

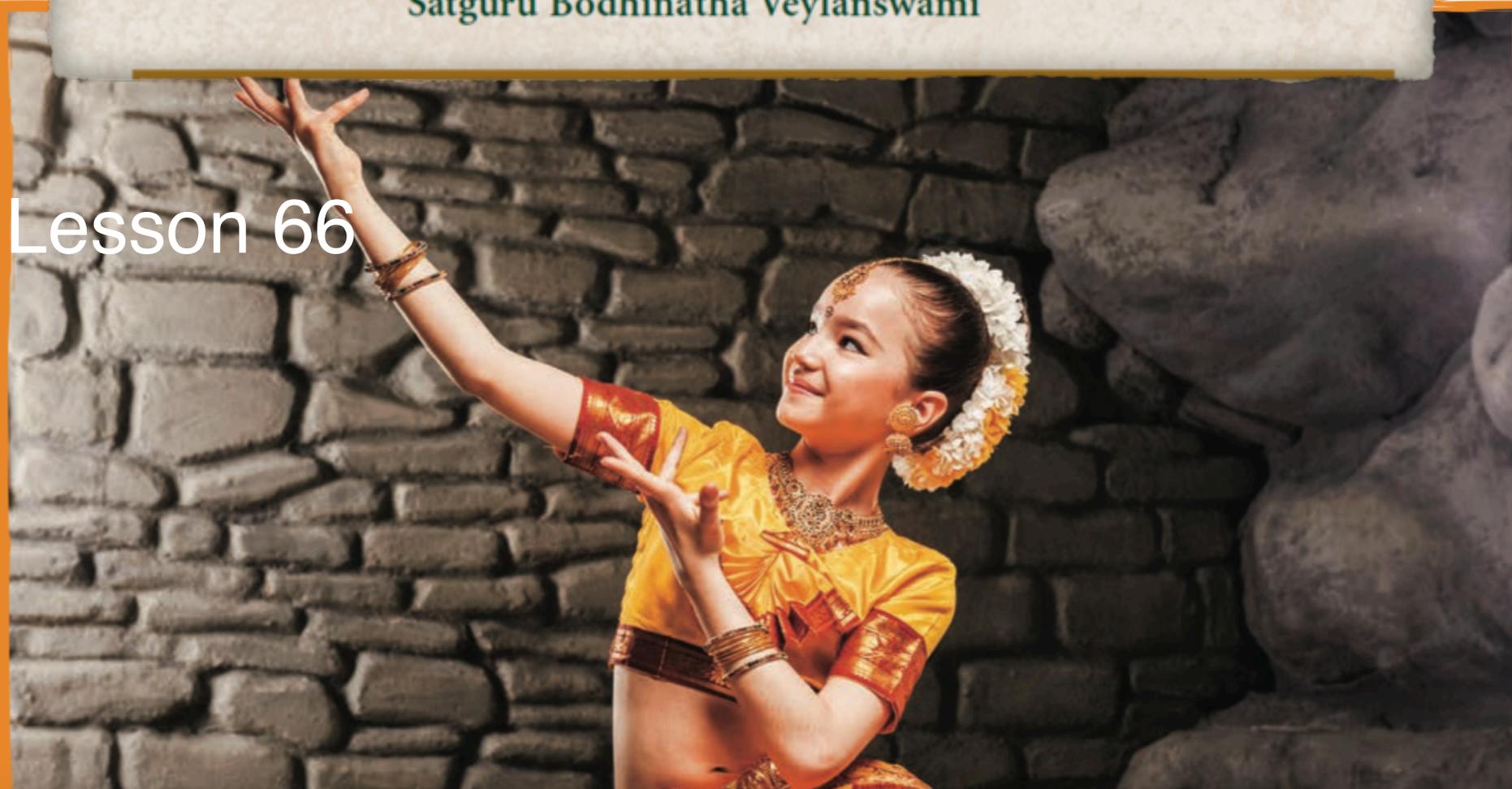
Path to Siva

A Catechism for Youth

Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami

Lesson 66

IN SILK COSTUME GESTURES TOWARD THE DIVINE



AVE BR

Why Should We Learn a Cultural Art?

Enjoying culture



It is a great pleasure to listen to a fine singer or musician or watch a gifted dancer perform.

It is uplifting to see beautiful paintings by a devoted Saiva artist.

Listening to a story...

It is enchanting to hear someone tell a story well.

Each song, each art piece or performance is a gift to every devotee who experiences it.



Perfecting a saivite art

Gurudeva encouraged devotees to perfect a form of Saiva art, singing, drama, dance or a musical instrument.



Creative skill...with our hands...

The ideal time to start is in childhood.

He also praised the merits of learning a creative skill requiring the use of one's hands, such as pottery, sewing, weaving, painting, gardening, baking and the building arts.



Creative benefits ...

All these talents manifest creative benefits for family and community.

There are so many options for each of us.



What can we learn?

You could learn a form of classical Indian dance.

You could learn music, such as voice, vina, flute or drum.

You may learn Sanskrit chanting or dramatic storytelling.



You can become an expert...

You could become an expert at weaving flower garlands, writing poems, sculpting or carpentry.

You can create kolam floor designs and other handmade decorations.



The art of cooking

You can perfect the art of cooking and prepare delicious prasadam dishes for festivals.



It takes hard work ... willpower...

Learning an art or skill takes hard work, willpower and dedication.

These are strengths you can apply to everything you do.

Each skill or art gives you new ways of uplifting your friends, family and community.



Become an accomplished human being

These cultural and creative expressions are fulfilling to you as well.

You become an accomplished human being.

And if you learn something well, you can teach that skill to others.



64 Kalas or cultural arts

There are 64 cultural arts, or kalas, in Hindu tradition.

In *Saiva Dharma Shastras* Gurudeva offered two contemporary lists, one for girls and one for boys.



Gurudeva says...

The Hindu enjoys all the facets of life as transmuted into a religious expression in art.

The Hindu's art is a religious art: drawing, painting and sculpture of the Gods, the devas, and the saints of our religion.

The music is devotional and depicts the tones of the higher chakras, echoes the voices of the Gods; and the dance emulates the movements of the Gods.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 66



66.1 The ideal time to start learning singing, dancing or a musical instrument is during the teenage years.

- True
- False

66.2 Gurudeva also praised the merits of learning a creative skill requiring the use of one's hands such as (Check the incorrect answer)

- A. Pottery
- B. Computer programming
- C. Sewing
- D. Gardening
- E. The building arts

66.3 Learning an art or skill takes hard work, willpower and dedication. These are strengths we (Check the correct answer)

- A. Can apply to everything we do
- B. Can only be used in the art or skill itself

66.4 Each skill or art gives us new ways of uplifting our friends, family and community. These cultural and creative expressions are fulfilling to you as well.

- True
- False

66.5 In the Hindu tradition, the number of cultural arts, or kalas is (Check the correct answer)

- A. Nine
- B. Sixty-four
- C. One hundred and eight