

# The Birth of Lord Ganesh

---

Long ago, Lord Shiva and his wife, the Goddess Parvati lived in happiness in a lovely home on the top of a hill. But the time came for Lord Shiva to go on a long journey and Parvati was left alone. As time passed Parvati grew more and more lonely. She decided to create a companion for herself. Using her powers she created a child, her son. She called this boy Ganesh.

Lord Shiva was surprised when he returned home from his travels to see a young boy standing outside the house. And as Ganesh watched Lord Shiva approach he was worried. Lord Shiva had been away fighting for many years, and his appearance was more than a little dishevelled. His hair was wild and matted, and he was clothed in animal skins. Ganesh had no idea who he was.

‘Go away!’ shouted Ganesh as Lord Shiva came closer.

He stood in front of the door, guarding the entrance. He knew his mother was inside the house bathing and was concerned for her safety. Lord Shiva was furious. How dare this impudent boy try to stop him from entering his own home? Lord Shiva was quick-tempered and had little patience for anyone he regarded as an enemy. He drew his sword.

‘I’m not letting you in!’ yelled Ganesh bravely.

Lord Shiva was an excellent swordsman and with one swift movement of his sword he sent

Ganesh’s head flying off far into the distance. Hearing the furore, Parvati quickly dressed and ran outside. She was distraught at the scene that met her eyes.

‘How could you?’ she screamed at Lord Shiva. ‘You have killed our son!’

Lord Shiva was filled with remorse when he realized the enormity of his mistake. He promised to do his best to rectify the situation. He would bring the boy back to life but – where was his head? He knew he had to act quickly and asked his soldiers to bring him the head of the first living creature they came across. And it just so happened that this was an elephant!

The elephant head was attached to the body of Ganesh, who then came back to life. In time his mother became used to the strange appearance of her son: a boy with the head of an elephant. And Lord Shiva grew to respect and to love this brave, intelligent son of his, who had so courageously protected his mother.

Today, Lord Ganesh is one of the most popular Hindu Gods. Hindus chant his name before beginning any new endeavour.

# Teacher's Notes: The Birth of Lord Ganesh

---

## Background Information

Lord Ganesh (also referred to as Ganesha or Ganesa) is one of the most well-known Hindu deities. Ganesh is regarded as the Lord of Beginnings and the Lord of Obstacles. In addition, he is viewed as the deva (god) of wisdom and education. There is a ten-day festival known as Ganesh Chaturthi, which takes place in either late August or early September. This festival celebrates the birth of Lord Ganesh. Many Hindus in India and other parts of the world celebrate this festival with great enthusiasm.

## Speaking and Listening Activity

Create a freeze frame to show the part of the story where Lord Shiva arrives home to find Ganesh outside. This will involve the children working in pairs and standing in position as though they are in a photograph. The characters should then 'come to life' when indicated by the teacher and voice aloud what they are thinking.

## Follow-up Activities

- ◆ There are several stories involving Lord Ganesh. Ask the children to find out about the story of Ganesh and his brother Kartik, who decide to race around the universe, or the story of Ganesh and his argument with the Moon.
- ◆ Ask the children to find out about some of the Hindu traditions involved in celebrating the festival of Ganesh Chaturthi.
- ◆ Encourage your pupils to conduct some research on elephants and then write a non-chronological report.

# The Birth of Lord Ganesh

## Reading Task A

Choose a suitable word to finish the sentence.

1. Lord Shiva had to go on a long \_\_\_\_\_ .
2. Parvati called her son \_\_\_\_\_ .
3. 'I'm not letting you in!' yelled \_\_\_\_\_ .
4. Lord Shiva was an excellent \_\_\_\_\_ .
5. Lord Shiva decided to bring Ganesh back to \_\_\_\_\_ .
6. The first living creature the soldiers came across was an \_\_\_\_\_ .
7. Ganesh tried to protect his \_\_\_\_\_ .

## Reading Task B

Draw a picture that shows what happened at the end of the story. Describe your drawing.

---

---

# The Birth of Lord Ganesh

## Reading Task C

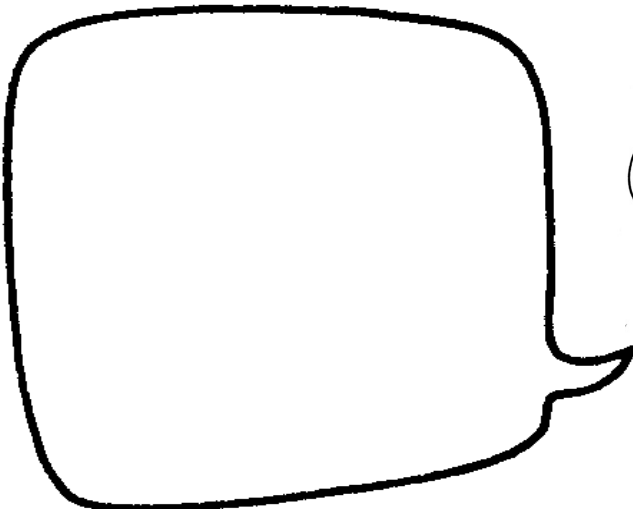
Find these phrases in the text of the story and explain them. Use a dictionary to help you if you are not sure.

1. using her powers \_\_\_\_\_
2. impudent boy \_\_\_\_\_
3. quick-tempered \_\_\_\_\_
4. hearing the furore \_\_\_\_\_
5. filled with remorse \_\_\_\_\_
6. courageously protected \_\_\_\_\_

## Reading Task D

Imagine what the characters said/thought.

What do you think Lord Shiva replied when Parvati shouted 'How could you? You have killed our son.' Write your answer in the speech bubble.



What do you think Parvati thought when she first saw her son with an elephant head? Write your answer in the thought bubble.

