



Namaskarah Activity

Topic	Value	Name of the activity	Type of illustration
Greeting all according to Indian culture	Pride in Indian culture	Greeting in Samskritam as Namaskaram	Whole School Approach

अभिवादनशीलस्य नित्यं वृद्धोपसेविनः ।
चत्वारि तस्य वर्धन्ते आयुः विद्या यशो बलम् ॥

The one who bows to others with namaskaram and serves elders will prosper with four things like long life, fame, success and strength.

Significance of doing namaskarah:

The word Namaha signifies that “when one is doing some action, one has to let go of the ego that he’s doing the action”. When one greets elders, it symbolises the attitude that “I am very small in front of you, you are an elder person”. To equals it symbolises the feeling that, “I respect the qualities in you.”

I. Meaning of the word NAMASKARAH

Namaskara is composed of 3 Samskrit words.

नम् (NAM)+ अस् (AS) + कारः (KARAH)

NAM, means “to bow to”

AS, means “to be or to exist”

KAR, means “doing or one who does”

So, the meaning of Namaskara becomes " I do the act of Bowing down to divine who exists in you". (with reverence)

Namaste is also used to wish others, which is a more informal expression. Here namaste means I bow to you.

नमस्ते = नमः (Namah) + ते (Te)

Namah means "bow, salutation, greeting" etc
Te means "to you"

II. Spiritual aspect of Namaskarah:

On a spiritual level, the object of greeting is the supreme consciousness within the other person. So namaskara typically represents the act of bowing down to a divine entity, which is inside every human being.

III. Importance of folding hands:

Everybody has an energy flowing inside their body called Prana Shakti. So, by shaking somebody's hand, our prana shakti will escape to them. To avoid that we fold our hands, so that our Prana Shakti stays within our body. Only during blessing the youngsters, elders or teachers touch the head of youngsters to pass on their Prana Shakti as blessings to support them increase their Prana Shakti.

While doing namaskarah both the hands are folded near our heart, where Anahata Chakra a, ductless gland, which is also a Power house is present according to Hindu Scriptures. It symbolises our Heartful good wishes to the other person.

IV. Advantages of folding hands:

Doing namaskarah by folding hands, will also avoid many contagious diseases, which will otherwise be passed on by shaking hands.

This activity can be done in the classroom to create awareness by classroom discussions as follows.

The teacher enters the classroom. All the children may get up and wish the teacher "good morning", which is the usual case so far in our country. Now the teacher has to introduce the Indian way of wishing teachers as "namaste guruji"/mataji etc or namaskaram to anybody they want to wish. So towards that the teacher can do an interactive session with the children.

The teacher may ask the students to sit down and he/she may start communicating as follows.

Illustration

Teacher: Sit down students.

Teacher: Hey children, I want to ask you people a question. Just now you all wished me good morning. What is the meaning of it? and why did you do that?

(Students may come up with answers like, that is how usually students wish teachers always the very first thing in the morning OR It also means that students wish a nice morning for the teacher. etc)

Teacher: but students!! can you please tell me which culture this way of wishing belongs to?

Students: definitely it is western English culture teacher!!

Teacher: And which country do we belong to?

Students: We belong to India teacher.

Teacher: Then why are we copying the western culture? Can anyone tell me?

(Students may come up with many answers for this like since we were ruled by the British for many years, they introduced their education system called Macaulay education to us. So, we are still copying that. OR we don't know teacher etc.)

Teacher: When do we usually copy others? For example, if you copy a dress code of your friend, what does it mean?

(Students may give many answers for this too like ... It means that we admire his dress code teacher OR we don't have a dress code of our own OR we are not proud of our dress code OR just that we have not thought much about it and simply copied them teacher etc.)

Teacher: So, students, here we are copying their way of wishing. So why do you think we are doing still? Don't we have our own way of wishing? OR are we not proud of our way?

(Again, here students may come up with many answers like we think that we have not thought much about it teacher OR we are not very proud of our culture or Bhartiya Samskriti OR It is a global practice to do so etc. If students give this answer, then the teacher should tell them that in Japan, Germany, China etc they have their own way of

wishing according to their own culture. So, following one's own culture will keep up the confidence and pride of the citizens towards their own country)

Teacher: So, students, can you tell us what Bhartiya Samskriti is, for greeting each other when we meet?

Students: We greet as namaskarah / namaste.

Teacher: And How do we do that?

Students: Oh, we all fold our hands and do Namaskarah.

Teacher: Oh, that's good that you all know. Can you people tell me what's the meaning of Namaskarah?

(Students may come up with many answers. The teacher continues as follows)

Teacher: Namaskarah is a respectful greeting when two people meet, or a parting salutation when they are moving away from each other. It is Derived from Samskritam word **Namah** which refers to bowing in reverence.

(If the students do not know the meaning, the teacher has to explain the meaning of the word namaskaram as given above)

Teacher: students, now can you tell me the spiritual aspect of doing Namaskarah?

(Again, here the students may or may not know the answers. So, the teacher has to educate the students)

Teacher: Now students, can you tell me why do we fold hands while doing namaskarah?

(Students may stay silent without knowing the answer or they may give the right answer. The teacher can give the answer to them)

Teacher: students can you tell me the advantages of folding hands instead of shaking hands?

(Again, here the students may come up with many answers. If they don't know, teacher can update them)

Students may look surprised.

Teacher: Did you all know, that the concept of namaskaram involves so much meaning children?

Students may come up with many answers

(Here the communication between teacher and the students may go a little different way too, depending on the social background of students. So, the teacher has to handle them according to the situation and the type of students)

Teacher: So now students, can you all tell me which is more meaningful to greet others when you meet anybody?

The students may obviously come up with an answer as namaskaram is more effective and meaningful, than just a good morning which is only wishing others to have a nice day.

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