

Culture III Class Summary, Jan 31

Dear Parents,

Last Sunday, Jan 31st we had a mid-term (Multiple choice quiz). The Mid-term key is posted on the web. Papers will be graded and returned on Feb 21st, when the project is due. Please let me know if your child has not been assigned any Mahabharat character he is supposed to work on.

Myself and Vaibhav will not be there on Feb 7, class will be taken by Susmita Petkar. Later Susmita and Geeta Rajan will give the details regarding the Annual Day program. If any parents are interested in volunteering for our class performance, please contact them. We need a lot of help!

Following is the summary of Mahabharat session of Jan 31

We learnt about Eklavya, Karna and their attempts to get first-class education even though their status put them at a disadvantage.

Eklavya,

Was a tribal boy, who frequently watched Drona teaching the Hastinapur princes arithmetic, art of war, battle skills, weaponry and civics. Drona rejected Eklavya as a pupil as Drona taught only princes and Eklavya couldn't afford him. Eklavya mastered the skills by observing through the trees and foliage and built a clay statue of Drona which became his guide.

When time to give "gurudakshina" came, Eklavya disclosed his secret to Drona asked what gift would he prefer. Drona worried about Eklavya's skills (even tested him) being used by Hastinapur enemies and knowledge acquired by deceit was harmful, asked him to cut his right thumb. Eklavya obliges and cannot practice archery, a weapon of choice for Arjuna, Drona's favorite pupil.

Balram,

Krishna's older brother Balram taught the princes the art of mace (gada) duel. Bhima and Duryodhana became the most powerful warriors in Mace warfare. Balram always thought Bhima was powerful because of his brute strength but Duryodhana was the one with more art and skill. Duryodhana was Balram's favorite pupil.

Karna,

Karna's attempts at acquiring superior education came from deceiving Lord Parshuram (who had retired) about his parents who were Adhirat and Radha, from low caste.

Parshuram only taught Brahmins, barring a few exceptions like Bheesma. Karna disguises as a brahmin and deceives Parshuram for years, until at the end of his training is caught when Karna's tolerance for an insect bite is too much for Brahmin (and only a true kshatriya will withstand).

Parshuram curses Karna: Karna will forget any important mantra he tries to recite at a time he needs it the most!

Dejected Karna walks away and decides to test a Divya Astra "Brahmastra" (the most powerful weapon of all) that he learned from Parshurama, on a grazing cow. The Brahmastra use sends seismic waves across the globe and shatters the cow before vaporizing it. The farmer who watches this is furious!

Farmer curses Karna: Karna will be killed by the same weapon, the Brahmastra when he is helpless, just like farmer's poor and helpless cow!

Pandava and Kauravas skill exhibition:

To welcome the newly graduated princes, Bheesma sets up a arena for display. People from all over the region gather to watch the Hastinapur Princess. Yudishtir shows his use of the Javelin. Bheema and Duryodhana show Mace fight. Arjuna dazzles in archery, set new records.

Just then, walks in a youth wearing Kavcha and Kundala who is instantly recognized by Kunti as her discarded Son from Surya! Bheesma and Drona objects to his participation as he is not a prince and only a prince is allowed to participate. Duryodhana who is jealous of Pandava brother's talent immediately makes him the King of Angad province. Karna participates, he breaks all the records set by Arjuna and warns everybody that he too is Lord Parshuram student and carries divya astras.

Duryodhana and Karna become best of friends, with Adhiraat watching proudly!

Thus, Three of leading men Bheesma, Drona and Karna are all graduates from the same school, Lord Parshurama!

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Thanks,
Vaibhav and Suhasini