

The Master Key



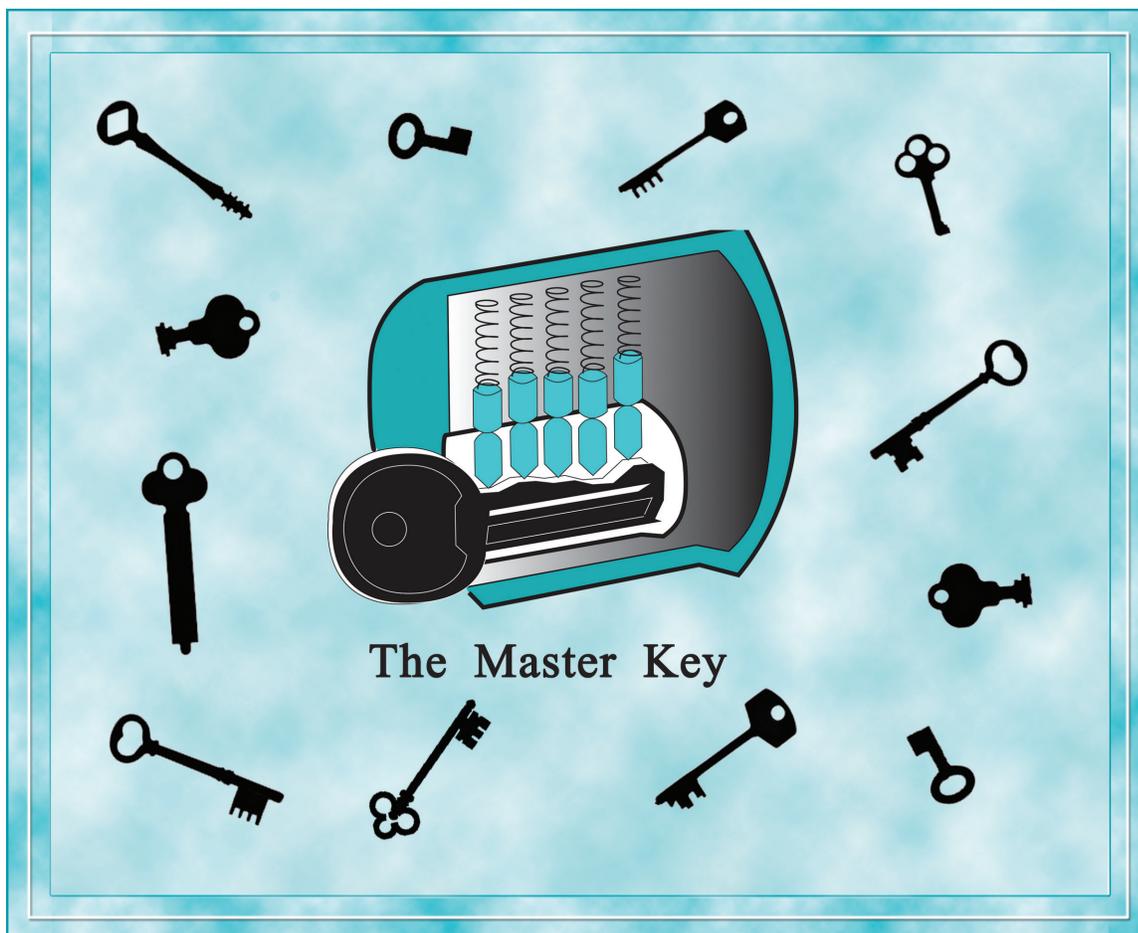
Commence the class with the Opening Prayer. Take attendance. For the Memory Time, children will learn to chant the verses given in the Prayers section.

TOPIC OF THE DAY

The topic of the day consists of:

- ◆ The Master Key
- ◆ Life's Master Key
- ◆ Lord, May I Please!
- ◆ Knowledge, The Master Key
- ◆ What Makes Me Smile?
- ◆ What Is Success?

The Master Key



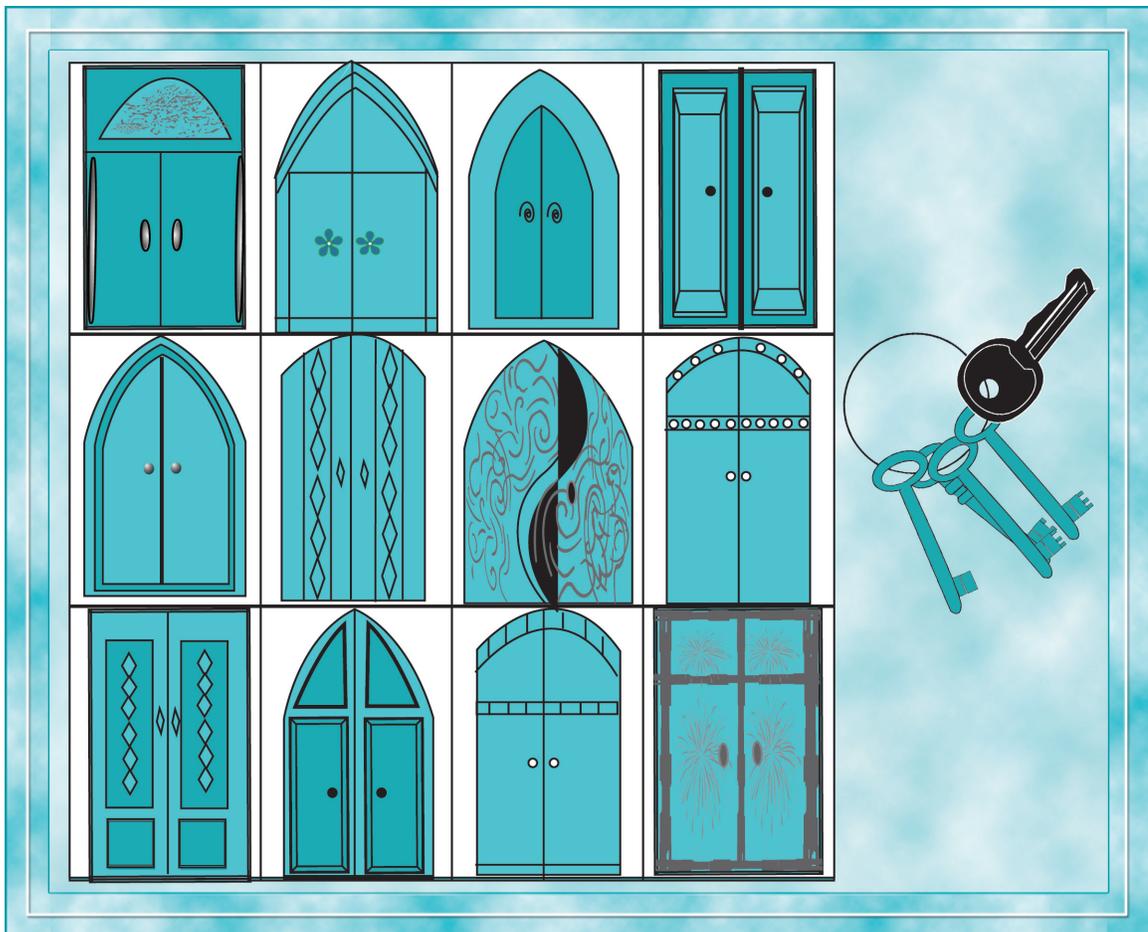


Take handful of keys to the class. Among them have one master key. Talk about how keys are different and about the function of a key. The key opens or locks a room, a locker etc. How does a key open the door?

There are pistons in the lock. The groves in the key fit the piston and it opens the lock. Then, point to the master key. What is so different in it? The master key is different. The master key opens all the doors as all the pistons fit the groves of the key. The master key helps a custodian to open all the rooms of the building with one master key.

Life's Master Key

A young boy lost his dad at an early age. The dad had a big business and many people worked in his company and were very happy. It is because his dad was a caring person and all his employees loved him; he had a great reputation in town. When dad passed away, the responsibility of the business landed upon the young boy. Not knowing how to run the business, he was worried. He wanted to make sure that he does not ruin his father's reputation in the town.



He prayed. He sincerely prayed and asked the Lord to help him in understanding how he can be just to his employees like his dad was. That night he had a dream. In his dream he was in heaven, waiting for his turn to enter the gate of the heaven.

The gatekeeper was asking each person what he or she desired. Some asked for children, some asked for wealth, some for name and fame! Whatever the person asked for, the gatekeeper gave a key and showed the person the room to open the door. He said, "Go to that door" and pointed to the humongous beautiful palace with many many golden doors. One by one each person asked for something and they all got entry to the door of their desire! All of them got what they asked for.

Now, it was the young boy's turn. The gatekeeper asked the same question, "Young man, what do you want? This is heaven, whatever you want, you shall be granted." The boy looked at the gatekeeper and said politely, "Sir, all I want is to be fair to my dad's employees. I want that understanding, the knowledge of how I can be just to one and all."

The gatekeeper was very pleased to hear this. He said, "Young man, you have asked for the master key. This key will open all the doors of this palace; some rooms are filled with jewels; some are filled with name and fame; some with wealth, and many more things that people desire. You have asked for the Knowledge, the understanding that is going to make you free."

Inference: Life's master key is Self-Knowledge that sets us free. Knowledge of the Self makes us see oneness in the universe. The vision of oneness makes us behave fairly with one and all.

Lord, May I Please!

A celestial God had a beautiful horse endowed with many good qualities. The horse wanted to be perfect in every way. It wanted to be the most beautiful horse in the world!

One day the horse said to the god, "O Lord, you have given me beauty and many good qualities. I am so grateful to you. But can you make me more beautiful? I would be very grateful if you could make me more beautiful."

God replied, "Tell me what you want me to do. I can definitely do it for you."

The horse said, "I feel I am not well proportioned. My neck is too short. If you can make my neck a little longer, my upper body will become more beautiful. And one more thing, make my legs longer and thinner to match my lower body. Yes, then, I will be the masterpiece of beauty."

God said, "*Tathāstu!*" The horse turned into a camel! The horse started to cry, "O Lord, I wanted to become the most beautiful horse, but you have turned me into a camel, the ugliest creature of all!"

God said, "My dear, what you asked for, you got it! You have become a camel."





The horse cried, “Oh no, I do not want to become a camel I wish to remain a horse. As a horse, at least people appreciated my good qualities. Nobody will appreciate me as a camel.”

God said, “The key to happiness (success) is never try to achieve or receive more than what I have given you. Be thankful for what you have. If you want to lead a desire-filled life, then at every moment you will want more and more. But you have no idea of the outcome! You asked for a longer neck and legs, and this is what happened. Each thing in my creation has its own good qualities. The camel is not as beautiful as the horse, but it has its own function and carries heavy loads.”

Our plea all through our life is desiring objects that we think will make us feel happy but it is not so!

Knowledge, The Master Key

A group of people were on a vacation. On the first day of the vacation, they left early in the morning as they had to travel a long distance. They stopped for a break after few hours of driving and the driver announced, “Ladies and gentleman, I have a good news and a bad news! The good news is that having started early, we have covered a good distance in a short time, and the bad news is, I really do not know where we are!” Acting without thinking you will reach some place but not necessarily where you want to reach.

Suppose you needed something from your friend’s home and they are on vacation. With their permission you went to their home in the late evening and entered the home and it is pitch dark. What would you want to do first? Turn on the lights. So, first you will try to find the switch. Even after finding the switch, you got no lights because of the storm the power was out or may be the fuse had blown! How would you find your thing? So the next logical thing to do is to bring a lighted candle or a flashlight to find what you needed to pick up. Unless you bring in light, you knew the problem of darkness will not go. The remedy to remove darkness is light.

If a person has lost his ring inside the house and he is looking for it outside because it is dark in the house, but is bright outside, what would you tell him? You need to look for things where it is! You should look for things where there is a possibility of finding it! Are we also not doing this? We search for happiness everywhere other than where we will find it. We come up with answers, remedies that are convenient to us but not the right remedy.

If you want to go to New York from California and instead of going in an easterly direction, you decide to go towards the west! You did not bother to look up the direction as you know earth is round and ultimately you will reach regardless of the direction of travel!

We need to know why we are doing what we are doing, and whether we are using the smartest and best way to accomplish the goal, to reach the destination. We need to know our goal and the way. When we do, we work smartly to reach our destination of life. Is there a destination, a goal in our life? What do we want? We need to ask ourselves why do we do what we do?

In the previous stories, the horse asked for long neck and long legs, people waiting at the gate of heaven asked for variety of things because they thought that those items will make them happy! Meaning, the destination for our life is only happiness. To be happy for ever is our goal of life.

Our scriptures say, "Happiness is not in the world of objects but is within us." The master key is to search for the happiness within ourselves.

What Makes Me Smile?

Ask children what makes them smile, what makes them happy. As they say, jot them down on the board. Select few items from the list that boys would love and if (name a girl in the class) Maya has all the items that one of the boys (Ashok) wants and, whatever Maya asked for Ashok has. Would they be happy? They both will not be happy to receive what they had no desire for!

Take few sugar cubes and ask few children to taste it. Ask them what's the taste. They all will have to agree that it is sweet as sweetness is inherent to sugar cubes! If it was not, all the children will not agree upon its sweetness.

If happiness is in the objects, everyone will feel happy with the same objects. Our scriptures say, "Happiness is not in the objects, but it is within us." How can I search for happiness within me? That is what we will be learning in the following lessons.

What Is Success?

Give children a sheet of paper and ask them to draw a picture or write few words as to what they think success is.

Here are few quotes about success. Discuss the quotes with children and then again ask them to rethink their own understanding of success:

- ◆ "Success is simply a matter of luck. Ask any failure," says Earl Wilson
- ◆ "Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experiences of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired and success achieved," says Helen Keller
- ◆ "Most look up and admire the stars. A champion climbs a mountain and grabs one," a quote by an unknown author.
- ◆ "Success is a self-fulfilling prophecy," says *Pūjya Guruji*, Swami Tejomayananda.
- ◆ "As human beings, our greatness lies not so much in being able to remake the world...as in being able to remake ourselves," says *Mahātmā* Gandhi.

Success as defined in the dictionary is, "achieving a goal." But your goal must be a worthy one. Mother Theresa, *Mahātmā* Gandhi were successful in people's eyes and yet they had nothing of their own! They never had to dress for success nor did anything just to impress others!





CLOSING

In this lesson, we discussed that:

- ◆ Knowledge of the Self is the Master Key of life.
- ◆ If happiness is in the objects, everyone will feel happy with the same objects. Our scriptures say, “Happiness is not in the objects, but it is within us.”

Conclude the class with the following:

- ◆ Quiet Time: Follow one of the techniques given in the Appendix to make children’s mind quiet.
- ◆ Closing Prayer: Chant the Closing Prayer given in the Prayers section.