thoughts or acting out of anxiety only leads to confusion. This realisation helped me not just in the exam, but also in my daily life, where I now try to pause, reflect, and respond rather than react impulsively.

The Book — A Guide, Not Just a Study Material

The book provided for the Ramayana examination played a crucial role in shaping this experience. It was not a conventional textbook filled only with information. The inclusion of Patachitra art made the learning visually engaging and emotionally connected. Each illustration brought the story closer, making it easier to reflect on the events rather than merely read about them.

What made the book truly special were the reflective questions placed throughout. These questions encouraged introspection rather than rote learning. They prompted us to think about how the values of the Ramayana apply to our own lives—our decisions, relationships, and responsibilities. The book felt more like a guide than an exam resource. It helped me understand that the Ramayana is not just an ancient epic, but a living source of wisdom that continues to guide human conduct even today.

Becoming a Baala Pratinidhi

Being selected among the top eight Baala Pratinidhis was a moment of quiet pride and gratitude for me. It was not just a recognition of performance, but an opportunity to represent values and learning. Becoming a Baala Pratinidhi was more of a responsibility rather than an honor. I learnt this from Lord Rama as even he viewed the throne 'not as honor but as a responsibility'. When I was informed about the trip to Sringeri, I felt both excited and humbled. It was my first visit to Sringeri, a place I had heard about for its spiritual legacy and disciplined tradition. I looked forward to the journey with curiosity and respect.

Sringeri – Day One: A First Encounter with Sacred Stillness

The first day at Sringeri was deeply enriching. Visiting the sacred temples one by one created a sense of peace that is difficult to describe in words. The Sri Sharadamba Temple, Sri Rama Temple, Sri Janardhana Swamy Temple, Sri Anjaneya Temple, Sri Garuda temple, and especially the Sri Vidyashankara Temple left a lasting impression on me. The architecture, the calm surroundings, and the disciplined atmosphere reflected centuries of devotion and learning.

Walking through these temples, I felt a sense of quietness within myself. The environment encouraged introspection rather than excitement. The visit to the Adishthanams of the 33rd, 34th, and 35th Jagadgurus further deepened my respect for the unbroken lineage of spiritual wisdom preserved at Sringeri. I realised how knowledge, when passed on with humility and discipline, becomes timeless.

We were later taken to the **Guru Nivasa**, where we had darshan of **Sri Sannidhanam**. The moment felt serene and grounding. The gentle flow of the Tunga River nearby, accompanied by the cool breeze, added to the sense of peace. It was my first time experiencing such an atmosphere, and it left me feeling calm and attentive.

Another memorable experience on the first day was our visit to the **Sri Sadvidya Sanjeevini Samskrita Mahapathashala**. The interaction with the Acharya and the students of the pathashala was deeply insightful. Listening to their thoughts on dharma, bhakti, discipline, and learning helped me understand how education rooted in values shapes character. It was inspiring to see how tradition and learning coexist so naturally there.

The visit to **Shankaragiri**, with the Ramayana pictorial display and the life-size statue of Adi Shankaracharya, was equally impactful. Witnessing Sri Mahasannidhanam perform the Chandramouliswara Puja and receiving His darshan was a moment of deep reverence. It marked the conclusion of a day filled with reflection and gratitude.

Sringeri — Day Two: Learning Through Service and Silence

The second day began with a visit to the ancient **Rishyashringa Temple at Kigga**. The serene surroundings and the quiet atmosphere made it an ideal place for reflection. Standing there, I felt a sense of connection to the simplicity and discipline of ancient sages.

One of the most touching experiences of the trip was visiting the old-age home at Sringeri. Along with the other Baala Pratinidhis, I was given the opportunity to share my thoughts on the Ramayana with the elders. Speaking to them, listening to their gentle words and seeing their smiles, was deeply heartwarming. It reminded me that wisdom grows richer with age, and sharing knowledge is as important as gaining it.

We also visited the guardian deity temples of Sringeri—**Kalikamba Temple, Kere Anjaneya Temple, and Durgamba Temple**. Each place carried its own quiet strength and sense of protection. The calmness of these temples encouraged silence and reflection.

Seeing **the ancient palm-leaf manuscripts** was another fascinating experience. Learning about how knowledge was preserved with such care and effort made me appreciate the depth of our heritage. Later, at the **Guru Nivasa**, we were granted a private interaction with **Sri Sannidhanam** — an experience I consider truly rare and precious.

A Question That Changed My Way of Thinking

During this interaction, **Sri Sannidhanam** asked me a question that I was not expecting at all. Out of everyone present, He chose to ask me what advice I would give to people in positions of power. I was genuinely shocked and felt incredibly lucky at that moment. For a few seconds, my mind went completely silent. The question was not demanding an immediate answer — it was inviting reflection. As I spoke, the character of Ravana came to my mind. I shared how great knowledge and strength lose their value when humility and self-restraint are absent. While answering, I realised that the true blessing was not being able to speak, but being encouraged to think deeply. I remain sincerely grateful to Sri Sannidhanam for asking me that question. It taught me that wisdom is not loud or assertive — it is quiet, thoughtful, and aware.

Conclusion — A Subtle Yet Lasting Transformation

The Ramayana exam and the Sringeri trip did not bring sudden changes in my life. Instead, they brought subtle but lasting transformations. I have become more calm, reflective, and mindful in my actions. I have learned the value of emotional control, humility, and inner peace. These experiences helped me understand that true growth happens slowly and silently.

I feel proud and grateful to be a Baala Pratinidhi and to be associated with Baala Bharati. This journey has strengthened my resolve to live by the values of the Ramayana and to propagate its teachings wherever possible. I conclude this reflection with sincere gratitude to the organisers for providing such a meaningful opportunity. This experience will remain a guiding light in my life.

JAI SHREE RAM !!!



Jagadguru Shankaracharya Sri Sri Vidhushekhara Bharati Samidhanam with the Top 8 Winners of the Ramayana Examination at Sringeri (Jan 4, 2026)

RAMAYANA: A BLISSFUL IMMERSION INTO DEVOTION, DHARMA AND DIVINITY

— Essay by Meenaakshee Shyam,
Class 10, Vidyaniketan Public School

Every day, the sun rises at dawn, and merges with the horizon at dusk. Every single one of us is given the same 24 hours a day. We breathe the same air, survive on the same water and live on this same planet called Earth. All of us are on the same roller coaster called 'Life', yet the way we perceive the ride and reach our destination greatly differs. What brings about this difference?

The answer to this perplexing question is given by our ancestors in the great epic called 'Ramayana'. Written by Sage Valmiki hundreds and thousands of years ago, it remains the one stop solution to all the problems faced by us, even today. Every single verse, out of 24000, teaches us precious life-lessons. The Vajrotsava Bharati Rolling Shield Ramayana exam, conducted by Baala Bharati with the blessings of the Jagadgurus of Sringeri, has aided me in understanding core values such as humility, perseverance, and self-confidence. I have been listening, reading and watching the Ramayana since childhood, but this competition has presented me the Ramayana through a very different lens.

The enthralling journey started when I received the Shrimad Ramayana book, featuring captivating, colourful pictures of Ramayana conforming to the Patachitra tradition. The first level written exam was conducted in school on October 25th, and then, the next level exam was conducted

on November 8th and 9th in the Sringeri Shankara Math at Bengaluru. The online tests with intriguing case-based questions, creative activities such as chronology flash cards, panel discussions, open book exams and many others made the contestants apply the lessons of Ramayana in real life. We discussed the traits of many characters, such as Hanuman, Bharata, Manthara, Kaikeyi, Vibhishana, etc and analysed controversial instances of Ramayana such as the killing of Vali, Agni pareeksha of Sita, and many more. This contest broke down the complex aspects of dharma and adharma into simple actions that can be understood and practiced even by small children. It has been the starting point in my beautiful journey of trying to unravel the hidden truths of our enigmatic culture.

The Sringeri trip which followed the competition was beyond my imagination. The visit to Vidyashankara temple, Rishyashringa temple, and many other divine sanctuaries in and around Sringeri, and the subsequent insights rendered by our guides at Sringeri have enlightened me about the rich heritage and traditions of Sringeri. The visits to the Sri Sadvidya Sanjeevini Samskrita Mahapathashala and the Vriddhashrama (old-age home) were truly an endearing experience. As a part of this trip, I also had the rare opportunity of reading and touching manuscripts that dated thousands of years ago. The most special part of the trip was the divine darshan and interaction with Sri Sri Sri Sannidhanam, and I still feel awe-struck and blessed when I recall being in the presence of His Holiness.

On the whole, this journey has greatly impacted the way I perceive life and will always be close to my heart. I realized that this was not merely a competition, but truly a joyous celebration of this timeless epic and

the ancient values deeply rooted in it. As a future citizen of Bharat, I have understood that the need of the day is to cherish and preserve our culture and bring India back to its former glory of Ramarajya. This is possible through the comprehension of our ancient epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata. Hence, I extend my deepest gratitude to Sringeri Math and Baala Bharati for organizing such an event and for inspiring children like me.

JAI HIND!
VANDE BHARATAMATARAM!



THE EPIC THAT SHAPED ME

— Essay by Isha Prashanth,
Class 8, Jnanodaya Institutions

Baala Bharati gave me a rare and meaningful opportunity to study the Ramayana in depth through a well-planned and thoughtful examination. This exam was not about memorising verses or facts alone. Through online tests, panel discussions, and open conversations, it encouraged us to truly understand the Ramayana. Topics such as dharma, chronology, character analysis, and ethical dilemmas helped me realise that the Ramayana is not only an ancient epic, but a guide that speaks to our lives even today.

Preparing for the exam required discipline, consistency, and genuine interest. As I went through the different stages of evaluation, my connection with the Ramayana grew stronger. Each character began to feel real, representing values like truth, sacrifice, devotion, courage, and righteousness. The interactive nature of the exam improved my clarity of thought and confidence in expressing ideas. Throughout this journey, the volunteers of Baala Bharati were extremely friendly, patient, and encouraging, making the entire experience comfortable and motivating.

Winning the Ramayana examination became even more special as it gave me the opportunity to visit Sringeri, a place filled with spiritual energy and calmness. Visiting the sacred Sharada Peetham and the Rishyashringa Temple created a deep sense of peace within me. We also had darshan of the four guardian deities of Sringeri, each symbolising protection, strength, devotion, and discipline. Standing in these temples, I felt a quiet connection that stayed with me long after the visit.

We were guided by knowledgeable individuals who explained the history of Sringeri and the origin and significance of the temples. Their explanations helped me appreciate how deeply spirituality is woven into history and culture. As a part of the visit, we also went to an old age home. Spending time with the elderly, listening to their words, and simply being present with them was a touching experience. It reminded me that dharma is reflected in compassion, care, and respect for others.

We also visited the Sri Sadvidya Sanjeevini Samskrita Mahapathashala, where learned scholars explained the Ramayana with simplicity and devotion. Their teachings helped me understand that dharma is our life's 'aadhaara' — the foundation that supports our thoughts, actions, and responsibilities.

One of the most sacred moments of the Sringeri visit was the rare opportunity to have a private audience with Jagadguru Sri Sri Vidhushekhara Bharati Sannidhanam. We spoke with the Acharya about the Ramayana and the deeper meaning of dharma. Sitting in His presence brought a deep sense of peace and divinity. His gentle words and blessings left a lasting impression and strengthened my inner connection with the spiritual essence of the Ramayana.

This entire journey—from preparing for the Ramayana examination to visiting Sringeri—has shaped my thoughts and behaviour in a meaningful way. It has deepened my respect for our scriptures, strengthened my focus as a student, and inspired me to live with truth, humility, and compassion. Above all, it taught me that true success lies not only in achievements, but in living a life rooted in dharma.



With scholars at the Sri Sadvidya Sanjeevini Samskrita Mahapathashala at Sringeri



Outside the Sri Vidyashankara Temple at Sringeri

Ramayana Art



श्रीमद्रामायणम् Srimad Ramayana

— By Samana Karanam,
Class 9, Jnanodaya Institutions



What the Ramayana Teaches Me

— By Ahana Sharma, Class 9
Sri Sri Ravishankar Vidya Mandira

Be Humble

‘Whatever I have learnt is very little. There is still so much more that I have to learn’ - this is the attitude we need to develop. Sri Rama stays calm and respectful even in exile. Lakshmana serves without pride. Bharata refuses the throne out of loyalty. Hanuman, though incredibly powerful, calls himself only Sri Rama’s servant. All four show deep humility through their choices and actions.

Grow a Kinder Heart



Sri Rama is a perfect example for showing compassion. He accepts Vibhishana simply because he seeks refuge. He doesn’t judge him by his family or the war—he just chooses what is right and fair. Kindness, for Sri Rama, isn’t just being polite—it is recognizing others’ efforts, showing respect, and valuing their feelings.

Respect Your Parents

Sri Rama respects his parents when he accepts his exile without complaint. Even though it is unfair, he obeys his father’s word, showing honor and devotion above his own comfort or desires.

Work with Love and Care

In the Ramayana, while the Vanara army carried huge boulders, a small squirrel*, wanting to help, rolled tiny pebbles and wet sand, depositing them in the sea for the bridge. The monkeys laughed at the squirrel's small contribution and threw it.

The squirrel fell into Lord Rama's hands. Instead of scolding the monkeys, Sri Rama gently stroked the squirrel's back, telling the monkeys that the squirrel's work was valuable because it was done with love and pure devotion. The three strokes of Sri Rama's fingers left permanent white stripes on the squirrel's back, a blessing and a symbol of his grace for all squirrels.

From this beautiful story we can learn that every sincere effort, no matter how small, is valued by God. The three white stripes on the squirrel's back show Sri Rama's blessing, reminding us that doing something with love and care is more important than how big the task is.

Truthfulness

Always speaking and acting honestly - like Bharata refusing to take the throne and placing Sri Rama's sandals instead, showing respect for what is right.

Selflessness

Helping others without thinking of rewards - like Lakshmana staying

* While this anecdote is not mentioned in the Valmiki Ramayana, the ideals of Srīmad Ramayana have inspired many such anecdotes with morals.

with Sri Rama in the forest and Hanuman serving Sri Rama devotedly, showing that true effort comes from love and loyalty.

Loyalty

Staying faithful to family and friends - like Lakshmana following Sri Rama into exile, and showing support even in difficult times.

Courage

Facing danger bravely - like Sri Rama fighting Ravana to rescue Sita Devi, showing that doing what is right often requires strength and bravery.

So in simple words, the Ramayana helps us by teaching honesty, courage, kindness, patience, and hope. It tells us that even if the right path feels difficult, it will always lead us to peace.

Sri Rama's Tips for Being Excellent

- a) Selflessness: Help parents with chores at home, share school supplies, or assist a friend without expecting anything in return.
- b) Loyalty: Stand by friends in tough times, support classmates during group work, and respect family decisions.
- c) Truthfulness: Always tell the truth, admit mistakes, and avoid lying to teachers, parents, or friends.
- d) Courage: Speak up against bullying, try new activities even if scary, and face challenges at school bravely.

- e) Respecting Elders: Listen to parents, teachers, and grandparents, and follow their guidance politely.
- f) Compassion: Comfort friends who are sad, help classmates who struggle, and be kind to yourself and everyone around you.



Fun Activities Based on the Ramayana

Snakes and Ladders & Crossword

— By Smruthi A,

Class 10, Vivekananda Kendra Vidyalaya

Activity: 1 Snake and Ladder

In this game, the ladders represent all the good/positive characters of the Ramayana, and the snakes represent the evil/negative characters.

Every time we play this game, it reminds us that good qualities elevate us & bad qualities lead to our downfall.

Sitarama

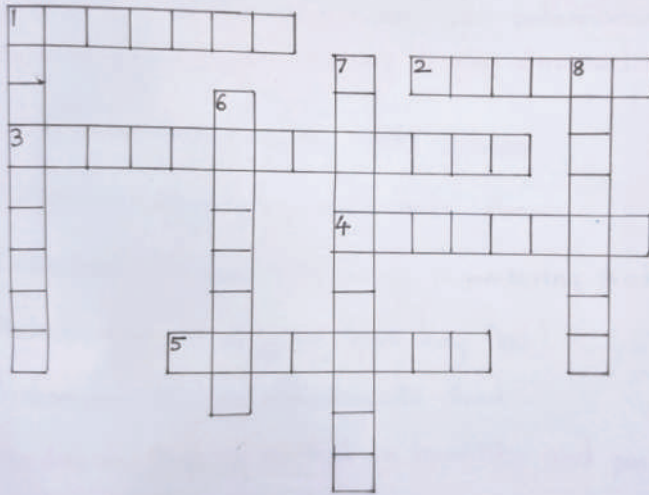
100	99	98	97	96	95	94	93	92	91
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
80	79	78	77	76	75	74	73	72	71
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
60	59	58	57	56	55	54	53	52	51
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
40	39	38	37	36	35	34	33	32	31
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Crossword-Navavidha Bhakti

(9 Types of Devotion)

The 9 types of Bhakti are the 9 words which must be filled in this crossword.

The clue for each word is the name of the person who followed that form of Bhakti.



Across

- 1) Sugriva
- 2) Lakshmana
- 3) Jatayu
- 4) Sita
- 5) Vibhishana

Down

- 1) Hanuman
- 6) Valmiki
- 7) Bharata
- 8) Shabari

Refer the last page of the magazine to validate your answers.

Decipher the Code & Spot the Words

— By Harshitha Pradeep,
Class 8, Jnanodaya Institutions

Decipher the code given below with A=1, B=2, C=3 and so on.

19-18-9 | 18-1-13-1'19 | 22-9-18-20-21-5-19 | 19 -8-1-12-12 | 7-21-9-4-5
| 21-19 | 1-12-23-1-25-19.

(Answer in the footnote* below)

**Find the following names from the Ramayana in the grid below -
Sri Rama, Dasharata, Bala Atibala, Mareecha, Subahu, Seeta and
Vasishta.**

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

(Solution given in page 54)

* Sri Rama's Virtues shall guide us always

Dharmic Spending



At the finals of the Inter-School Ramayana Examination, Baala Bharati had posed this question to the top 20 finalists:

If you were to win the first prize of ₹ 50,000, how do you think you would use the money?

The responses took everyone by surprise! The clarity of thought and wisdom, profound sensitivity to issues and more importantly, the dharmic bent of mind of the children was indeed striking. Sharing below the thoughtful responses of the top 8 winners.

If Bhagavan wishes me to win the 1st prize, I would feel very blessed. I would use the money to do good deeds. I would use half the money to do charity and help the needy, like giving it to the poor, sick and donating to orphanages and goshalas. I would save the rest for my academic needs, because I want to become a doctor and help everyone lead a happy and healthy life. I would feel indebted to Lord Rama for giving me this money and making me help others.

— Meenaakshee Shyam, Class 10

I would donate some of the money to the Sringeri Math and some shelters, and use the rest to help the needy people in the society. I

would like to use it for a righteous cause and make a good difference in the world.

— Isha Prashanth, Class 8

Being a student, I feel it is equally important for my friends to know about dharma and such amazing epics. Afterall, we are the future of Bharatavarsha! So I would dedicate money to the pracharam (of dharma) and donate to institutions like Baala Bharati in promoting dharma and also to temples for offerings and prasadams. Along with this, I would try to rent some places and start Balakendras every Sunday to instill culture among younger generations.

— Samana Karanam, Class 9



If I win a cash prize of Rs 50,000, some of the money I would save but, to be honest, I truly would like to donate to charities. Sometimes, when I am out walking or in a vehicle, I see many old and helpless people, handicapped people and also children working. I feel very bad. So personally, more than through charities, I would love to help them and directly donate to those people who are not that blessed but still help others and also save the lives of animals. For their kind nature, I would love to give some money to them.

— Satwik Hegde, Class 9

I would never use it for personal gains. I would donate it to some really good organizations like Shankara Math. I may also try to invest it to get more money, and I will be able to do even more social service with it. I am not sure exactly how I will use it, but I will definitely use it for the betterment of Sanatana dharma.

— Smruthi A, Class 10

The first thing that I am devoted to spending my money on is to give ₹7,000 for the construction of the world's largest temple in Mayapur. It now requires a Devi Lakshmi for its completion and it costs ₹7,000 per sq.foot. If possible and my parents agree, I will happily give for 2 sq.foot too. And even for the completion of Dwarkadish Mandir, I would give some of the money. Then I would save some money and with the remaining, purchase my basic needs instead of being dependent on God. Actually, it is all God's money and if he wishes to give it to me, I will use it wisely and also donate to the poor.

— Gangothri CM, Class 9

If I won the first prize of ₹50,000, I would use it to develop temples. I would also use it to create awareness among people about Ramayana. I would use some to donate to the people in need. I would also conduct many events associated with Ramayana and try to immerse our lives into the (teachings of the) Ramayana. I would also give the rest to my gurus and parents, expressing gratitude.

— Yogesh Santosh RM, Class 8

Firstly, I would thank the organisers for giving me the cash prize. I would make sure the ₹50,000 is used properly. Firstly, out of the ₹50,000, I would keep ₹10,000 for charity where I would donate ₹5,000 to a Goshala (because I love cows!) and I would donate the other ₹5,000 to some NGO for the betterment of society. Then I would seek permission from my parents to invest the remaining ₹40,000 wisely. I would put ₹20,000 in a saving's account. Then I would buy 150 gms of silver as an asset. With the remaining money I would buy something for myself. I am planning to buy some self-help books.

— Dheemaan Pramanik, Class 9



Ramayana Colouring Fun



Ramayana Colouring Fun

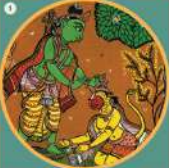
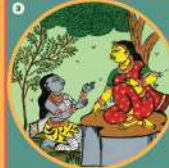
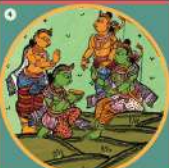
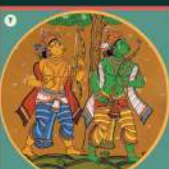
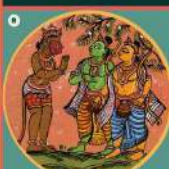


Solution for the Ramayana crossword

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



Validate your answers to the crossword with this illustrative design of 'Navavidha Rama Bhakti' (the 9 forms of devotion to Bhagavan Sri Rama)

ಶ್ರೀ ರಾಮಭಕ್ತಿ - ನವವಿಧ ರೂಪಗಳು The 9 types of Rama Bhakti			
	ಶ್ರವಣಂ Shruvanam ಹನುಮಂತನು ಶ್ರೀರಾಮನ ಕಥೆಯನ್ನು ಕೇಳುವುದರಿಂದ ಕೃಪಾರ್ಥನಾದನು Hanuman became blessed by hearing the story of Sri Rama 	ಕೀರ್ತನಂ Kirtanam ವಾಲ್ಮೀಕಿ ಮಹರ್ಷಿಗಳು ಶ್ರೀರಾಮನ ಮಹಿಮೆಗಳನ್ನು ಕೇಳುವುದರಿಂದ ಕೃಪಾರ್ಥನಾದರು Valmiki became blessed by narrating Sri Rama's glories 	ಸ್ಮರಣಂ Smaranam ಸೀತೆಯು ಸದಾ ಶ್ರೀರಾಮನನ್ನು ಮನಸ್ಸಿನಲ್ಲಿ ನೆನೆಯುವುದರಿಂದ ಕೃಪಾರ್ಥನಾದಳು Sita by constantly remembering Sri Rama became fulfilled 
	ಪಾದಸೇವನಂ Padasevanam ಭರತನು ಶ್ರೀರಾಮನ ಪಾದುಕೆಗಳನ್ನು ಪೂಜಿಸುವ ಮೂಲಕ ಕೃಪಾರ್ಥನಾದನು Bharata by serving Sri Rama's sacred padukas became fulfilled 	ಆರ್ಚನಂ Archanam ಶಬರಿಯು ಭಕ್ತಿಯಿಂದ ಪವಿತ್ರವಸ್ತುವನ್ನು ಆರಾಧಿಸುವ ಮೂಲಕ ಕೃಪಾರ್ಥನಾದನು Shabari through worship became fulfilled 	ವಂದನಂ Vandanam ವಿಭೀಷಣನು ಸಮಾಜ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಮೂಲಕ ಕೃಪಾರ್ಥನಾದನು Vibhishana by offering his salutations became fulfilled 
	ದಾಸ್ಯಂ Daasyam ಅಶ್ವತ್ಥಾಮ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮರೂಪ ಸೇವ ಮಾಡುವ ಮೂಲಕ ಕೃಪಾರ್ಥನಾದನು Lakshmana by devoted service became fulfilled 	ಸಖ್ಯಂ Sakhyaam ಸುಗ್ರೀವನು ಶ್ರೀರಾಮನು ಬೆಳೆಸುವುದರ ಮೂಲಕ ಕೃಪಾರ್ಥನಾದನು Sugriva by friendship became fulfilled 	ಆತ್ಮನಿವೇದನಂ Atma-Nivedanam ಜಟಾಯು ಸತ್ಯ ವಾಕ್ಯವನ್ನು ಅರ್ಪಿಸುವ ಮೂಲಕ ಕೃಪಾರ್ಥನಾದನು And Jatayu, by offering his very life became fulfilled 



Scan for more information on the Peetham's
'Srimad Ramayana' book specially released
for children and Puzzles on Jagadguru Sri Adi
Shankaracharya