

# **TEACHER'S GUIDE**

FOUNDATION PROGRAMME FOR LITERACY  
NUMERACY AND SKILLS

## **INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC**

**GRADE 7**

**TITLE :**

**PLAYING OF THE INSTRUMENT**

**MOE  
MAHATMA GANDHI INSTITUTE  
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**GRADE 7**

# **GUIDE TO EDUCATORS**

## **TITLE : PLAYING OF THE INSTRUMENT**



## Competency

C 1: Handling and Practice

## Element 3

Demonstrate instrumental practice routines.

## Performance Criteria

**Level 1 :** Participates in guided practice sessions

**Level 2 :** Follows structured practice routines independently

## Purpose of Activity

The purpose of this lesson is to guide learners from correct posture and handling towards their first structured instrumental playing experiences. Through guided practice, students begin to apply basic stroke movements and play simple notes and patterns on their instrument. The lesson supports the development of coordination, control, and disciplined practise habits, helping learners gain confidence in producing sound while maintaining correct playing technique. This lesson lays a foundation for consistent and meaningful instrumental practice for both sitar and tabla students.

## Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

- Maintain correct sitting posture while playing their instrument.
- Demonstrate basic strokes or hand movements appropriate to the instrument.
- Produce a clear sound on the instrument using the correct technique.
- Identify and play simple notes or pitch areas under teacher guidance.
- Participate actively in guided instrumental practice routines.

## Resources & Materials

- Musical Instruments (Sitar, Tabla)
- Mizraab for Sitar Students
- Student Workbook
- Appropriate Seating arrangement
- Whiteboard and Marker.

## INTRODUCTION

In this lesson, you will begin to play your instrument and explore how music is created through simple actions and careful listening. Whether you are learning the sitar or the tabla, you will practice correct posture, hand position, and basic playing techniques. You will focus on producing clear sounds, keeping a steady tempo, and playing with control.

This lesson helps you build confidence as a beginner musician and encourages you to listen to yourself and others while playing. By practising step by step, you will learn how to handle your instrument properly and enjoy making music together in a respectful and focused way.

## Teaching Trajectories / Implementation Guidelines

### INSTRUMENTAL SITAR

#### **Note to Sitar Educators:**

All the following activities should be explained and demonstrated by the educator first followed by student practice.





#### **Activity 1**

##### **Recap of Sitting and Handling of Instrument**

- The teacher revises correct sitting posture and instrument positioning.
- Learners demonstrate how to sit and hold their instrument correctly.
- The teacher checks posture, hand placement, and overall comfort before proceeding.
- Corrections are given gently and individually.

## Activity 2

### Stroke Movements

Types of stroke	Description	
<i>Da</i>	It is an inward stroke played with the index finger performed by folding the fingers, until the <i>mizraab</i> strikes the desired string.	
<i>Ra</i>	It is an outward stroke played with the index finger which is performed by unfolding the fingers and is usually referred to as the reverse of the <i>Da</i> stroke.  The <i>chikaari</i> strings are usually played with a <i>Ra</i> stroke.	 
<i>Dir</i>	It is a composite stroke performed by combining the <i>Da</i> and <i>Ra</i> strokes at double or faster speed than the original one	

## Activity 3

### Playing the first musical note

#### Let's Practise!

#### Playing my first musical note – A step-by-step approach

##### Step 1. Select your *mizraab*

- Choose an appropriate *mizraab* for you.

##### Step 2. Adopt a proper sitting posture

- Remove your socks.
- Sit cross-legged on the carpet.
- Move the right leg forward and place the left leg to your right, passing under the right thigh as shown in the picture.



#### Note to the teacher:

- Before attempting this activity, please ensure that the sitar has been properly tuned.
- During every tuning process, encourage your students to observe how you proceed as the first step to learn tuning is through observation and listening.

### Step 3. Adopt a proper handling position

- Place the *tumbaa* on the sole of the left foot.
- Place the right forearm on the *tumbaa* and the right hand thumb on the *daandi*, at the end of the last *pardaa*.
- Keep the sitar steady between the sole of the left foot and the right forearm, with the support of the right knee, almost at an angle of 45 degrees from the ground.
- The sitar should be held in such a position that it does not obstruct your face while playing.

### Step 4. Locate the first swara in Indian Music – Sa.

- Identify the 7th *pardaa*, starting from the top.
- Place the left-hand index finger just before the desired *pardaa* while pressing on the main string and the thumb at the back of the fingerboard just before the corresponding *pardaa* thread.



**Step 5. Play your first *swara***

- Strike the main string in an inward stroke. Do it 2 – 3 times.
- Guided by your teacher, apply the outward stroke as well on the same *pardaa*.

**Congratulations!! That was your first musical  
note on the sitar!**

**Did you enjoy it?**

**You are going to learn about the other  
*swara-s* in the next chapter.**

## Activity 4

### Placement of notes of the three main *Saptak-s* on the Sitar

#### Let's practice!

Playing the three main *saptak-s* / scales on the sitar – A step-by-step approach.

#### Welcome Back!!

You are now going to learn how to play all the natural notes of the scale. Get ready with your sitar and follow the instructions given.

#### Prior Knowledge

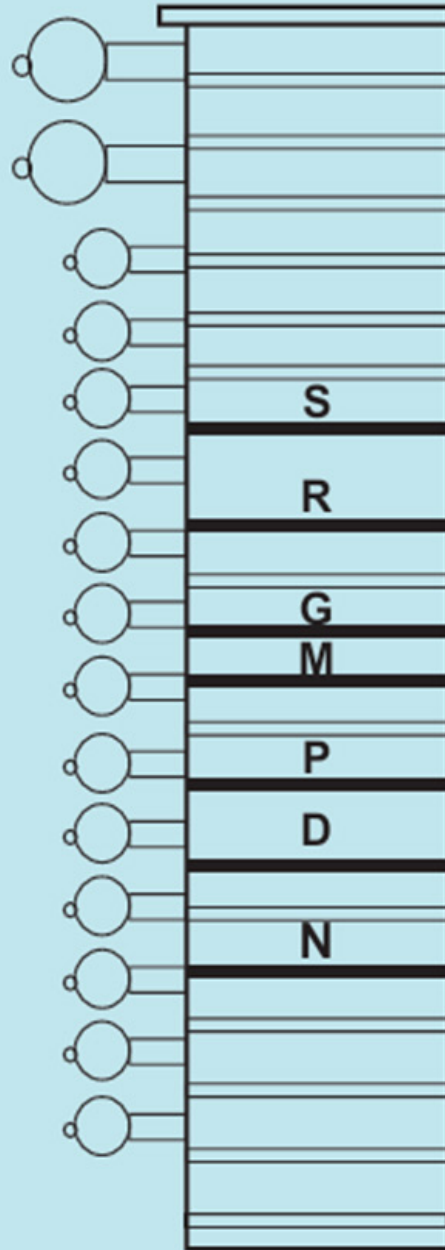
Before attempting this activity, you should be able to:

- Wear an appropriate *mizraab*
- Adopt a proper sitting and handling position
- Identify and play the *swara Sa* on the sitar with the strokes *da*, *ra* and *dir*.



### 1. *Madhya Saptak* / Middle scale

The diagram below shows the position of the seven *shuddha swara*-s of the *madhya saptak*.

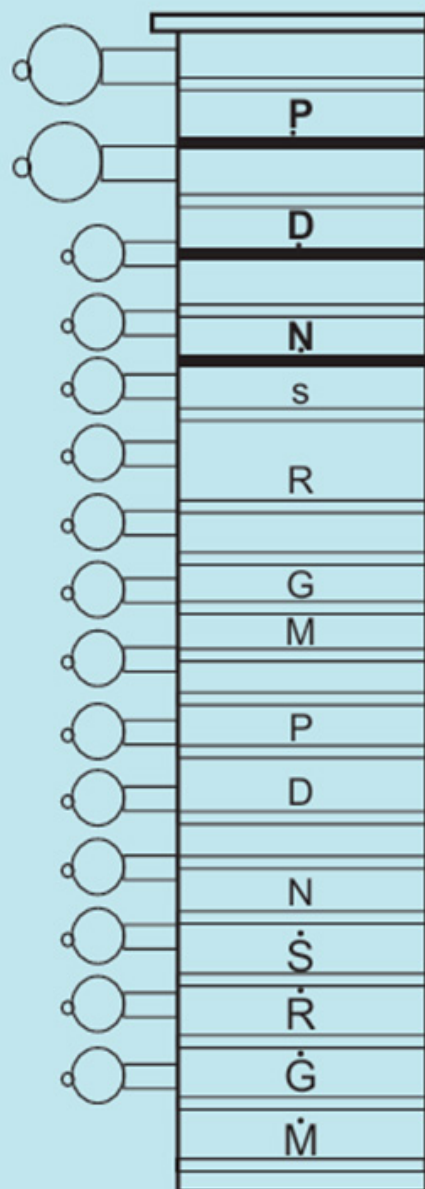


• Guided by your teacher, play each *swara* by applying the strokes *da*, *ra* and *dir*.



### 3. *Mandra Saptak* / Lower scale

The diagram below shows the position of the *shuddha swara-s* of the *mandra saptak*.



• Guided by your teacher, play each *swara* by applying the strokes *da*, *ra* and *dir*.

## Activity 5

### Playing of Aroha and Avroha

#### 4. Aroha and Avroha

• Since you are now aware of all the *shuddha swara-s* and their positions on the *daandi* (fingerboard), play the *aroha* and *avroha*, along with the appropriate strokes, as given below:

##### i. Play one swara in one beat

























AR ( <i>Aroha</i> )	S	R	G	M	P	D	N	Ś
Strokes	<i>d</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>r</i>
AV ( <i>Avroha</i> )	Ś	N	D	P	M	G	R	S
Strokes	<i>d</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>r</i>

##### ii. Play two swara-s in one beat

AR ( <i>Aroha</i> )	SS	RR	GG	MM	PP	DD	NN	ŚŚ
Strokes	<i>dir</i>	<i>dir</i>	<i>dir</i>	<i>dir</i>	<i>dir</i>	<i>dir</i>	<i>dir</i>	<i>dir</i>
AV ( <i>Avroha</i> )	ŚŚ	NN	DD	PP	MM	GG	RR	SS
Strokes	<i>dir</i>	<i>dir</i>	<i>dir</i>	<i>dir</i>	<i>dir</i>	<i>dir</i>	<i>dir</i>	<i>dir</i>

## Exercise 1

- Label the *pardaa-s* in the spaces provided in column A with the corresponding *swara-s* given column B :

<u>Column A</u>	<u>Column B</u>
	Ṛ
	Ṅ
	Ṣ
	Ḡ
	D
	P
	S
	Ṣ
	Ḡ
	Ṣ
	Ḡ
	Ṣ
	Ḡ
	Ṣ
	Ḡ
	Ṣ
	Ḡ
	Ṣ
	Ḡ
	Ṣ
	Ḡ
	Ṣ
	Ḡ
	Ṣ



## Assessment Criteria

Learners will be assessed through **continuous observation during guided practise**, focusing on their ability to apply correct playing techniques while playing simple musical piece or composition.

### 1. Posture and Instrument Readiness

Learners demonstrate the correct sitting posture and hold the instrument properly before playing.

### 2. Stroke / Hand Movement Techniques

Learners demonstrate basic stroke movements (*mizraab* strokes for sitar / basic hand strokes for tabla) with control and coordination.

### 3. Sound Production and First Note Playing

Learners are able to produce a clear and controlled sound when playing the first note or basic stroke.

### 4. Pitch Area Awareness / Saptak-s Placement

Learners show awareness of different pitch areas (three main saptaks for sitar) or correct tonal placement for tabla strokes under guidance.

### 5. Playing Simple Patterns (*Aroha-Avroha* / Basic Sequences)


Learners attempt simple ascending and descending note patterns or structured stroke sequences with support of the teacher.

### 6. Attention, Practice Behaviour, and Response

Learners listen attentively, follow instructions, and participate positively during guided practise.

**Rubric  
Assessment**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
<b>Posture and Instrument Readiness</b>	Posture is incorrect; needs frequent reminders	Maintains correct posture with some reminders	Maintains correct posture independently
<b>Stroke / Hand Movement Techniques</b>	Stroke movements are unclear or inconsistent	Stroke movements are mostly correct with guidance	Stroke movements are controlled and confident
<b>Sound Production</b>	Sound is unclear or inconsistent	Produces clear sound with occasional support	Produces clear and steady sound confidently
<b>Pitch Area / Saptak Awareness</b>	Shows limited awareness of pitch areas	Identifies pitch areas with teacher support	Identifies and applies pitch areas accurately
<b>Playing Simple Patterns</b>	Struggles to follow simple patterns	Plays patterns with minor errors	Plays patterns accurately and smoothly
<b>Attention and Practice Behaviour</b>	Needs repeated prompts to focus	Follows instructions with reminders	Listens attentively and responds promptly



## Extension Activity

Learners may practise basic stroke movements or simple note playing at home using a silent or mock setup. They may also observe a short video or live demonstration of a sitar or tabla player and identify correct posture, hand movement, and playing techniques. More confident learners may attempt short guided practice routines independently under the supervision of the teacher.

# INSTRUMENTAL TABLA

## INTRODUCTION

### **Note to Tabla Educators:**

All below activities should be explained and demonstrated by the educator first followed by student practise.

## **Activity 1**

### **Recap of Sitting and Handling of Instrument**

- The teacher revises correct sitting posture and instrument positioning.



- Learners demonstrate how to sit and hold their instrument correctly.
- The teacher checks posture, hand placement, and overall comfort before proceeding.
- Corrections are given gently and individually.

## Activity 2

### Basic Syllables

The basic syllables of the left drum:

**Ka,Ke,Ki**

The syllable 'ke' is executed by separating all the fingers. Then turning them inward in the form of an arch and striking them on the *maidan* with all the flat nails together at the same time. It is played without lifting the wrist from its place to obtain a non-resonant or close sound.

**1<sup>ST</sup> STEP**



**2<sup>ND</sup> STEP**



### **Ge,Ghe, Ghi,Gi**

Place your left hand wrist behind the *syahi* , on the *maidan*. Thus the entire palm will come over the *syahi* by covering it. In doing so, the fingers i.e index finger, middle finger, ring finger and the small finger are kept joined together.

Now, to play the syllable 'Ge', raise the palm in such a way that the wrist remains behind the *syahi* in its position. Now, join the ring and the middle finger together and fold them in such a way that they are pointing downwards in a semicircular position. With the fingertip of the middle finger and ring finger, strike the portion in front of the *syahi* i.e on the *maidan* (where there is the least space between the *syahi* and the *kinar*).

While playing this syllable, the wrist should be pressed downwards and, immediately after, striking with the fingers, the wrist should slightly be lifted to obtain an open sound.

The syllable 'Ge' is also played with the index finger and it is used alternately with the middle finger and ring finger together.

**1<sup>ST</sup> STEP**



**2<sup>ND</sup> STEP**



**3<sup>RD</sup> STEP**



### Activity 3

#### Syllable 'na'

na

The syllable 'na' is played with the tip of the ring finger by striking on the right edge of the *syahi*. It is a close sound.

1<sup>ST</sup> STEP



2<sup>ND</sup> STEP



### Activity 4

#### Syllable 'Dha' and 'Dhin'

Dha = Ta + Ge

The sound 'Dha' is produced when 'Ge' and 'Ta' are played together.

Dhin = Tin + Ge

The sound 'Dhin' is produced when 'Ge' and 'Tin' are played together.



## Assessment Criteria

### 1. Posture and Instrument Readiness

Maintains correct sitting posture and proper positioning of the tabla.

### 2. Hand Placement and Stroke Technique

Executes basic strokes (Ge, Ta, Tin, Na, Dha, Dhin, Ke, Ti) with correct hand placement.

### 3. Sound Clarity

Produces clear and controlled sounds for individual bols.

### 4. Compound Syllables (Dha/Dhin)

Correctly coordinates both hands to produce Dha and Dhin.

### 5. Rhythmic Patterns (3, 4, 8 beats)

Maintains steady tempo while playing simple patterns.

### 6. Attention and Practice Behaviour

Follows instructions and participates actively.

**Rubric  
Assessment**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
<b>Posture</b>	Incorrect; frequent reminders	Mostly correct with reminders	Correct independently
<b>Stroke Technique</b>	Inconsistent strokes	Mostly accurate with guidance	Accurate and controlled
<b>Sound Clarity</b>	Unclear sounds	Mostly clear	Clear and resonant
<b>Dha/Dhin</b>	Struggles to coordinate	Performs with support	Performs confidently
<b>Rhythmic Patterns</b>	Difficulty maintaining beat	Minor errors	Steady and accurate
<b>Practice Behaviour</b>	Needs prompts	Follows with reminders	Attentive and responsive

## Exercise 1

Play the following patterns under the guidance of your teacher.

- Patterns of basic syllables in cycles of 3 beats.

Beats	1	2	3
Ex. 1	Ghe	Ghe	Ghe
Ex. 2	Ta	Ta	Ta
Ex. 3	Ke	Ke	Ke
Ex. 4	Ghe	Ghe	Ta

- Patterns of basic syllables in cycles of 4 beats.

Beats	1	2	3	4
Ex. 1	Ghe	Ghe	Ta	Ta
Ex. 2	Ke	Ke	Ta	Ta
Ex. 3	Ta	Tin	Tin	Ta
Ex. 4	Dha	Dhin	Dhin	Dha

- **Patterns of basic syllables in cycles of 8 beats.**

Beats	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Ex. 1	Ghe	Ghe	Ghe	Ghe	Ta	Ta	Ta	Ta
Ex. 2	Ghe	Ghe	Ta	Ta	Ke	Ke	Ta	Ta
Ex. 3	Dha	Dhin	Dhin	Dha	Ta	Tin	Tin	Ta
Ex. 4	Dha	Dha	Ti	t	Ta	Ta	Ti	t

## Exercise 2

**Compose 5 exercises using the syllables Ge, Ta, Tin, Dha, Dhin, Ke, Ti and t in each of the cycles below:**

- (i) 3 beats
- (ii) 4 beats
- (iii) 8 beats



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