

CLASS-IV

Lesson 1 An Introduction of Yoga

Lesson 2 Yama and Niyama

Lesson 3 Asanas and Pranayam

Lesson 4 Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi

Lesson 5 Asanas



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AN INTRODUCTION TO YOGA

Yoga is an ancient spiritual science that seeks to bring the mind, body and spirit in balance. The word 'Yoga' is derived from the sanskrit root 'Yuj' which means to attach, join, harness or yoke. By practicing the different yoga techniques you will achieve good health, relaxation, and inner fulfillment. These will also help you to meet the different challenges of life with greater ease and confidence. Yoga at an early age encourages confidence and awareness to undertake life's activities in a noncompetitive manner. Yoga is observed to nurture cooperation and compassion- instead of opposition. This is a great gift to give to our children. The purpose of yoga is an inner cleaning of the individuals thoughts, emotions and feelings.

Yoga lays claim to many benefits. Physically, it enhances your flexibility, strength, coordination, and body awareness. In addition it promotes concentration and a sense of calmness and relaxation. While doing yoga, children exercise, play, connect more deeply with the inner self, and develop an enriching relationship with their natural surrounding.



Yoga helps build inner strength that helps children to succeed in life. Yogic activities energize the body, giving it vitality and improve individuals capacity. It additionally helps in expanding adaptability, muscle quality and body tone. Overall it improves breathing and vitality.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson you will be able to:

- explain the importance of yoga;
- trace the history of yoga;
- list different techniques of yoga; and
- describe the basics of yoga.

1.1 IMPORTANCE OF YOGA

Thousands of years ago, the ancient Rishis (sages) lived in the forest, mountains, and the caves of India. They observed their environment, and saw how the animals and nature moved in perfect harmony. They imitated the movements of the animals, the trees, the mountains, and even the movements of the stars, and created a wonderful technique called Yoga, which helps to inculcate healthy habits and adoption of a healthy lifestyle to achieve good health.

Teaching of yoga at the school level, will help to encourage a positive and healthy lifestyle for better physical, mental and emotional health of children. Practice of yoga will help in the development of strength, stamina, endurance and high energy at the physical level in the children. Besides, yoga empowers one



with increased concentration, calm, peace and contentment at the mental level, leading to inner and outer harmony. Yoga is not a part of any religion, it is a way of living that aims towards a healthy mind in a healthy body. Other forms of physical exercises, like aerobics, assure only physical well-being. They have little to do with the development of the spiritual or astral body.

Yogic exercises are important in :

- Attainment of perfect equilibrium and harmony
- Self-healing
- Removing negative blocks from the mind and toxins from the body
- Enhancing personal power
- Living with greater awareness
- Developing attention, focus and concentration, especially for children
- Reducing stress and tension
- Improving your posture and flexibility
- Building better relationships
- Improving your self-confidence
- Improving your memory and concentration
- Helping you sleep better
- Aiding good digestion



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1.2 HISTORY OF YOGA

The development of yoga can be traced back to over 5,000 years ago, but some researchers think that yoga may be up to 10,000 years old. The science of Yoga has its origin thousands of years ago, long before the first religions or belief systems were born. In the yogic tradition, Shiva is seen as the first Yogi or Adiyogi, and the first Guru or Adi Guru. The Number of seals and fossil remains discovered in Indus Saraswati valley civilization show yogic activities and figures performing Yoga, suggesting the presence of Yoga in ancient India.



Fig. 1.1 Ancient seals related to Yoga.

The above pictures are the seals excavated from the Mohenjodaro site show Pashupati (Lord Shiva) in yogic posture (Bhadrasana). They were sitting cross-legged with arms outstretched. The pose was of meditative state. We can say that the history of Yoga is approximately over 5000 years old, starting from the pre-vedic era and continuing till date.

The History of Yoga can be divided into five main periods :

- i. Vedic Age
- ii. The Pre-classical Age or Epic Age



- iii. The Classical Age
- iv. The Post Classical Age
- v. Modern Age

- **Vedic Age**

Vedic Yoga is portrayed as ritualistic ceremonies, which requires yoga practitioners to transcend the boundaries of the mind, traced back to the period of Rig Veda. Great explorers of early yoga, naming a few, are Vasistha, Yajnavalkya etc.

- **Pre - Classical Age**

This is the main source, from which we get documented information about Yoga practices and the related literature during this period, are available in Upanishad texts. Yoga was slowly refined and developed by Rishis (mystic seers) who documented their practices and beliefs in the Upanishads.

- **Classical Yoga**

The classical period is defined by Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, the first systematic presentation of yoga. This was written sometime in the second century.

This text describes the path of Raja Yoga, often called 'Classical Yoga'. Patanjali organized the practice of Yoga into an 'eight limbed path' containing the steps and stages towards obtaining Samadhi. Patanjali is often considered the father of Yoga and his Yoga, Sutras still strongly influence most styles of modern yoga.



• **Post-Classical Yoga**

A few centuries after Patanjali, many yoga masters have created a system of practices designed to rejuvenate the body and prolong life which is called as Hatha Yoga.

Listed below are the few of the Hatha Yoga Texts:

- Hatha Yoga Pradipika
- Gheranda Samhitha
- Hatha Ratnavali
- Shiva Samhitha

Hatha Yoga was strongly promoted in India by the intensive work of T. Krishnamacharya, Swami Sivananda and other yogis practicing Hatha Yoga.

• **Modern Period**

In the modern period Swami Vivekananda spread the wisdom of Yoga to the world, especially in the west. He classified the Yoga into four, namely:

- Karma Yoga,
- Raja Yoga,
- Bhakthi Yoga and
- Jnana Yoga.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 1.1

Fill in the blanks

1. Seals and fossil remains discovered in ----- valley civilization show yogic activities and figures performing Yoga.
2. Teaching of yoga at the school level, will help to encourage a ----- and ----- life style.
3. Patanjali's ----- is the first systematic presentation of yoga.
4. Vasistha, Yajanavalkya are great ----- of early yoga.
5. In the modern period ----- spread the wisdom of yoga to the world.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF YOGA

Yoga at an early age, shapes young minds and bodies, giving tools that will enhance and support children to be balanced, creative, and tension free individuals. It promotes self esteem, concentration and body awareness and the ability to steer smoothly through life's challenges. Physically, yoga enhances body coordination it has a powerful effect on brain development, and leads to heightened focus.

Now a days, you all are overstressed with the pressure to accomplish, in a world flooded with information. Yoga is a tool that teaches you healthy ways to release stress to bring your bodies back into equilibrium. Yoga builds strength, confidence and



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resilience. Remember that a strong body is able to digest food better, breathe better and withstand stress. The practice of yoga can help you to self regulate, besides being a wonderful aid to promote mental health and combat attention disorders.

Briefly the aims and objectives of Yoga education at an early age are to:

- enable the you to have good health;
- practice mental hygiene;
- possess emotional stability;
- integrate moral values; and
- attain higher level of consciousness.

Yoga helps to achieve all these objectives in an integrated manner.

Regular practice of Yoga helps -

- In encouraging self esteem and body awareness
- In maintaining flexibility and strengthening the growing bodies
- To enhance concentration, mememory and IQ
- Anger management
- To build present moment awareness
- Promoting relaxation of body and mind
- It helps to manage anxiety and stress



- Helps in developing creativity
- Developing cordial peer and social interactions
- Bringing emotional stability
- Inculcating moral values
- Developing discipline and responsibility.

1.4 BASICS OF YOGA

Every one of us want to be happy! Happiness directs our lives. To overcome the pain and to achieve happiness has been the fundamental drive in all humans. This natural feeling is found not only in human beings, but also in animals.

Yoga is a very ancient science that helps us not only to develop flexibility and strength in our bodies, but happiness and peace of mind also. Yoga believes that happiness is our natural state. When the body and the mind are out of balance, we cannot experience this happiness. With the help of yoga poses, breathing exercises, focusing within and meditation, we can bring back this harmony of body and mind, and achieve this natural state of happiness.

At the base of the yoga practice are the following five basic principles:

- Proper exercise,
- Breathing,
- Relaxation,
- Diet, and
- Meditation.



i. Exercise

The body is the physical manifestation of a being. The practice of Yoga has beneficial effects to every part of the body - muscles, joints, ligaments, blood circulation, digestion, etc.

ii. Diet

We are what we eat. A proper diet should accompany a yoga practice to maintain a healthy physical body. A diet of purely fresh, locally grown, and organic ingredients is recommended.

iii. Breathing

Central to a yoga is proper breathing. Yoga emphasizes attention to breath, and taking long, deep inhalations that begin in the lower abdomen and fill up the entire chest cavity. This increases lung capacity and oxygen flow throughout the body, which clears and cleanses the mind.

iv. Relaxation

One can achieve inner peace through proper relaxation leading to spiritual cleansing.

v. Meditation

The final but most important aspect of the yoga philosophy is positive thinking and meditation. Meditation allows one a way to ease the constant chatter of the mind, and control it.

The basics of yoga according to the Upanishads :

Our Upanishads says that our natural state is state of silence where our minds stops chattering. It is the state free of all thoughts or a state of peace.

When your mind is free of thoughts it is a state of BLISS, KNOWLEDGE and CREATIVITY.

Peace is important for all those who:

- are in search of greater and more permanent happiness and bliss,
- seek knowledge,
- want to be totally free, and
- aspire to become more and more creative.

An ideal society is one in which the above features are found. It is constructed by setting up and observing the prescribed social norms and value system (Yamas and Niyamas) habits, customs, manners, etiquettes, etc. These will help us to move in the direction of peace.

India for centuries has stood for such a social setup. You need to create such an environment where all individuals progress towards their goal of peace and the achievement of the required social values.

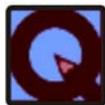
You must work towards the creation of a Spiritually Inclined Environment. With such a spiritual background, you are free from over stimulation, unhealthy competition, comparison, stress and pressure to achieve unrealistic targets. Each soul is potentially divine as Swami Vivekananda puts it, every child is differently gifted. Through yogic practices we should calm down our mind and nurture our area of interest and talent to achieve our potential.



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INTEXT QUESTIONS 1.2

I. State whether true or false.

1. Physically, yoga enhances body coordination and has a powerful effect on brain development.
2. The practice of yoga has no beneficial effects to every part of the body.
3. Yoga is a very ancient science that only helps us to develop flexibility and strength in our bodies.
4. Regular practice of yoga helps in encouraging self esteem and body awareness.
5. Meditation allows one a way to ease the constant chatter of the mind, and control it.



WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT

- The importance of yoga
 - o Attainment of perfect equilibrium and harmony
 - o Self-healing
 - o Removing negative blocks from the mind and toxins from the body
 - o Enhancing personal power
 - o Living with greater awareness
 - o Developing attention, focus and concentration
 - o Reducing stress and tension
 - o Improving your posture and flexibility



- o Building better relationships
- o Improving your self-confidence
- o Improving your memory and concentration
- o Helping you sleep better
- o Aiding good digestion
- The history of yoga
 - o The Vedic Age
 - o The Pre-classical Age or Epic Age
 - o The Classical Age
 - o The Post Classical Age
 - o Modern Age
- The objectives of yoga
 - o Enable all to have good health
 - o Practice mental hygiene
 - o Possess emotional stability
 - o Integrate moral values
 - o Attain higher level of consciousness
- The basis of yoga
 - o Proper exercise,
 - o Breathing
 - o Relaxation
 - o Diet and
 - o Meditation



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TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. What is Yoga?
2. What are the benefits of Yoga?
3. Trace the history of Yoga and explain how many periods it is divided into? Briefly explain what are they?
4. What are the objectives of Yoga?
5. What are the basics of Yoga?



ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

1.1

1. Indus Saraswati
2. positive, healthy
3. Yoga Sutras
4. explorers
5. Swami Vivekananda

1.2.

- I.
 1. True
 2. True
 3. False
 4. False
 5. True