



BALA VIKAS OF FAIRFAX PRESENTS YOUTH DAY COMPETITIONS 2017



(Competitions For Pre-elementary To High School Students. Rules And Topics Are Attached to This Flier.)

Saturday, July 15th, 2017
Check-In: 9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
(Competitions start immediately afterwards.)

at
Durga Temple

8400 Durga Place
Fairfax Station, VA 22039-3079

All are welcome to participate. There is no cost for participation.
All participants will be recognized with certificates. Winners will be awarded Trophies.

Competitors Pre-register Online at <http://www.balavikas.org/youthregform.asp>

Registration closes July 8th, 2017 at 11:59 PM

****No onsite registration available****

Judges Pre-register Online at <http://www.balavikas.org/jregform.asp>

Volunteers Pre-register Online at <http://www.balavikas.org/vregform.asp>

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE Contact
Vaidy Baskaran (703) 391-7267 or P. Srinivasan (703) 251-0900
Or Send E-Mail to ydb@balavikas.org or visit us at <http://www.balavikas.org>

CATEGORIES

Pre-Elementary (Grade 1 and below): *Coloring, Religious Chanting, Story Telling*
Elementary I (Grades 2-3): *Coloring, Religious Chanting, Story Telling, Recitation*
Elementary II (Grades 4-5): *Coloring, Religious Chanting, Story Telling, Recitation*
Intermediate (Grades 6-8): *Religious Chanting, Recitation, Speech, Essay*
High School (Grades 9-12): *Religious Chanting, Recitation, Speech, Essay*

*****If interested in Recitation, download the relevant pieces from**
<http://www.balavikas.org>***

If you are encountering problems, please call Bhavana Channavajjala, (571)-337-6149 or send e-mail to ydb@balavikas.org, so that we can mail you a Recitation piece.

Competition Directors: Bhavana Channavajjala (571) 337-6149
Asha Krishnakumar (703) 839-0746

PLEASE VISIT <http://www.balavikas.org> FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.
PLEASE FEEL FREE TO FORWARD THIS TO OTHERS WHO MAY BE INTERESTED.

High School:

Essay: *"Mahatma Gandhi says that Truth and Non-Violence (Ahimsa) are his weapons. What does this mean to you?"*

Speech: *"How can the spiritual values we learn be applied to the college setting?"*

Intermediate:

Essay: *"Arise! Awake! And stop not until the goal is reached" is a famous quote by Swami Vivekananda. What does it mean to you?*

Speech: *"What is the significance of puja to you?"*

If interested in entering Recitation, please download the relevant piece from our web site: www.balavikas.org.

RULES

- 1. Please bring your own pencils, crayons, and paper. To be consistent, only crayons will be allowed for coloring competition.**
- 2. Drawing for the coloring competition will be given on the day of the competition, and a 60-minute time period will be allotted for coloring.**
- 3. Essays for these assigned topics can be prepared and researched ahead of time, however on the day of the competition, no notes or references can be used. Essays must be written in the 60 minute time period allotted.**
- 4. Speeches must be between 3-5 minutes with a 30-second grace period.**
- 5. Every religious chant (regardless of language or religion) must be explained in English. These chants must be between 2 - 3 minutes with a 30-second grace period.**
- 6. Stories with a clear moral and ethical message (irrespective of religious origin) will be accepted. Stories must be between 2-3 minutes with a 30-second grace period.**
- 7. Your grade is the one you will be entering in the new school year.**

PLEASE NOTE: All competitors will be recognized with Certificates. First three winners in each category will receive trophies.

Bala Vikas Youth Competition - 2017

High School

Recitation

God of Truth

To see the universal and all-pervading Spirit of Truth face to face one must be able to love the meanest of creation as oneself. And a man who aspires after that cannot afford to keep out of any field of life. That is why my devotion to Truth has drawn me into the field of politics; and I can say without the slightest hesitation, and yet in all humility, that those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means.

Identification with everything that lives is impossible without self-purification; without self-purification the observance of the law of Ahimsa must remain an empty dream; God can never be realized by one who is not pure of heart. Self-purification, therefore, must mean purification in all the walks of life. And purification being highly infectious, purification of oneself necessarily leads to the purification of one's surroundings.

But the path of purification is hard and steep. To attain to perfect purity one has to become absolutely passion-free in thought, speech, and action; to rise above the opposing currents of love and hatred, attachment and repulsion. I know that I have not in me as yet that triple purity, in spite of constant, ceaseless striving for it. That is why the world's praise fails to move me, indeed it very often stings me. To conquer the subtle passions seems to me to be harder farther than the physical conquest of the world by the force of arms. Ever since my return to India I have had experience of the dormant passions lying hidden within me. The knowledge of them has made me feel humiliated though not defeated. The experiences and experiments have sustained me and given me great joy. But I know that I have still before me a difficult path to traverse. I must reduce myself to zero. So long as a man does not of his own free will put himself last among his fellow creatures, there is no salvation for him. *Ahimsa* is the farthest limit of humility.

In bidding farewell to the reader, for the time being at any rate, I ask him to join with me in prayer to the God of Truth that He may grant me the boon of *Ahimsa* in mind, word, and deed.

-Mahatma Gandhi, *My Experiments with Truth*

Bala Vikas Youth Competition - 2017

Intermediate

Recitation

Standards for Inspired Living

The Upanishads glorify service as the highest pinnacle of right living. Dedicated and noble work alone can polish an individual to a state of true culture and right discipline. To those who know what service is, work is not slavery or drudgery but is the joy of life. Man is not born to revel in idleness. Nature will whip the idle on to the road of right or wrong activity, and thereby evolve him steadily to a state of joy characterized by dynamic outer activity yet inner calm and peace.

Vedanta has never permitted escapism, though many uninformed people contend that it does. The earliest Upanishads emphasized that one who cannot live the noble life of renunciation and self-restraint must unavoidably and honestly live a life of intense activity, striving to fulfill one's desires through honest means; teaching oneself to live in cheerful enthusiasm all one's life in the service of man and in the glorification of the Lord.

The one who intensively plunges into life-eager and anxious to meet daily its new challenges, and at every turn doing one's best to meet the challenges with truth and purity as the standards - to such a one, actions do not cling. Living an entire lifetime in a spirit of paying homage to the Lord, detached from the anxiety for the fruit of actions and from the ego-sense, is lauded not only by the Bhagavad Gita but by the Upanishads also . Such actions are not bars to spiritual progress; in fact, they are necessary to prepare a student for the highest flights in meditation. To a seeker, dedication to work is a means for the inner purification of his vasanas.

All activities, whether social, economic, political, or domestic, when pursued in an attitude of detachment, can never bind the actor by their results. Results can cling to the doer only when he acts with expectation of an attachment to definite results. The seeker should, therefore, function purely in a spirit of work for work's sake.

-Swami Chinmayananda
The Choice is Yours: Ethics in Vedanta

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Elementary II

Recitation

Friends,

Spiritualism is rooted in India's heritage. Indian saints and Greek sages had intellectual and spiritual exchanges thousands of years back. India's openness to new ideas is manifest in the Rig Veda: Let noble thoughts come to us from all sides. This philosophy has guided our intellectual discourse since time immemorial. Mother India gave birth to many religious and spiritual streams. Some of them have even travelled beyond Indian borders.

The tradition of welcoming, respecting and honouring all faiths is as old as India itself. As Swami Vivekananda said: We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true.

What Swami Vivekananda had said a century ago holds good and will, for ever, not only for this nation but also for this government or for that matter any government in India, run by any political party. This principle of equal respect and treatment for all faiths has been a part of India's ethos for thousands of years. And that is how it became integral to the Constitution of India. Our Constitution did not evolve in a vacuum. It has roots in the ancient cultural traditions of India. We believe that there is truth in every religion.

-Prime Minister Narendra Modi

<https://blogs.wsj.com/indiarealtime/2015/02/18/narendra-modis-speech-on-minority-religions-in-full/>

Bala Vikas Youth Competition - 2017

Elementary I

Recitation

Equality of Religions

I believe that all the great religions of the world are true more or less. I say 'more or less' because I believe that everything that the human hand touches, by reason of the very fact that human beings are imperfect, becomes imperfect. Perfection is the exclusive attribute of God and it is indescribable, untranslatable. I do believe that it is possible for every human being to become perfect even as God is perfect. It is necessary for us all to aspire after perfection, but when that blessed state is attained, it becomes indescribable; indefinable. And, I, therefore, admit, in all humility, that even the Vedas, the Koran and the Bible are imperfect word of God and, imperfect beings that we are, swayed to and fro by a multitude of passions, it is impossible for us even to understand this word of God in its fullness.

-Mahatma Gandhi, *Truth is God*