



**PART – II ENGLISH (B.A, B.SC, B.COM, B.COM (CA)**

**SUBJECT NAME: ENGLISH FOR COMMUNICATION SKILLS-II**

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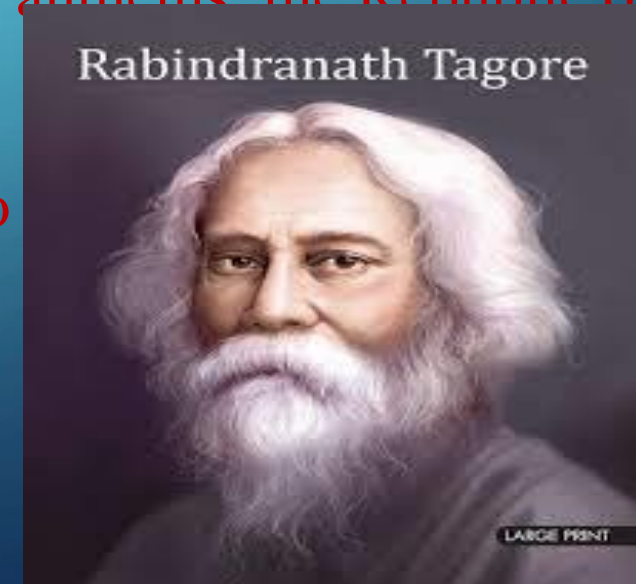
# CHITRA

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

# About the Author:

- ❖ Rabindranath Tagore (May 1861-7 August 1941) sobriquet Gurudev, was a Bengali person having wide ranging literature and music.
- ❖ He was author of Gitanjali. He became the first non European to win the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913.
- ❖ Tagore wrote poetry as an eight-year-old. His novels, stories, songs dance-dreams, and essays spoke to topics political and personal.
- ❖ His composition were chosen by two nations as national anthems: the Republic of India's Jana Gana Nana and Bengladeshi's Amar shonar Bengale.
- ❖ When the Hindus glorified the self Immolation of Sita to appease her husband Rama's doubts, Tagore condemned.





# Introduction:

- THIS LYRICAL DRAMA was written about twenty-five years ago. It is based on the following story from the Mahabharata.
- In the course of his wanderings, in fulfilment of a vow of penance, Arjuna came to Manipur. There he saw Chitrangada, the beautiful daughter of Chitravahana, the king of the country.
- Smitten with her charms, he asked the king for the hand of his daughter in marriage. Chitravahana asked him who he was, and learning that he was Arjuna the Pandava, told him that Prabhanjana, one of his ancestors in the kingly line of Manipur, had long been childless.
- 'The one son that will be born to her must be the perpetuator of my race. That son will be the price that I shall demand for this marriage. You can take her, if you like, on this condition.'
- Arjuna promised and took Chitrangada to wife, and lived in her father's capital for three years. When a son was born to them, he embraced her with affection, and taking leave of her and her father, set out again on his travels.

# Characters:

- ❖ Chitra - Manipur Princess ( King of Manipur)
- ❖ Arjuna – Best warrior and skilled Archer
- ❖ Vasantha – The god of spring time
- ❖ Madana – God of Love ( Spring)

## Mortals:

- ✓ Chitra, daughter of the King of Manipur
- ✓ Arjuna, a prince of the house of the Kurus. He is of the Ksthatriya or “warrior caste”, and during the action is living as a Hermit retired in the forest.
- ✓ Villagers from an outlying district of Manipur.

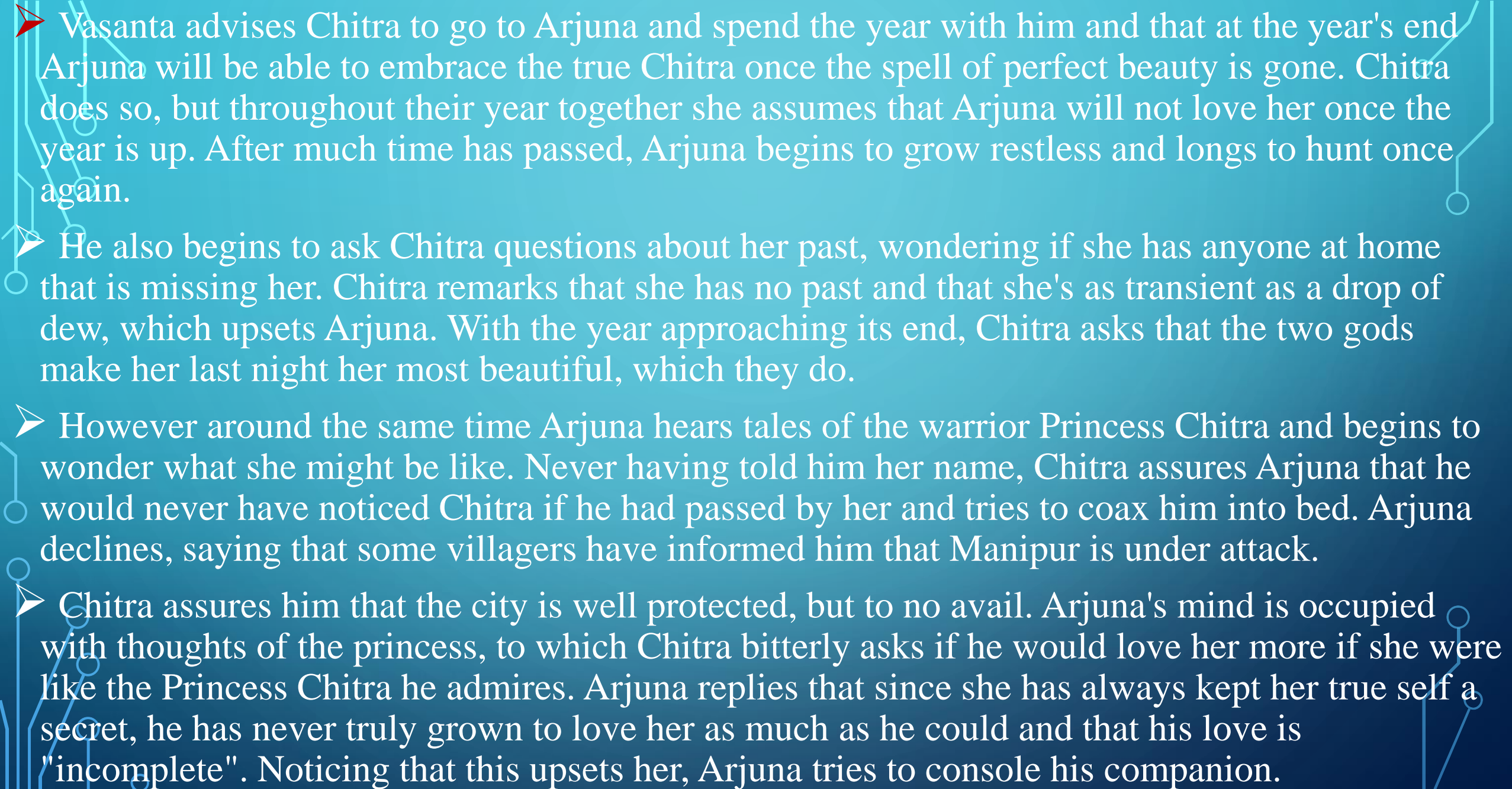


# Brief Explain Chitra Play:

- ☒ **Chitra** is a one-act play written by Rabindranath Tagore, first published in English in 1913 by the India Society of London. The play adapts part of the story from the Mahabharata and centers upon the character of Chitrangada, a female warrior who tries to attract the attention of Arjuna. *Chitra* has been performed worldwide and has been adapted into several different formats, such as dance.
- ☐ The play adapts the story of Chitrāngadā and Arjuna from the Mahabharata and begins with Chitra beginning a conversation with Madana, the god of love, and Vasanta, the god of springtime and eternal youth. They ask Chitra who she is and what is bothering her, to which she replies that she is the daughter of the king of Manipur and has been raised like a boy as her father had no male heir.
- ☐ She is a great warrior and hero despite being born as a woman, but has never had the chance to truly live as a woman or learn how to use "feminine wiles". Chitra explains that she had met the warrior hero Arjuna after seeing him in the forest while she was hunting for game. Despite knowing that he had pledged several vows including one for twelve years of celibacy, Chitra fell instantly in love with him.



- The following day she tried to approach him and plead her case, but Arjuna turned her away due to his vows. Chitra begs with the two gods to give her a day of perfect beauty so she can win over Arjuna and have just one night of love with him. Moved by her pleas, the two gods give her not just one day but an entire year to spend with Arjuna.
- The next scene opens with Arjuna marvelling over the perfect beauty he has seen. Chitra, the beauty of which he mentions, enters and Arjuna immediately strikes up a conversation with her. He requests to know what she is searching for, to which Chitra coyly replies that she is seeking the man of her desires.
- The two go back and forth until Chitra admits that she is looking for him, which prompts Arjuna to say that he will no longer hold to his vows of chastity. Chitra finds that rather than make her happy, hearing this makes her extremely unhappy since he is not falling for her true self and tells him not to offer his heart to an illusion.
- Later the next day, Chitra admits to Madana and Vasanta that she had spurned Arjuna due to him falling for what she saw as a false image of herself. The two gods scold her as they had only given her what she had asked of them. Chitra replies that despite their gift, she sees the perfect beauty as a being separate from herself and that even if she had slept with Arjuna, it would not be the true her that he loved- only her beauty.

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- Vasanta advises Chitra to go to Arjuna and spend the year with him and that at the year's end Arjuna will be able to embrace the true Chitra once the spell of perfect beauty is gone. Chitra does so, but throughout their year together she assumes that Arjuna will not love her once the year is up. After much time has passed, Arjuna begins to grow restless and longs to hunt once again.
  - He also begins to ask Chitra questions about her past, wondering if she has anyone at home that is missing her. Chitra remarks that she has no past and that she's as transient as a drop of dew, which upsets Arjuna. With the year approaching its end, Chitra asks that the two gods make her last night her most beautiful, which they do.
  - However around the same time Arjuna hears tales of the warrior Princess Chitra and begins to wonder what she might be like. Never having told him her name, Chitra assures Arjuna that he would never have noticed Chitra if he had passed by her and tries to coax him into bed. Arjuna declines, saying that some villagers have informed him that Manipur is under attack.
  - Chitra assures him that the city is well protected, but to no avail. Arjuna's mind is occupied with thoughts of the princess, to which Chitra bitterly asks if he would love her more if she were like the Princess Chitra he admires. Arjuna replies that since she has always kept her true self a secret, he has never truly grown to love her as much as he could and that his love is "incomplete". Noticing that this upsets her, Arjuna tries to console his companion.



- The play ends with Chitra finally admitting to Arjuna that she is the princess of which he spoke of and that she begged for beauty in order to win him over. She admits that she is not a perfect beauty, but that if he would accept her then she would remain with him forever. Chitra also admits that she is pregnant with his son. Arjuna meets this news with joy and states that his life is truly full.
- To conclude, Chitrangada is a true symbol of modern woman. Wearing male's attire, horse-riding and hunting, ruling powerfully, proposing to her hero and not getting upset even though rejected her proposal, being stubborn on her demand (for Arjuna), romanticism and desiring for working with man are the real qualities of modern woman.
- She seems to have defied all the traditional roles assigned to her by the orthodox society. Tagore has deliberately depicted such a character of Chitra so as to uphold values of women's liberty and man-woman equality.

**Thank You**