

Let's Learn About India

Grade Level: Second Grade

Presented by: Rebecca L. Knappenberger, Diehl Elementary School, Erie, PA

Length of Unit: Ten Lessons

I. ABSTRACT

No other country except China has such a long history as India. India is a country filled with interesting facts ranging from its geography to its religions to its culture. This unit exposes students to India, using many different activities. Students will role -play the caste system, learn about humanitarians, partake in a festival, and identify Indian music and instruments. This unit brings India into the classroom.

II. OVERVIEW

A. Concept Objectives:

1. The students will develop an awareness of the country of India.
2. The students will understand that the ideas people profess affect their behavior.
3. The students will develop a multicultural perspective that respects the dignity and worth of all people.
4. The students will understand the complex nature of a given culture: religion, art, music and dance.
5. The students will recognize that architecture and art reflect the inner life of a people.

B. Content from the *Core Knowledge Sequence*:

1. Locate the country of India on numerous maps
2. Indus River and Ganges River: understand their importance
3. Hinduism
 - a. Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva
 - b. Many holy books, including the Reg Veda
4. Buddhism
 - a. Prince Siddhartha becomes Buddha,
 - b. “the Enlightened One”
 - c. Buddhism begins as an outgrowth of Hinduism in India, and then spreads through many countries in Asia
 - d. King Asoka
5. Identify and locate Indian Ocean
6. Use directions on a map: north, south, east, west
7. Locate the Equator
8. Understand geographical terms: desert, mountains, coast, river, ocean, bay, sea, boundary, plateau
9. Language Arts: Fiction: *The Blind Man and the Elephant* and *The Tiger, the Braham, and the Jackal*

C. Skill Objectives:

1. Students will locate India on numerous maps.
2. Students will identify on a map: Indus and Ganges Rivers, Himalaya Mountains, East and West Ghats, Indian Ocean, Bay of Bengal, Arabian Sea.
3. Students will locate and compare the three regions of India.
4. Students will be introduced to the caste system through role -play.
5. Students will summarize in two or three sentences a specific Indian custom.
6. Students will understand what Hinduism is and articulate what they specifically believe in.

7. Students will understand what Buddhism is and how it began.
8. Students will become familiar with two of the all time greatest humanitarians from India.
9. Students will identify pictures of the famous Taj Mahal.
10. Students will list three facts about the Taj Mahal.
11. Students will be introduced to various forms of Indian art.
12. Students will learn that in India, they use henna to decorate their hands.
13. Students will understand that the country of India celebrates different festivals.
14. Students will identify instruments known to India.
15. Students will explain and describe new concepts and information in his or her own words

III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

- A. For Teachers:
 1. Adams, C. *India The Time Traveler Series*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Instructional Fair, 1998. 1-56822-684-5.
 2. Hirsh, E.D. Jr. *What Your Second Grader Needs to Know*. New York, New York: C. Dell Publishing, 1998. 0-385-31843-X.
 3. Sarin, A. V. *India An Ancient Land, A New Nation*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Dillon Press, Inc. 1984. 0-87518-273-9.
- B. For Students:
 1. Locate the continent of Asia
 2. Have an understanding of the term “history”

IV. RESOURCES

- A. Adams, C. *India The Time Traveler Series*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Instructional Fair, 1998. 1-56822-684-5.
- B. Backstein, K. *The Blind Man and the Elephant*. New York: Scholastic, Inc. 1992. 0-590-45813-2.
- C. Bains, R. *Gandhi Peaceful Warrior*. Troll Communications L.L.C. 0-8167-1768-0.
- D. Bothwell, J. *The First Book of India*. New York, New York: Franklin Watts, Inc. 5310-00559-3.
- E. Breyer, M. *Ancient India Thematic Unit*. Westminster, Ca: Teacher Created Materials. 1998. 1-55734-577-5.
- F. Ganeri, A. *Journey Through India*. Troll Communications L.L.C. 0-8167-2761-9.
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- K. Japan National Tourist Organization. One Rockefeller Plaza, Suite 125 New York, New York. Telephone (212) 757-5640.
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- N. Kipling, R. *Just So Stories*. New York, New York: Konecky and Konecky. 1990 1-56852-137-5.
- O. Lewin, T. *Sacred River*. New York, New York: Clarion Books, 1995. 0-395-69846-4.
- P. McNair, S. *India Enchantment of the World*. Chicago, Illinois: Children’s Press. 0-516-02719-0.

- Q. Neurath, M. & Ellis, J. *They Lived Like This in Ancient India*. New York, New York: Franklin Watts, Inc. 67-17660.
- R. Watson, J. W. *India Celebrates*. Champaign, Illinois: Garrad Publishing. 0-8116-49504.
- S. Young, E. *The Blind man and the Elephant*.
- T. Young, E. *Seven Blind Mice*.

V. LESSONS

Lesson One: Geography of India

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective:
 - a. Students will develop an awareness of the country of India.
2. Lesson Content:
 - a. India
3. Skill Objectives:
 - a. Students will locate India on a map.
 - b. Using a map, students will identify: Indus and Ganges Rivers, Himalaya Mountains, East and West Ghats, Indian Ocean, Bay of Bengal, Arabian Sea.
 - c. Students will locate and compare the three regions of India.

B. *Materials*

1. World map
2. Individual student map of India
3. Transparency of a map of India
4. Overhead projector
5. Visa-vis pen
6. Crayons
7. Pencils
8. Pictures of India
9. Chart paper
10. Blank folders to decorate

C. *Key Vocabulary*

1. River: a large natural stream of water flowing
2. Mountain: a mass of land that rises to a great height
3. Regions: a continuous part of a space with or without boundaries or with certain characteristics
 1. Desert: dry, barren often sand -covered area of land
 2. Plain: a large area of level country
 3. Boundary: a line that marks a limit
 4. Irrigate: to supply land or crops with water
 5. Plateau: an area of fairly level high ground

D. *Procedures/Activities*

1. The teacher will write the following words on the board: river, mountain, desert, and plain. The students will say the words after the teacher.
2. The teacher will orally define each word.
3. The teacher will hold up pictures showing the same geographical terms. The students will orally identify the picture with the correct term.
4. The students will come up and sit on the floor in front of a large world map. The teacher will locate by pointing to them: Equator, India, Indian Ocean, Bay of Bengal, Arabian Sea, Ganges, Indus, and Brahmaputra Rivers.
5. The Himalayas and the Eastern and Western Ghats will be located.

6. The students will go back to their seats and receive a blank map of India. As a whole group, the class, one term at a time will locate the specific place on their map and write in what place that is. The teacher will do the same with the map on the overhead projector.
 7. The students will color the bodies of water blue.
 8. Next, the three regions of India will be located. Using three different colors of crayons, the students will identify the Himalayas, the Northern Plains, and the Southern Plateau.
 9. The students will be asked to compare the three regions. Using chart paper, the teacher will divide the paper into three sections and label them Himalaya Mountains, Northern Plains, and Southern Plains. As the students give responses about each area, the teacher will write that response under the correct heading.
 10. Orally review what was taught in this lesson.
 11. Hand out to each student a blank folder. Explain that this will be used to hold all the important information that they will receive about India. The students will decorate their folder with facts that they learned in this lesson.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Teacher observation of students during class discussion and while labeling their own map.
 2. The folder will be used as an assessment tool at the end of the unit, and continually added to throughout the unit.

Lessons Two and Three: Role-playing of the Caste System

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objectives:
 - a. Students will understand that the ideas people profess affect their behavior.
 - b. Students will understand the connection between ideas and actions, ideology and policy, and policy and practice.
 2. Lesson Content:
 - a. Indian culture and customs
 3. Skill Objective:
 - a. Through role-play, the students will be introduced to the caste system.
- B. *Materials*
1. Chalkboard and chalk
 2. Name tags of different classes, each a different color
 3. Five colors of yarn cut into seven inch strips to be used for bracelets, one for each student
 4. Story *How the Elephant Got Its Trunk*.
 5. Items to be used in the different castes for the art project (paper plates, patterns, paper, glue, scissors)
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Caste system: dividing people into groups or caste based on birthright
 2. Scholar: a person who is skilled in academic work
 3. Ruler: a person who rules by authority
 4. Merchant: a trader who buys or sells; a storekeeper
 5. Laborer: a person employed to do unskilled manual work
 6. Menial laborer: a person who does degrading tasks
 7. Symbol: a mark or a sign with a special meaning
- D. *Procedures/Activities*

1. Introduce the caste system to the class. List on the board the different castes. Explain and talk about each one (see Appendix B), what people can and cannot do. (This will take one class period.)
2. Next Day: Bring whole group to sit on the floor and read to them *How the Elephant Got Its Trunk*. Discuss story.
3. Have colored yarn bracelets in hand. Ask students to pick any color bracelet they want. Put the bracelet on their left wrist and leave it alone.
4. Students now go to designated areas color coded according to their bracelet.
5. Project (paper plate elephant) will be made according to the rules of the caste system.
6. Project Directions
 - a. **Brahmans: Red**
 - b. **Kshatriyas: Orange**
 - c. **Vaisyas: Yellow**
 - d. **Sudras: Green**
 - e. **Untouchables: Blue**
 - f. Place students in room according to the caste system:
 - g. **Brahmans** prominently placed up front.
 - h. Arrange the **Kshatriyas**, **Vaisyas**, and **Sudras** in order starting at the front of room to the back. **Untouchables** are as far back as possible, away from everyone.
 - i. Placement of materials according to the caste system:
 - j. ***Untouchables** have NOTHING to do. NO talking, NO project to complete, just SIT QUIETLY!
 - k. ***Brahmans** will have glue and paper plates. While waiting for completed pieces to be given to them, they may socialize within their group, eat snacks, drink water and use the restrooms. They will be served by the **Sudras**.
 - l. ***Sudras** have to trace elephant patterns of the trunk and ears and give to the **Vaisyas**, **Kshatriyas**, and **Brahmans**. Only AFTER all groups have all their materials, may the **Sudras** begin to put their project together.
 - m. ***Untouchables** will be sitting and doing NOTHING.
 - n. [Teacher may begin to notice frustration within group]
 - o. ***Talking** is only permitted within each caste. They may not talk to anyone in another caste.
 - p. ***When** all of the pieces are given to the **Brahmans**, they will only have to assemble the project. They will continue to be served by the lower caste **Sudras**.
8. Clean up is done in the same manner: **Sudras** and **Vaisyas** will do all the cleanup. **Kshatriyas** and **Brahmans** will socialize within their group.
9. Class Discussion: All students come and sit on floor in this order: **Brahmans** sit first in front. **Kshatriyas** kneel two rows back from them. **Vaisyas** stand two rows back from them. **Sudras** sit over to one side away from us. **Untouchables** stand off by themselves. Discuss reactions to this activity. How did you feel? How were you treated?
10. Important Notes learned from lesson:
 - a. Watch **Untouchables** for frustration and tension. Teacher may need to approach group during project and discuss feelings.
 - b. **Sudras** and **Vaisyas** will probably not complete entire project since teacher intervention may be needed with the **Sudras** and **Vaisyas**. They act as laborers and do most of the work. Frustration may set in.

- c. Plan for a two- hour block to complete this lesson. [Because of the number of students and time, **Sudras** and **Vaisyas** worked as laborers.]
 - d. Project completion determined when the **Brahmans** projects are completed.
 - e. All projects from other groups may not get completed.
 - f. Debriefing is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT. DO NOT skip this section.
 - g. Follow the lesson plan as far as seating arrangements.
 - h. Allow enough time for all students to express their opinions and feelings.
 - i. Had out treats to ALL students after discussion. Allow the **Untouchables** to go first and get j. All bracelets are removed and given TO THE TEACHER! The teacher will dispose of them.
 - k. Closure: Students are reminded that this role- playing activity is now over.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
- 1. Assessment is made throughout the activity by the teacher observing the reactions of the students. During the debriefing discussions, teacher will observe students comments to see if they understood the objective.
 - 2. Have the students journal about this – either with words or pictures in their assessment folder.

Lesson Four: Learning About Indian Customs and Traditions

- A. *Daily Objectives*
- 1. Concept Objective:
 - a. The students will develop a multicultural perspective that respects the dignity and worth of all people.
 - 2. Lesson Content:
 - a. Indian Customs
 - 3. Skill Objectives:
 - a. The students will summarize in two or three sentences a specific Indian custom.
 - b. The students will illustrate the specific Indian custom that they wrote about.
- B. *Materials*
- 1. Pictures from various places depicting the customs
 - 2. Paper
 - 3. Pencils
 - 4. Crayons
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
- 1. Custom: a usual way of behaving or doing something
 - 2. Sari: a length of cotton or silk draped around the body, worn as the main garment
 - 3. Dhoti: a piece of white cloth wound around the waist, arranged to look like a pair of baggy trousers
 - 4. Namaskar: the most common form of Hindu welcome
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
- 1. Bring the class together in a circle on the floor. Begin the lesson by talking about customs and traditions the children are familiar with within their own families. Examples would be: birthdays, Christmas, Thanksgiving, etc.
 - 2. Say to the students that today we are going to learn about customs found in India. Take each custom listed in the background knowledge and read and discuss them. Show pictures illustrating the customs.
 - 3. Discuss all customs listed. Ask student to think about all of them and choose one they like best or one they think is a little different than what they are used to.

4. Send the students back to their seats. Pass out lined paper and a piece of drawing paper. Direct the students to write two sentences about one of the customs. After their sentences are written, have the students draw a picture of the custom they wrote about.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Review the customs again orally and as you do so write them on the board. The students will then write two sentences about the custom he/she liked or thought was different. The teacher will assess their writing to see if directions were followed.
 2. Students will be writing for a second time here for assessment in their folders.

Lessons Five and Six: India's Religions and Famous Leaders

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective:
 - a. The students will understand the complex nature of a given culture: religion
2. Lesson Content:
 - a. India's religions and famous leaders
3. Skill Objectives:
 - a. The students will understand what Hinduism is and what they believe in specifically.
 - b. The students will understand what Buddhism is and how it began.
 - c. The students will become familiar with two of the all time great humanitarians from India.

B. *Materials*

1. Pictures of people at religious events
2. A picture of the Rig Veda
3. Pictures of Buddha
4. Pictures of Mahatma Gandhi
5. Pictures of Mother Teresa

C. *Key Vocabulary*

1. Religion: belief in the existence of a superhuman controlling power
2. Tradition: the handing down of beliefs or customs from one generation to the next
3. Hinduism: one of the oldest religions in the world; believe in one superior god and have many other gods and goddesses
4. Brahman: main superior god
5. Rig Veda: sacred writings
6. Buddhism: religion based on love, compassion, and tolerance to people
7. Yoga: physical exercises and breathing control
8. Nobel Peace Prize: an award made annually for outstanding achievements
9. Fasted: gone without food for a period of time
10. Gutter: a slum environment
11. Charity: generosity in giving to the needy

D. *Procedures/Activities*

1. The teacher will begin the lesson by defining the term religion. The class can talk about different religions of the students in the class.
2. The teacher will write on the board the terms Hinduism and Buddhism. Using the background notes; the teacher will list the characteristics of both religions.
3. The teacher will have pictures showing the differences of the two beliefs. (This may take one whole class period).

4. Review the differences and likenesses of the two religions using the teacher made handouts.
 5. Introduce the picture of Mahatma Gandhi. Using background notes, tell the students about his great accomplishments.
 6. Show the students pictures of Mother Teresa. Talk about her accomplishments.
 7. Show students old newspaper clippings about Mother Teresa and articles from when she died. Discuss her impact on people's lives today.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. There are teacher made worksheets on the important information from this lesson. The students will be asked questions about facts they have learned. (See Appendices B, C & D)
 2. Students will be asked to write three sentences in their folders about any of the four topics discussed in this lesson.

Lesson Seven: Let's Learn about Architecture and Art

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective:
 - a. The students will recognize pictures of the famous Taj Mahal.
 2. Lesson Content:
 - a. Architecture and Art
 3. Skill Objectives:
 - a. The students will recognize pictures of the famous Taj Mahal.
 - b. The students will list three facts learned about the Taj Mahal.
 - c. The students will be introduced to various forms of Indian art.
- B. *Materials*
1. Various pictures of the Taj Mahal
 2. Various pictures of different forms of art including paintings, jewelry, metal works, and embroidery
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Symmetrical: the same on both sides
 2. Dome: a hemispheric ceiling or roof of a building
 3. Intricate: small details
 4. Arches: a curved construction spanning an opening and supporting weight; an archway
 5. Marble: a limestone that takes high polish
 6. Deface: to mar the appearance of
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Using background notes, describe the Taj Mahal. Distribute numerous pictures so students can see what you are talking about.
 2. After everyone has seen a picture, pass out the teacher made handout, Appendix E, and as a whole group, read the facts about the Taj Mahal.
 3. Pass out other pictures depicting various forms of art throughout India.
 4. Read background notes and give students time to discuss various forms of art in the pictures.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. The students will answer the question in their assessment journal -: "What is the most important idea about the Taj Mahal? Why?"

Lesson Eight: Henna Art on Hands

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective:

- a. The students will recognize that art reflects the inner life of a people.
- b. The students will understand the complex nature of a given culture: art.
2. Lesson Content:
 - a. Hindi Language and pretty hands (Henna Art on Hands)
3. Skill Objectives:
 - a. The students will know that Hindi is the language they speak in India.
 - b. The students will hear some words and phrases in Hindi and be able to write one of them.
 - c. The students will learn that in India, they use henna to decorate their hands.
- B. *Materials*
 1. Key Indian phrases recorded on tape/tape player provided by a parent, cultural institute, or movie. See also background notes for Lesson 8.
 2. Key Indian phrases written on chart paper
 3. Samples / pictures of Indian pottery
 4. Black and white construction paper
 5. Thin black markers
 6. Scissors
 7. Glue
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
 1. Hindi: a language spoken in India
 2. Henna Painting: beautiful intricate designs painted on the body
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
 1. Tell students that the language they speak in India is called Hindi.
 2. Play the tape so students can listen to how it sounds.
 3. Hang up chart paper with key Indian phrases.
 4. Go over punctuation of each Indian word or phrase.
 5. Tell students that when you write Hindi, you write below the line instead of above the line.
 6. Practice together the writing of an Indian phrase.
 7. Explain that in India, they use a natural dye called henna to decorate their hands and ankles.
 8. Tell students they will create their own “Henna Hands” on paper.
 9. Pass out white paper and have the student trace and cut their hand pattern.
 10. Have them draw a design with a black marker on the hands.
 11. Glue the hands on the black paper.
 12. Show and discuss Indian pottery.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
 1. Observe students as they listen, speak and write Indian phrases.
 2. The students’ artwork should show intricate details on their hand projects.

Lesson Nine: Indian Music

- A. *Daily Objectives*
 1. Concept Objective:
 - a. The students will understand the complex nature of a given culture: music and dance.
 2. Lesson Content:
 - a. Music and Dance
 3. Skill Objective:
 - a. The students will identify instruments known to India.
- B. *Materials*

1. Various pictures of instruments known to India
 2. Various songs known throughout India
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Music: the art of arranging the sounds of voices or instruments or both in a pleasing sequence or combination
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Bring all students to the front of the room and play Indian music.
 2. Ask students what they thought of the music. Allow some discussion. Play the same piece of music over. Play other Indian music.
 3. Using background notes, give students information about Indian music and dance. While doing so, pass around pictures illustrating dancing.
 4. With the students (or a small group) make up a dance using hands and body movement to go along with an Indian song.
 5. Listen to a story song in the Hindi language.
 6. Students can pantomime the story.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Students will make up a thirty-second dance to a bit of Indian music.
 2. Students will tell each other what part of Indian music or dance they enjoy and why they enjoy it.

Lessons Ten and Eleven: Festivals

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objectives:
 - a. The students will develop a multicultural perspective that respects the dignity and worth of all people.
 - b. The students will understand that the ideas people profess affect their behavior.
 - c. The students will understand the connection between ideas and actions, between ideology and policy, and policy and practice.
 2. Lesson Content:
 - a. Festivals celebrated in India
 3. Skill Objective:
 - a. The students will understand that in India many different celebrations are held for many reasons.
- B. *Materials*
1. Booklet for each student containing information about Indian festivals
 2. Brightly colored construction paper
 3. Glue
 4. Crayons
 5. Scissors
 6. Pipe cleaners
 7. Streamers of different colors
 8. Various colors of finger paints
 9. Materials need for games
 10. Music and CD player
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Festival: a day or time of religious or other celebration
 2. Celebration: to do something to show that a day or event is important, to honor with festivities
 3. Bonfires: a large fire built in the open air

4. Republic: a country in which the supreme power is held by the people or their elected representatives
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Each festival listed in the background notes will be typed out and made into a little booklet for the students to have in their hands while each festival is being read about and discussed. (See also Appendix F) Explain that today we will learn about some of the festivals of India. Pass out a booklet to each student.
 2. Divide the class into pairs. Let the students read the booklet to/with each other.
 3. After the class has had time to do this, bring them back to whole group. Discuss which festival they liked best.
 4. Read the booklet as a whole group. Students will take turns reading. Take time to discuss each festival.
 5. List on the board all the festivals that the students read about. Make a tally graph showing the class's favorite festival. Talk about the graph.
 6. Day two: Concentrate on Holi, Festival of Spring. Reread from the booklet about this festival.
 7. Students will do activities to get ready to celebrate this festival. Everyone will make paper flowers to be hung and placed around the room.
 8. Students will paint pictures using bright colors to be hung around the room.
 9. Divide the room into three sections. In one section, students can sit, relax, have a snack and enjoy each other's company.
 10. The second section will have three games set up (ring toss, throw the balls in the bucket, toss the hoop over the create).
 11. The third section will have Indian music playing for singing and dancing.
 12. Give students time to visit all three stations.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Teacher will observe students while doing activities.
 2. Review different reasons for the different celebrations. List the students' responses on the board.

VI. CULMINATING ACTIVITY

- A. Stations will be set up in the gym or a large area where students will have space to move from activity to activity.
- B. The stations will be as follows: Station 1: Indian Myths and Tales--here students will listen to an Indian myth. The students will sequence the events of the myth. It is helpful to have the events already written out on sentence strips for expediency. Station 2: Indian Music—here students will listen to more Indian music. Station 3: India Word Search—here students will complete a word search filled with terms and words learned in this unit. Station 4: Indian Art—here students will be given a blank picture of a pot. They will decorate the pottery using colorful tissue paper. Station 5: Geography—here the students will complete a map using a color-coded key. Station 6: Festivals—here students can make bracelets for themselves or a friend for the festival of Raksha Bandhan. Station 7: Alternate station - Indian movie being shown, or a documentary of India in English.
- C. Invite a guest speaker into the classroom to discuss India from first hand experience.

VII. HANDOUTS/STUDENT WORKSHEETS

- A. Background Information on each lesson
- B. India and Religion
- C. Buddhism
- D. Mohandas Gandhi

- E. Taj Mahal
- F. India Celebrates

VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Appendix A – Background Information

Lesson 1: *India* is north of the equator. It is a country of deserts and swamps, mountains and plains, beaches and forests. There are three main regions within India: the Himalayas, the Northern Plains, and the Southern Plains (called the Deccan). India stretches over 2,000 miles from the southern tip to the northern Himalayan Mountains. The Himalayas (means “home of the snow”) are the highest mountains in the world. The wall of mountains stretches for 1,500 miles. They form the northern boundary of India. The mountains can only be crossed during the summer months because of winter snow. All supplies must be carried over the mountains by pack animals. Most of the Indian people live in the plains area, which covers the northern part of the country. It extends east to the Bay of Bengal and west to the Arabian Sea. This is the countries most densely populated area. Three rivers irrigate the area. Water from the Indus, Ganges, and Brahmaputra rivers bring fertile soil down from the mountains. Ganges River is India’s main river and is considered holy. Indus River was home to ancient Indus civilization and is in Pakistan. Rainfall is scarce in this area. The southern peninsula is known as the Deccan Plateau. This area is bare with an occasional tuft of grass or shrub. Smaller mountains to the east and west are called the Eastern and Western Ghats (Ghats means “step”). This is a hotter drier region. On the west coast one will find small fishing villages, coconut palms, and spice gardens. On the east coast, there is much farming. There are three main seasons in India: cold, hot, and rainy. There is a summer monsoon. It lasts from June through October. A monsoon is a wind that picks up great amounts of water as it blows across the ocean.

Lesson 2 and 3: The caste system is a vital part of Hinduism. It is a way of grouping the people into social classes. It is the strict dividing of all Hindu people into hereditary classes. There are four castes in India: the Brahmins (priests and scholars), Ksatriyas (warriors and rulers), Vaisyas (craftsmen, merchants and farmers), and the Sudras (laborers and unskilled workers). A fifth group of people, called the Panchamas (untouchables) and renamed Harjans (Children of God) by Gandhi, do all menial labor.

Lesson 4: *Feet and Shoes:* It is considered a sign of respect to touch the feet of one’s parents or elders. It is very rude to sit in such a position where as the soles of your shoes can be seen by another person. It is impolite to point your feet at anyone. Shoes are considered unclean and are removed in houses and kitchens. *Welcome:* The most common form of welcome is the welcome called namaskar. The palms of the hands are brought together with the thumbs at about nose level. The head is bowed slightly. It is a sign of respect to acknowledge someone with the same notion. *Family Life:* Family ties are very strong. People commonly live together in family groups. Younger people help elders. Usually all income is shared. When a young man or woman marries, it is arranged by the adult members of the family. *Clothing: Sari*—The sari is the most universal dress of the women of India. It is six or eight yards of silk or cotton material wound around the figure in such a way that it makes not only a gracefully draped skirt but an upper garment as well. There are many ways of tying a sari so that it makes a becoming dress. Indian women wear a blouse and the sari goes over the blouse. *Dhoti*—A dhoti is a piece of white cloth wound around the waist, arranged to look like a pair of baggy trousers. Men wear a button-to-neck coat over this and on their heads they wear turbans. *Jewelry:* Women wear many rings, necklaces, hair ornaments, and anklets. Their arms are covered with bangles made of gold, silver, or glass. Nearly every female, adult or child, has her nose pierced as well as her ears and wears tiny sparkling gems in her nose and ears. A Hindu woman wears a round spot of

powder on her forehead, red or the color that matches her sari. This may have had religious significance at one time, but now it is only cosmetic. *Greetings*: The namaste is the traditional greeting used in India. It is performed by pressing the palms together (finger tips up) below the chin and saying, “Namaste”. To greet superiors or to show respect, a slight bow is added. “Hello” and “Hi” are acceptable greetings. Out of respect for a women’s privacy, Indian men will not shake hands with or touch women in formal or informal settings. A title for men is Shri and Shreemati for married women and Kumari for unmarried women. Whistling is very impolite. It is considered improper for women to wink.

Lesson 5 and 6: *Hinduism* is the most important religion in India. Hinduism is one of the oldest religions in the world. The caste system evolved from Hinduism. Hindus worship many gods: Brahma (the creator of the universe) which has no form, Vishnu (the preserver of the universe), and Shiva (the destroyer of evil or the changer). Hindus believe a person can have many lives. The Hindus have a special book called the Rig Veda. It is made up of about one hundred hymns that praise the ancient gods and goddesses. One important belief of Hinduism is that people are born again in different bodies after they die. People who lead a good life are rewarded in the next life. People who were lazy or cruel, may be born again as an outcaste. In Hinduism, it is important to lead a good life. *Buddhism* is the fourth-largest religion in the world. Buddhism teaches compassion and nonviolence. The goal of a Buddhist is to feel peaceful—free of hatred, sadness, and desire. The man who became the Buddha was the son of a king in the mountains in India. He gave up being a ruler to gain wisdom and become a teacher. To find his own answers in life, he decided to think quietly. It has been said that he sat under a tree for ninety-eight days. By the end of the ninety-eight days he had become wiser or “enlightened”. The word Buddha means the enlightened one. One of the things that Buddha taught is that we should not hurt any living thing. Buddha lived a very long time ago. His teachings have been followed by people ever since. There was once a King of India that was so impressed with Buddhism that he spread it all over India. When Asoka was a young king, he fought lots of battles with his army. But after one war, he became sad because he realized that many people were hurt by battles. Even though Buddha had been dead a long time, Asoka heard about Buddha’s teachings. Asoka listened to Buddha’s teachings and stopped fighting. He built hospitals all over India for people and animals. He even set up houses along the roads for people who were tired from long journeys. Asoka had words carved on pillars and put them in places where many Indians could read them. Because of Asoka, Buddha’s ideas spread all over Asia. *Mahatma Gandhi* (1869-1948) (Mohanda Gandhi) was of great spirit, one who gave up everything for his people to struggle for freedom but not to hate or use violence. He often fasted as a form of protest. He was a simple man who encouraged people to live as he did. He believed that everyone should try to be self-sufficient. He was assassinated in Delhi in January 1948. Mother Teresa, called the “saint of the gutter” was awarded the Noble Peace Prize in 1979 for her wide spread services in founding hospitals, schools, orphanages, and shelters for lepers and other needy people.

Lesson 7: The *Taj Mahal* is on the banks of the Yamuna River in the city of Agra. It is considered the most beautiful building in India. Some rank it as one of the wonders of the world. In the Urdu language Taj Mahal means “crown of the palace.” It is a gem of white marble, grandly proportioned and decorated like a jewel, set in a lovely garden whose pools reflect its beauty. The Taj Mahal was built by the Moslem Emperor Sha Jahan in memory of his wife, Queen Mumtaz Mahal, whom he loved dearly. Both the Emperor and the Queen lie buried in tombs decorated with inlaid jade, lapis, and cornelian. The Taj was begun in 1631. It took twenty-two years to

build, although twenty thousand men worked on it daily. Each stone was set by hand. It is symmetrical with a reflecting pool in front and beautiful gardens nearby. On entering, a visitor must remove his or her shoes because the use of animal skins (leather) is believed to be disrespectful. *Art*—Religion played an important source of artistic inspiration. Hindu art can seem both fantastic and frightening. There are creatures with many heads and many arms. Miniature paintings are very popular. The small, realistic paintings depicted court life, Persian stories, and scenes from the Hindu epics. People of India express themselves everyday by decorating their homes and belongings. Village crafts include basket weaving, woodwork, metalwork, pottery, embroidery, and rug making. India is a very colorful nation. The whole country is like a giant canvas splashed with happy colors.

Lesson 8: The Time Traveler Series India ISBN 1-56822-684-5 Page 22-23 and Enchantment of the World India ISBN 0-516-02719-0 Page 108

Lesson 9: The classical music of India has a magical sound. The three basic parts parts of a song are the raga, the tala, and the drone. Each one represents an emotion, a season, or a time of day. India can be called the land of drums because there are so many different types used in Indian music. The sitar, tabla, and the sarangi are classical northern instruments. The sitar is made from a large hollow gourd and its long arm is teak wood. It has six or seven main strings and up to nine sympathetic strings. The tabla is a pair of drums resembling the bongo drums. The sarangi is a stringed instrument played with a bow. A shehni, a wind instrument that resembles a small clarinet, produces a constant drone sound. The music of the south differs. According to Hindu belief, dancing came from the gods. They have hundreds of hand gestures and many facial expressions. Occupational songs are commonly heard. Farmers sing in the fields. Woodcutters have their special songs. Workman working on buildings have been known to be heard singing. Dahee Maatyaar is a simple dance song.

Lesson 10: So many different festivals are observed in different parts of India that one could probably find one somewhere on nearly everyday of the year. There are nearly thirty major celebrations a year. Numerous local festivals are found throughout India. Festivals are a time for families to come together for feasting and observing certain rituals. Processions, fairs, and street entertainment are a part of the celebrations. Each temple has an annual festival dedicated to its own particular god or goddess. Changes of season are welcomed with festivals. Festivals welcome in the harvest, winter and spring. India has two holidays to celebrate its nationhood. *Independence Day* is held on August 15. In 1947 India became an independent country. The most exciting national holiday is *Republic Day*. On January 29, the Republic of India was formed. Parades are held all over India. Decorated elephants and camels march down the streets. *Hoil*, the spring festival, begins with a blazing farewell to the passing season. People say good-bye to the old year with huge bonfires. The fire symbolizes the destruction of the evil spirit Holika. The second day of this festival is called Color Day because everything and everyone gets splashed with colors. Nobody goes outside with good clothes on. The colors are meant to frighten away evil spirits. Rama's triumph—This festival of *Dussehra* begins with the first new moon in October and lasts for ten nights. Every night a different part of a long poem called the Ramayana is performed on stages built by the people of the village. By the end of the festival, the audiences have heard all 48,000 lines of the Ramayana. *Diwali*, the festival of the lights, is the Indian New Year. It lasts for five days and marks the end of the monsoon season. The excitement builds as everyone cleans and whitewashes their houses. The whole house, including the doorway, is painted with colorful pictures and designs. Diwali is a time to put on new clothes, eat sweets, visit relatives, exchange gifts, and

make offerings to the deities. The highlight of the celebration is the Festival of the Lights. Fireworks light up the night sky, and small clay lamps called *dipas* twinkle from every rooftop and windowsill. These tiny oil lamps are lit to welcome the goddess of wealth, Lakshmi. She brings prosperity. *Pongal*, festival of the cow marks the end of winter. On the first day people clean their homes and prepare a sweet called *pongal*. It is offered to the sun and shared by all. On the second day all cows and bullocks are decorated with flowers and paint and fed *pongal*. In the evening all go to see the decorated cows in procession. Bullfights are held on the third day. Small bundles of money are tied to their horns. The contestants try to wrestle the money from the angry bulls without getting hurt. This is very dangerous. *Id-ul Fitr* is the Muslim festival held to mark the end of the fast of Ramadan. For the month of Ramadan, Muslims do not eat anything between sunrise and sunset. They do this to recall the time when the prophet Muhammad fasted while waiting Allah's message. At the end of the month long fast, the people celebrate with food, prayer, and visiting friends. *Raksha Bandhan* is a special celebration for brothers and sisters. In July sisters make or buy bracelets called *rakhi* to give to their brothers. They do this to show their affection.

Appendix B

India and Religion

Religion is an important part of life in India. India is the birthplace of two of the world's major religions, **Hinduism and Buddhism**.

Hinduism has no leader or formal church. There is not one single holy book such as the Bible, but the Hindus have many sacred writings. Most important are the **Rig Veda**, which contains prayers, hymns, and works of philosophy. Hindus believe in one superior being or god called **Brahman**. There are many gods and goddesses that are part of Brahman. An important Hindu ritual is traveling to the holy city, Varansi, to bathe in the Ganges River. Hindus also believe that cows are sacred and worship them as a source of life and fertility. No beef is ever eaten by a Hindu.

Hinduism is considered to be more of a way of life. Hinduism teaches righteous living or moral duty, a person's actions have a consequence, and a continuous process of rebirth.

Hindus use a social system that put people in social classes. They believe that one must live a good life and be **reincarnated** to move to a higher caste. This system is called the **Caste System**.

In the **Caste System** there were **four main social groups**.

The HIGHEST GROUP: Priests, Scholars, Cows, **Brahmans**

Next Important Group: Warriors, Rulers, **Kshatriyas**

Then the Group: Farmers, Merchants, Craftsmen, **Vaisyas**

Last Group: Peasants, Servants, Laborers, Unskilled Workers, **Sudras**

At the very bottom of the social class are the **Untouchables**.

Appendix C

Buddhism

Siddhartha Gautama, born in the sixth century BC near the border of India, was a wealthy Hindu prince with a beautiful wife and child who became deeply troubled by the suffering he saw outside his palace. He decided to give up everything he owned and seek an answer to why life was so hard. Siddhartha wandered through India for many years. One day while **meditating**, he experienced **enlightenment**. He realized that there is always suffering in the world; that the suffering comes from wanting things, and that when a person stops wanting, the suffering stops.

Soon Siddhartha had many followers, who called him **Buddha**, which means the “**enlightened one**” or “**the one who knows**.” Buddha taught that we should not hurt any living thing. The goal of a Buddhist is to feel **peaceful** – free of hatred, sadness, and desire. Buddhism is about preaching **love, compassion, and tolerance** to people.

Appendix D

Mohandas Gandhi

Born: October 2, 1896

Died: January 30, 1948

At one time Great Britain ruled all of India. Independence was India's dream for many years. They needed a great leader. That great leader was born on October 2, 1869. He was Mohandas Gandhi.

From his father, Mohandas learned about law and politics. From his mother, he learned about religion. Her religion, Hindu, was her way of life. Fasting was an important part of her religious practice. People fasted for two reasons: self-discipline and self-purification. These two ideas became important to Mohandas Gandhi's adult life.

While growing up, Gandhi had experiences with segregation. The cruelty and unfairness of segregation made a deep impression on young Mohan.

Mohan attended school. His greatest problem was that all the classes were taught in English. Mohan believed that Indians in India should have been able to learn in their native language. Gandhi believed that the people of India must feel pride in their own languages, their own customs, and their own history.

When Mohan was seventeen years old, he started college in India. He wanted to go to England to study but his religious beliefs were standing in the way. Hindu was his religion. His family was in the Vaisyas caste (merchants, farmers, crafts people). The Hindu religion believed that if one crossed the ocean to a foreign land they would become outcasts. (An outcast would no longer exist in the eyes of his family, his friends, and his religion) Mohan promised to remain a true Hindu wherever he was. He was allowed to go to England.

Mohandas Gandhi considered living in castes cruel and unfair. From this day on, he declared war against the unfeeling harshness of the caste system. This was a war he fought for the rest of his life.

Mohandas Gandhi spent three years in England. He earned a law degree, learned English, Latin, and French. He began to shape the philosophy that would guide his life – and change India's history.

Gandhi believed deeply that every person is of equal value. He also believed that people must fight for equality, BUT they must not hurt anyone else while doing so. People should not be violent in trying to change unjust laws.

This philosophy of nonviolence is called passive resistance. Gandhi believed the force of goodness in any soul would have a powerful effect on others.

Gandhi used fasting for spiritual and political reasons. It was his way of protesting against injustice. Gandhi's belief that all Indians must have equal rights included the Untouchables. They were looked upon as unclean and almost subhuman. They were not permitted to enter schools, temples, or hospitals. If an untouchable handled food, the food could only be eaten by another untouchable. It was considered an act of pollution when an Untouchable's shadow touched a Hindu of a higher caste.

Gandhi wanted to change all this. He begged for equality for the Untouchables. The government refused to do anything about it. He vowed that he would fast until the Untouchables were given their rights. Within a week, temple doors were opened. They were allowed to draw water from the public wells and to walk freely on the public streets. All this happened because of Gandhi.

He practiced passive resistance. His fame and number of his followers grew. Changes began to happen in India. On August 15, 1947, India became a free country from the British.

On January 30, 1948, while walking to his evening prayers, Mohandas Gandhi was shot and killed by a Hindu assassin. The whole world mourned the loss of this great leader.

Appendix E

Taj Mahal

The Taj Mahal, built between 1630 and 1650 is in Agra, India. It took 20,000 builders and **artisans** 20 years to complete. The Taj Mahal is the **Burial tomb** of Emperor Shah Jahan and his wife.

The name Taj Mahal means “Crown of the Palace.”

It is **symmetrical** (the same on both sides) with a reflecting pool in front and a beautiful garden nearby.

The building is made of white marble. Much of it is **inlaid** with **semiprecious jewels**. The work is so intricate that a single flower, only one inch square, might have as many as 60 inlaid pieces.

On entering the Taj Mahal, a visitor must remove his or her shoes because the use of animal skins (leather) is believed to be disrespectful. The Indian people have great respect and pride for their national monument. There are no tour guides or security guards although the Taj Mahal is surrounded by a high wall.

The area beyond the Taj Mahal is crowded with animals, merchants, and the homeless, but the **mausoleum** is kept **immaculate** and in perfect condition.

Appendix F

India Celebrations

Republic Day (January 26) (August 14, 1947)

The weather is usually pleasant, cool, but bright in late January in New Delhi. Big parades take place through out the country. Troops of red-coated horsemen wear turbans of gold cloth. Even grander than the gold-turbaned horseman are the elephants, their trunks painted with flowers. Next to the elephants are the camels. The broad padded feet of the camels rise and fall in perfect rhythm, and their proud riders sit straight and tall as the crowd murmurs its admiration.

Soldiers, sailors, boys, and girls in uniforms keep time behind lively bands. Then the floats come down the parade route in brilliant colors. Dancers ride on the floats and compete in folk dance festivals.

Today, the bands march and play to honor a free India.

Pongal a Rice Harvest Festival (January)

Many of the warm moist fields of South India grow two crops of paddy or rice during the year. One harvest time comes late in January.

The celebration lasts for three days. Many days before, people are getting ready. People coat the walls of village homes with fresh whitewash or fresh red clay to cover the streaks from last year's rains. They may paint designs on the walls. They get new clothes.

On the first day of the festival, people thank the gods for sending the rains to make the harvest good. They visit the nearby temples with their gifts.

On the second day, thanks are given to the sun. The mother of the family rises early and bathes. Soon after she bathes, she starts cooking some of the new rice for the holiday sweets.

The third day of the holiday is planned to honor the cattle who have helped in the growing of the crops and the harvest. The men and boys splash water over the backs of the cattle to wash them clean. Then they paint the animals' horns bright blue or gold. Girls may hang garlands of flowers around the necks of these hardworking beasts.

Spring and the New Year (March-April)

India has many celebrations throughout the entire country. Different parts of the country do different things. Some things are common in most areas. Some of the common

customs are music, folk dancing, singing, and visiting friends. Whatever the setting or the religion of the people, everywhere in India there is a celebration in the spring.

The Rain Celebration (June)

In April and May it is very hot and dry in India. The soil crumbles to dust and is blown through the air by the harsh winds.

In June the rains begin along the West coast and day by day the winds strengthen and blow the rain farther inland.

“Monsoon!” the people cry. The winds and the rain are a welcome sight to break up the heat of the past two months. Women and girls of North India celebrate by sailing happily through the air on swings hung for the occasion. They make many different kinds of swings. The important thing is the feeling of freedom and joy from the searing heat.

Holi, a Festival of Spring (March-April)

Holi is partly a harvest festival and a celebration of spring itself. The origin of this festival has different beginnings. This festival has one of the wildest celebrations in the country.

The mildest form of the celebration is held in quiet homes. Members of the family give one another flowers or sweets and a bowl of red powder stands on the table. When a family member or good friend comes over, someone takes a bit of red powder on a fingertip and presses it onto the other person’s forehead.

There is a wild side to this celebration. Powders of different colors are for sale on the streets. There are also pails of liquid colors for sale. Players squirt the liquid or powder on others. All of this is done in fun. Sometimes it does get out of hand.

In other parts of India this holiday is celebrated in different ways. Some families go to the beach. Some cities have big festivals. Bright colors and flowers are seen all around. There is dancing and music. Everyone enjoys the festival.

Raksha Bandhan, Brother’s Day (July) (Rock sha bhan dahn)

This name means “a tie for protection.” On this day, every sister ties a bright wristlet of ribbon, foil, or glittering paper on her brother’s wrist. It is an honor to be chosen as a brother by a girl, and to have her fasten a good luck badge on one’s wrist. In return the brother is “bound” to protect the “sister.”

On this day the boys are proud and are kings of their families. They want to show off their bright bangles and show everyone they have sisters who care for them.

Diwali or Festival of Lights (October-November)

This festival lasts for five days and marks the end of the monsoon season. Everyone cleans and whitewashes their houses.

People put on new cloths, eat sweets, visit relatives, and exchange gifts.

Diwali is the most brilliant festival of all! The night is bejeweled with small golden oil lamps that send a warm glow over the roofs, windowsills and doorways of homes.

Fireworks light up the sky and small clay lamps called dipas twinkle. These oil lamps are lit to welcome the goddess of wealth, Lakshmi (Lakshmi) She brings prosperity (success).