

The Avanti PRE Curriculum

Teacher Resource Sheet 7.6.1c

“Overview of the Ramayana”

This resource includes (see page 2) a copy of Exercise Sheet 7.6.1c entitled, “Student Overview of the Ramayana”, which breaks each book into discrete episodes. Please also see here (on page 3) a very concise overview of the Ramayana story.

Kanda (Book)	Title and Location	Contents
1	Bāla Kāṇḍa Book of childhood Ayodhya	The birth and childhood of Rama, born to King Dasharatha of the Kingdom of Kosala. The wedding of Rama to Sita.
2	Ayodhya Kāṇḍa Book of Ayodhya Ayodhya	The preparations for Rama's coronation in the city of Ayodhya. Manthara 's treachery and Rama's exile to the forest. The regency of Rama's brother, Bharata. .
3	Araṇya Kāṇḍa Book of the Forest The Forest	The forest life of Rama with Sita and Lakshmana. Rama's meeting with Ravana's sister, Shurpanaka. The kidnapping of Sita by the demon king Ravana.
4	Kishkindha Kāṇḍa Book of the monkey kingdom Monkey Kingdom	In search of help, Rama and Lakshmana meet Hanuman. Rama helps assassinate the monkey people's leader, King Vali. Vali's younger brother, Sugriva, crowned King of Kishkindha.
5	Sundara Kāṇḍa Book of beauty Lanka	Hanuman's adventures, including his jumping over the ocean and finding Sita on the island of Lanka. Hanuman is captured but escapes, setting fire to Lanka. Hanuman returns to Rama and the monkey army.
6	Yuddha Kāṇḍa Book of war Lanka	The monkey army builds a bridge to Lanka. Ravana is killed, his army defeated. Sita undergoes the test of fire proving her purity. Rama and Sita return to Ayodhya to reign over the ideal state. (Sometimes the story finishes here)
7	Uttara Kāṇḍa Last book Various locations	The detailed story of Ravana's life, his encounter with Lord Shiva , Vali and Kartha Virya Arjuna and many others. Shurpanakha's humiliation is retold by sage Vashishta to Rama and Sita. Rumours of impurity lead to Sita's banishment, during which she gives birth to Lava and Kusha. Sita disappears into the earth. The twin boys ascend the throne of Ayodhya, after which Rama returns to Vaikuṇṭha.

“Student Overview of the Ramayana” (EXS 7.61C)

Book	Title and Location	Main Stories (Scenes/Episodes)
1	Book of childhood Ayodhya	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dasharatha’s sacrifice for the birth of a son. 2. Rama’s birth and childhood. 3. Vishvamisra takes Rama and Lakshmana to kill demons. 4. The marriage of Rama and Sita.
2	Book of Ayodhya Ayodhya	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preparations for Rama’ coronation. 2. Manthara poisons Kaikeyi’s mind. 3. Kaikeyi demands Dasharatha to banish Rama 4. Rama leaves for exile followed by Sita and Lakshmana 5. Dasharatha dies; Bharata meets Rama and becomes prince regent.
3	Book of the Forest The Forest	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rama, Sita and Lakshmana travel south, meeting sages and killing demons. 2. Ravana’s sister, Surpanakha, attacks Sita. 3. Rama destroys an army of 14,000 demons. 4. Ravana kidnaps Sita (later, Jatayu is mortally wounded defending Sita) 5. Rama and Lakshmana begin the long search and find the dying Jatayu. 6. Ravana reaches Lanka and holds Sita captive in a grove of Ashoka trees.
4	Book of the monkey kingdom Monkey Kingdom	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rama and Lakshmana journey south meeting Sugriva and Hanuman. 2. Rama kills Sugriva’s brother, Vali; Sugriva is once more king of Kishkinda. 3. The monkeys go in all directions, searching for Sita.
5	Book of beauty Lanka	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Following a tip-off, the monkey army assembles on India’s south coast. 2. Hanuman leaps over to Lanka, finds Sita and delivers to her Rama’s ring. 3. Hanuman is captured; he sets Lanka ablaze; he jumps back to re-join Rama.
6	Book of war Lanka	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ravana refuses advice to return Sita; his brother Vibhishana joins Rama. 2. The monkey army constructs a floating bridge to Lanka. 3. Ravana tries to trick Sita into believing that Rama is dead. 4. The battle of Lanka. 5. Sita undergoes trial by fire, proving her purity. 6. Rama and Sita return triumphantly to Ayodhya.
7	Last book Various locations	Not included in this study. It mainly tells the story of Rama’s sons, Lav and Kush

Please note: the text in **bold** indicates the stories covered in depth during this half-term. The final three episodes in book 6 are important, and can be covered by students (if they want) during their final project work in Week 6.

Summary of the Story

Prince Rama was the eldest of four sons begotten by Dasharatha, King of Kosala. Just prior to Dasharatha's retirement and Rama's coronation, the prince was unfairly banished to the forest. His wife, Sita, and brother, Lakshmana, volunteered to join him. Despite the hardships, Rama relished forest life for it allowed him to keep company with the saints and sages living there.

However Ravana, king of the race of Rakshasas (man-eaters), heard of Sita's exquisite beauty and resolved to kidnap her. He conspired with the magician Maricha, who adopted the form of a delicate deer. As planned, it captivated Sita's mind and Rama set out to catch the playful yet elusive creature. Maricha also lured away Lakshmana. Ravana seized the unprotected Sita. Whisking her off on his aerial chariot to his capital, Lanka, he held her captive in his famed Ashoka garden,

Finding Sita gone, Rama was grief-stricken. Pacified by Lakshmana, he resolved to rescue his wife. Journeying south with determination, the brothers allied themselves with Sugriva, king of a race of monkey-like people. Sugriva's general, Hanuman, eventually found Sita on the isle of Lanka, but was detected by Ravana's son, Indrajit, and rewarded with a lighted tail. Hanuman escaped and, waving his famous tale, burned down most of the splendid city before bounding back to the Indian mainland.

Hearing of Sita's whereabouts, Rama ordered his army to toss giant boulders into the sea. Miraculously they floated, and the monkey warriors constructed a pontoon bridge extending to Lanka. The two armies clashed outside the city. Rama's troops gained the upper hand and eventually Rama killed Ravana. Reunited, Rama and Sita returned to Ayodhya, where they reigned happily for many years.

However, due to a malicious rumour, Rama banished Sita to the ashrama of sage Valmiki, where she bore twin sons, Lava and Kush. Years later, Sita and her two teenage princes briefly met Rama, though the couple never reunited. In separation from Rama, Sita ended her life by entering the earth and, when Rama also departed, their two sons inherited the kingdom.