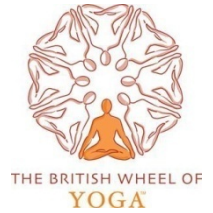


Assessment front sheets for Unit 1: 'Applied Anatomy and Physiology and the Teaching of Asana':

Task description paragraph 1.2.2



## 1.1a Posture Profile

**Name of Student Teacher:**

**Date of submission of profile: 9<sup>th</sup> September 2012**

<p><b>Name(s) of asana in Sanskrit</b></p> <p><i>Shavasana or Savasana</i>  <i>Pronounced shuh-vaah-su-nuh</i></p> <p><i>(occasionally referred to as Mrtasana)</i></p> <p><b>Literal translation/derivation</b></p> <p><i>The Pose of the Corpse: the word 'shava' or 'mrta' means corpse in Sanskrit</i></p> <p><b>Common English Name(s)</b> <i>The Corpse Pose</i></p>	
<p><b>Asana Analysis:</b>  Key joints/articulation/nature of movement</p>	<p>Slight abduction of both arms at shoulders (humerus articulating in the glenoid cavity of the scapula)</p> <p>Supination of both lower arms at the elbow (radius articulating with the ulna)</p> <p>Slight abduction of both legs at the hips (femur articulating with the acetabulum of the hips)</p> <p>Slight external rotation of the legs at the hips (femur articulating with the acetabulum of the hips)</p> <p>Spinal column extended  (vertebrae articulating with one another)</p>
<p>Key factors involved in creating the movement from the starting point (prone, supine, semi-supine, sitting, kneeling, standing). Factors include muscular contraction, both concentric and eccentric as appropriate, and gravity. Key muscle groups that need to be able to lengthen and</p>	<p>All muscles will hopefully relax!</p>

relax in the posture (will be stretched?)	
Key factors that may cause limitations (joint shape, body proportion, tightness or weakness of key muscles e.g. tight hamstrings in uttanasana; weak quads in utkatasana) Key muscle groups that need strength either to move into, hold, or exit the posture	None
<b>Preparation</b> Give examples of specific preparation. Indicate areas the preparation is targeting from the factors identified above. Ways of mobilising key joints  Ways of preparing key muscle groups that will lengthen and relax  Ways of preparing key muscle groups that need strength either to move into, hold or exit the posture	None needed
<b>Areas for Caution</b>  Anxiety/Depression/High Stress  Low back conditions/Sciatica/General Discomfort  Kyphosis or chin lifts  Vertigo  Respiratory problems/cough  Pregnancy  Hiatus Hernia	<b>Modifications to completed posture/Aids</b>  Keep eyes open if wish  Place padding beneath knees, semi-supine, take feet apart knees touching for tripod or may prefer a prone pose  Place padding beneath back of head  Turn head to one side  Can try placing lower legs on chair seat or placing padding beneath upper torso  Lie on left side with padding between thighs and under the head  Stack head and chest higher than abdomen using padding
<b>Stages leading to the posture, if appropriate, ( using less challenging/modified versions to prepare for/ lead into the final posture):</b> including teaching points to promote good structural alignment and core strength/stability as appropriate to the	

## posture

Can lie semi-supine with feet placed so shins are at 45°, hands on hips to ease lower back and shoulders to the floor before gradually straightening legs and arms.

To enter can start seated with bent legs in front, arms resting on elbows so the pelvis can be slightly tucked under, lowering down slowly from here by moving elbows side wards.

### Teaching points while in the posture

- Make sure students are all warm enough
- Check the body is aligned straight along the ground, and is symmetrical, but not so that a student inwardly feels misaligned
- Shoulders down away from ears
- Tuck shoulder blades downwards so chest is open
- Neck long, head level from chin to forehead
- Arms just away from the torso, rotating shoulders slightly outwards, palms facing upwards, fingers lightly curled
- Legs about hip width apart, hips releasing and externally rotating a little so feet are falling to sides
- Tongue relaxed, broad within the mouth, jaw released
- Falling into the back of the eyes, small eye muscles softening, facial muscles softening
- Allow the breath to slow, gradually deepening the breath
- Rest here, surrendering all physical and mental effort
- Just be
- Students need to have tried different modifications so they are adopting the most suitable one, they must also know they can quietly move to a more comfortable position if at any time the posture becomes uncomfortable

### Bringing students out of the posture

How students exit the pose will be dependant upon whether it has been adopted for a short period of time, perhaps as a rest pose or opportunity for reflection between asana, or whether it has been adopted as a pose for a longer period of formal relaxation.

- If it has been practiced for a short period of time then how we teach the exit from the pose will depend upon what came before and what will come afterwards, student may however appreciate the opportunity to stretch, or work with a counterpose such as apanasana, before continuing with the practice.
- If students have been in savasana for a formal relaxation then the process of return will include awareness of the breath, followed by awareness of sensation, then sounds, then the body, then deepening of the breath, movement at the extremities. Once this has been done then students must

exit the pose slowly and mindfully, bending both knees into the chest if desired, or simply rolling to one side. Ideally a little time is spent lying to one side before coming up to a seated position. Some students may also appreciate spending a little time palming the eyes before opening them to the light.

Occasionally students may find it difficult to come to sitting and here extra time must be given and a chair can be a helpful aid.

### **Variations/ways of developing the posture**

- Lie prone in Makrasana, The Crocodile pose, with head resting on crossed arms, toes touching, heels falling to sides or legs apart toes pointing to sides; can be practiced with elbows to floor, head in palms of hands



- Adopt Viparita Karani, Leg-up-the-wall pose



- Adopt Matsya Kridasana, Flapping Fish Pose, lying supine with bent knee touching elbow, hands placed upon one another, head to top of hands



- Can offer the use of a chair to all students, where the lower legs are placed upon the seat of the chair



- Can use an eye bag to aid relaxation of the eyes
- Can place a rolled blanket along the spine
- Place hands upon abdomen or hands beside the head with elbows bent to sides
- Can physically place students in the position of Savasana

### **Counterposes**

- Apanasana, gas-ejector pose or vatyasana single gas ejector pose
- Can roll gently from side to side

### **Key benefits and effects:** (If esoteric, refer to source ancient texts)

- Realigns physical body
- Integrates benefits of earlier practices
- Exposes and releases physical tension
- Initiates the parasympathetic branch of the autonomic nervous system,

- encouraging balance & revitalization of the body's organs and systems
- Helps to alleviate the symptoms of stress and is beneficial to all stress-related illnesses, for instance lowering blood pressure
- Rejuvenates, removing fatigue
- Releases mental tension creating space within the mind
- Develops body awareness
- Teaches pratyahara, sense withdrawal
- Prepares us for meditation by learning physical relaxation whilst maintaining attention
- Enables us to lose our everyday sense of self
- Gives an opportunity to experience peacefulness

## References in source ancient texts (if any)

Hatha Yoga Pradipika: Chapter 1 v32  
The Gherandha Samhita: Second Lesson v11

### Sources of information from modern teachers/bibliography

Asana, Pranayama, Mudra, Bandha, Swami Satyananda Saraswati, Bihar School,  
1969, p58 to 62

Instructing Hatha Yoga, Kathy Lee Kappemeir & Diane M. Ambrosini, Human  
Kinetics, 2006, P293 to 294

Structural Yoga Therapy, Mukunda Stiles: Weiser, 2000, p240 to 243

The Yoga Bible, Christine Brown, Godsfield Press, 2003 p310 to 311

Yoga Mind, Body & Spirit, Donna Farhi, Newleaf, 2000, p235 to p247

Yoga: The Spirit and Practice of Moving into Stillness, Erich Schiffman, Pocket  
Books, 1996, p295 to 301

**Student teacher's comments on what has been learned from this task**

**Student teacher's signature**  
**Date**

JE Beck

**Tutor's comments:**

**Tutor's signature**

**Date**

Notes for guidance: This template should be expanded in size to include detail as required. Diagrams may be used for explanation. All areas of the profile must be covered as relevant to the specific posture. Some aspects will be more applicable than others, depending on the posture. Tutors may ask for other information to be included.

