



Session 3

Hindu Mandir Empowerment Council
October 2 - 4, 2026 | Buena Park, California

Abhaya Asthana
VHPA/OMHCC

Speaker Bio



Dr. Abhaya Asthana



He was a Fellow at Nokia Bell Labs-CTO directing research in cognitive, self-reliable networks of the future - networks that continuously learn on their own and heal themselves. Earlier, he led the design of VLSI processors at INTEL. He got his bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from IIT Kanpur, where he went back to teaching from 1983-1985. Outside of science and technology, his passion is to learn about Hindu Dharma and history, practice it and pass it on to the children. His mission is to help Hindus living in America remain Hindus, and through their lives contribute to the richness of their adopted land. He is the Current Chairman and Past President of World Hindu Council of America. He lives in Framingham MA with his wife Jaya and has 3 children and 7 grandchildren.

OM Hindu Community Center (OMHCC)

Bal Vihar Curriculum



Abstract

Bal Vihar fills a need for the children that are not met in schools: to know who they are, their ancestors, their traditions, their value system, their heritage. Give them a sense of belonging. Help them discover their cultural bond with Bharat and develop pride in their Hindu identity (*Pehchan*).

The Bal Vihar promotes Intellectual, physical, social and spiritual well-being of the child. The program is designed to:

- 1) develop volunteer spirit in children,
- 2) a sense of awareness of our obligations to society,
- 3) a sense of belonging to a global family, and to develop leadership qualities.

What is a Bal Vihar?



- ❑ **It is about the fundamental “Swa”:**
- ❑ Fills a need for the children that is not met in the schools:
 - ❑ Know who they are, their ancestors, their traditions, their value system, their heritage.
 - ❑ Give them a sense of belonging. Help them discover their cultural bond with Bharat and develop pride in their Hindu identity (Pehchan).
 - ❑ Promote Intellectual, physical, social and spiritual well-being of the child.
- ❑ The program is designed to
 - ❑ Develop volunteer spirit in children,
 - ❑ Give a sense of awareness of our obligations to the society,
 - ❑ Give a sense of belonging to a global family, and to develop leadership qualities.
- ❑ Open to children from Pre K to Grade 12. The Bal Vihar is a weekly 2-hour program.
- ❑ It offers a modular, 4 level (KG, Elementary, Middle School, High School), age-appropriate curriculum



The OMHCC Bal Vihar fulfills this need of the Hindu society. These curriculum strive to not only make them dharmic Hindus, but also active workers, who take up Seva as their life's mission

The primary driver is the overall experience and the learning given to the child over the course of 13-14 years; that is the primary driver.

Modules – Unit of Teaching



Module is a learning package focused on a specific subject, designed to:

- Instill values in life
- Teach about the depth and richness of Hindu Civilization
- Inculcate a sense of belonging and identity
- Build character
- Be age-appropriate
- Be comprehensive
- Be contemporary
- Develop confident young ambassadors of our heritage

A module will typically require several sessions to complete.

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- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ● <u>Dharma</u> | ● Geeta Chap 2 | ● Dictation | ● Geography |
| ● Hindu Deities | ● Nirvanashtakam | ● Hindi Language | ● Dance |
| ● Symbols | ● Mantra Pushpam | ● Grammar | ● Music |
| ● Why Do We | ● <u>Shastras</u> | ● Short Essays | ● Drama |
| ● Essentials of HD | ● Value Tales I | ● Poems, Poetry | ● Games |
| ● Dharma Lakshanas | ● Value Tales II | ● Sanskrit | ● <u>Festivals</u> |
| ● Hindu Dharma UK | ● Bhagwat | ● Letter Writing | ● Festivals |
| ● Varna Vyavastha | ● Geeta | ● Premchand & | ● Tirthas |
| ● Ashram Vyavastha | ● Upanishad | ● Others Stories | ● <u>S & T, Math</u> |
| ● Karma | ● Tatva Bodh | ● <u>Living</u> | ● STEM |
| ● Ashtanga Yoga | ● <u>Itihas</u> | ● Behavior | ● Chess |
| ● <u>Shlokas, Geet</u> | ● Panchatantra | ● Aarti | ● Astronomy, |
| ● Songs I | ● Krishna Stories | ● Subhashitas | ● Astrology |
| ● Shlokas I | ● Rama Stories | ● Food & Nutriton | ● Medicine, Ayurveda |
| ● Songs II | ● Ramayana | ● Puja Vidhi | ● Vedic Science |
| ● Shlokas II | ● Mahabharat | ● Yaksha Prasna | ● <u>Seva</u> |
| ● Shlokas III | ● Puranas | ● Scenarios | ● Seva Projects |
| ● Hanuman Chalisa | ● <u>History</u> | ● Samskaras | ● <u>Events</u> |
| ● Shloka Meaning | ● Great Children | ● Nature Environment | ● Birthdays |
| ● Geeta Chap 12 | ● Great Women | ● <u>Practical Skills</u> | ● Graduation |
| ● Lakshmi Astakam | ● Hindu History HT | ● Speaker Series | ● Field Trips |
| ● Parishad Prarthana | ● Historical Figures | ● Hindu Ambassador | ● Khel Divas |
| ● Meaning | ● <u>Language</u> | ● Misrepresentations | |
| ● Lingashtakam | ● Alphabets R,W I | ● Performance | |
| ● Sunderkand | ● Alphabets R,W II | ● <u>Culture</u> | |
| ● Geeta Chap 15 | ● Alphabets R,W III | ● Arts & Crafts | |

How do we structure the curriculum?



Modules that develop critical thinking and build knowledge base

Modules that cover cultural and social aspects

Modules that develop language and practical skills for daily use

Thoughtfully Crafted Modules; Authentic source and reference material

Four levels

The content of the curriculums is divided into thoughtfully crafted units called “modules.” Modules are based on authentic source materials with references.

Level	Academic	Cultural	Skills	Grade	Modules
1a				Pre K	
1				k	
1				1	
1				2	
2				3	
2				4	
2				5	
3				6	
3				7	
3				8	
4				9	
4				10	
4				11	
4				12	

Grade level

**Three Tracks:
Academic,
Cultural and
Skills**

Modules for each level 1 to 4 become progressively more advanced in the topics studied and level of difficulty.

- Is the subject matter at each level age appropriate?
- Is the learning within a level and between levels progressive?
- When we look at the total picture, are we achieving our objective?

**Well rounded, confident,
knowledgeable Hindu
child**

Kashyap - Level 1 (Lower Elementary K-2) Curriculum



Level 1 Curriculum

Learn through stories, about Sri Ram, Sri Krishna and Hindu deities.
Values through Panchatantra, Hitopadesh and great children.
Learn about the core Hindu values and how to behave in society.
Acquire foundational Hindi language skills.
Learn about Hindu symbols.
Master the basic shlokas and aarti.
Inspirational songs!

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Module	Number of Sessions	Track	Grade	2026-27
Panchatantra II	6	A	K	
Great Children	6	A	K	
Songs I	4	C	K	
Value Tales I	4	C	K	
Shlokas II	4	S	K	
Alphabets R, W II	8	S	K	
Krishna Stories	6	A	1	
Arts & Crafts	6	A	1	
Songs II	4	C	1	
Value Tales II	4	C	1	
Shlokas III	4	S	1	
Alphabets R, W III	8	S	1	
Rama Stories	6	A	2	
Festivals I	6	A	2	
Symbols I	4	C	2	
Aarti I	4	C	2	
Shlokas IV	4	S	2	
Alphabets R, W IV	8	S	2	

Gargi – Level 2 (Upper Elementary Grades 3-5) Curriculum



Level 2 Curriculum

Learn the essentials of Hindu Dharma, the attributes of Dharma, significance behind our *rituals*

Study the Bhagwat and Ramayana.

Messages for life through *Subhashitas*.

History, geography and great figures, dance, music and foods of Hindustan.

Master Hindi language skills, grammar & poetry.

Meaning of the shlokas and how to perform a pooja.

Memorize key *stutis*, *Geeta Chapter 12* and Hanuman chalisa.

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Module	Number of Sessions	Track	Grade	2026-27
Panchatantra II	6	A	K	
Great Children	6	A	K	
Songs I	4	C	K	
Value Tales I	4	C	K	
Shlokas II	4	S	K	
Alphabets R, W II	8	S	K	
Krishna Stories	6	A	1	
Arts & Crafts	6	A	1	
Songs II	4	C	1	
Value Tales II	4	C	1	
Shlokas III	4	S	1	
Alphabets R, W III	8	S	1	
Rama Stories	6	A	2	
Festivals I	6	A	2	
Symbols I	4	C	2	
Aarti I	4	C	2	
Shlokas IV	4	S	2	
Alphabets R, W IV	8	S	2	

Maitreyi - Level 3 (Middle School Grades 6-8) Curriculum



Level 3 Curriculum

- Advanced study of Hindu Dharma
- Study the Mahabharat and the Puranas
 - Learn about Hindu Samskaras
- Hindu contributions to Science, technology and math.
 - Environment
- Real life lessons through role playing and scenarios.
 - Basic Sanskrit
 - Hindi literature, drama.
- Learn the Lingashtakam, *Sunderkand*, and *Geeta Chapter 15*.

Module	Level	Number of Sessions	Track	Subject Area	Grade (Yr)
Grade 6					
Ramayana	3	10	A	4	6
Hindu History HT	3	8	A	5	6
Dharma Lakshanas	3	2	C	1	6
Historical Figures	3	4	C	5	6
Lakshmi Astakam	3	4	S	2	6
Poems, Poetry	3	4	S	6	6
Puja Vidhi	3	4	S	7	6
Grade 7					
Hindu Dharma I DC	3	18	A	1	7
Yaksha Prasna	3	2	A	7	7
Tirthas	3	2	C	10	7
Scenarios	3	4	C	7	7
Parishad Prarthana Meaning	3	2	S	2	7
Geeta Chap 15	3	6	S		7
Lingashtakam	3	4	S	2	7
Grade 8					
Mahabharat	3	10	A	4	8
Sanskrit	3	8	A	6	8
STEM	3	2	A		8
Real life lessons	3	3	C		8
Drama	3	3	C	9	8
Sunderkand	3	8	S	2	8
Letter Writing	3	2	S	6	8

ATRI - Level 4 (High School Grades 9-12) Curriculum



Level 4 Curriculum

- Advanced topics such as *varna*, *ashram karma*, historical misrepresentations, Vedic Science,...
 - Geeta*
 - Tatva Bodh*
- Intro to Upanishads
 - Ashtanga Yoga
 - Ayurveda
- Memorize Geeta Chapter 2
 - Public Speaking
 - Hindu Ambassador
- Nirvanaashtakam and Mantra Pushpam*

Module	Level	Number of Sessions	Track	Subject Area	Grade (Yr)
Grade 9					
Hindu Dharma II, UK	4	16	A	4	9
Samskaras	4	4	A	5	9
Karma	4	2	A	1	9
Nature Environment	4	4	C	5	9
Other Stories	4	4	C	2	9
Geeta Chap 2	4	6	S	6	9
Grade 10					
Purusharthas, Ashram Vyavastha, Varna Vyavastha	4	4	A	1	10
Puranas	4	10	A	7	10
Astronomy, Astrology	4	3	C	10	10
Medicine, Ayurveda	4	3	C	7	10
Heritage Speaker Series	4	16	S	2	10
Chess	4	2	S		10
Grade 11					
Geeta Study	4	16	A	4	11
Ashtanga Yoga	4	4	A	6	11
Hindu Ambassador	4	12	C		11
Nirvanashtakam	4	4	C	9	11
Grade 12					
Upanishad	4	12	A	2	12
Tatva Bodh	4	8	A		12
Misrepresentations	4	8	C		12
Vedic Science	4	4	C		12
Mantrapushpam	4	4	S		12



What is in a Module?

A module consists of :

- Teaching material (text, graphics, PowerPoint, video, notes)
- A lesson plan – how the material will be rolled out over one or more sessions
- Key concepts and learning points
- Simple exercises, assignments to deepen understanding.
- Practical Projects, Practice
- References, Textbooks
- Measurement method

Presentation
Powerpoint

Textbook
Workbook

Lesson Plan
Teaching Guide

Quiz
Test

Homework
Class work

EACH Module - Encourages character building activities that will lay the foundations for developing future workers and leaders of the Hindu community in Americas. Stress on the fundamental concept of universal connectedness and a sense of belonging to the global society.

Bal Vihar and Parents – *Partnership and Commitment*



- Bal Vihar should not be considered as a “pill” meant for the children – a medicine that is good for them! It is in fact a “treat,” a joyful learning and sharing experience for parents and children alike.
- It is a way of showing that we as parent really care about our future generations; that we genuinely feel proud in sharing our rich, ancient and diverse heritage with our children; that we are willing to commit our time and energy in this sacred duty of ours.
- Bal Vihar is “by” the parents “for” the children. When the parents participate fully the children learn, play and blossom in the safe and caring environment created for them.

The **partnership between Parents and Bal Vihar** ensures that they have this **pehchan**, that they know and deeply understand their **ancestral and Hindu** identity.

In Conclusion



Bal Vihar is about the fundamental “Swa”:

- Instill the powerful lifelong concept of SWA. Develop confidence and conviction in oneself, Swabhimān (Identity) through discovering our roots, ancient knowledge and wisdom of a civilization that has sustained for thousands of years and remains alive and thrives in the contemporary world.
- Become a lifelong Sadhaka (seeker of knowledge, physical, practical and metaphysical) through Sadhana (Sustained effort, practice) and Swadhyaya (self-study). There is no substitute for this. Learn to become a true leader regardless of the field of action, (master of oneself “Swami”).

At the end of it, the final target question is:

- 1. have we been able to equip the young child with the conceptual, spiritual, academic, intellectual, cultural, social knowledge about their heritage, and**
- 2. imbue them with the practical skills to integrate and apply that knowledge in their daily life as practicing Hindus?**

OMHCC - Purpose

