



Girl Child in India Educational Guide

by
Girl Museum, Inc.



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Girl Child in India

Girl Child in India offers up a snapshot of life as a young girl living on the Indian sub-continent. The exhibition uses photographs and artwork of, or produced by, girls from India to provide a window into their daily lives and their personal experiences of girlhood. This exhibit also takes a closer, detailed look at some of the traditional art forms participated in during girlhood in India.

This educational guide is designed for classroom use with students in primary/elementary school, secondary school and university settings. All the activities are designed for ease of copy and distribution to your students. Also noted are links to both the UK National Curriculum (pg. 4) and the US Common Core (pg. 5).



Baking Chapatis, Claude Renault, 2005. Wiki Commons

Discussion Questions

Students can answer the following questions on their own or discuss in groups.

The following questions can be focused on one image, a selection of images, or all of the images from the *Girl Child in India* exhibition.

1. What similarities can you see between the girl(s) in the photo/artwork and yourself?
2. What differences can you see between the girl(s) in the photo/artwork and yourself?
3. What key themes are being represented in the photo/artwork? (For example: education, religion, work, play, etc.)
4. What do you think this photo/artwork tells us about the life of young girls in India?
5. Do you feel this photo/artwork shows a positive or negative image of girlhood in India? Why do you feel this way?

Analysis: Images

Analyze the three photographs on this page.

Using details from the photographs, and the exhibit, discuss what you feel it would be like to grow up as a *Girl Child in India*.

Do the photographs show life differently to how you imagine girls in India experience it?

Consider how it compares to your own childhood – do our differences mean we are any more/less happy than one another?



Image 1 (top right): Indian students, Biswarup Ganguly, 2010. Wiki Commons.

Image 2: First Communion, Joe Zachs, Wiki Commons.

Image 3: Holi participant, Biswarup Ganguly, 2012. Wiki Commons.

Activities

Activity #1: Girl Child in...

Take a look at the drawings by the girls who attend the Apne Aap Community Centre. They show the girls' interpretations of their lives in India.

Using colored pencils, draw a picture that you feel represents your own experience of growing up in your country as a young person.

As a class, compare your drawings – what is similar and/or different about your experiences in the same country?

Activity #2: In Depth

Use the exhibition, along with your own research, to write an essay on one of the following titles:

- What is life like for girls growing up in India?
- How is girlhood in India a different experience to growing up in your own country?
- How does religion/education/work/class system/wealth affect the lives of young girls in India?

Ask your teacher for advice on word count.

These websites could help you with your research:

- Wikimedia Commons (www.wikimedia.org)
- Library of Congress (www.loc.gov)
- National Archives (www.archives.gov)
- Queensland State Archives (archives.qld.gov.au)



UK National Curriculum Links:

History KS1 & KS2:

- Know & understand significant aspects of history of the wider world

Art & Design: KS1 & KS2:

- Produce creative work
- Become proficient in drawing & painting
- Evaluate & analyse creative works
- To use drawing and painting to develop and share their ideas, experiences and imagination

English KS1 & KS2:

- Use discussion in order to learn
- Ask relevant questions to extend their understanding & knowledge
- Articulate & justify answers, arguments & opinions

Geography KS1 & KS2:

- Understand geographical similarities and differences through studying the human geography of the UK and a contrasting non-European country



US Common Core Links:

History/Social Studies:

- Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions

Speaking & Listening:

- Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion
- Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study

Writing:

- Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate

Activities continued

Activity #3: Mendhi Madness

Mendhi is a traditional method of body decoration practiced by girls in India, Africa, the Middle East, and central Asia for thousands of years. Mendhi designs are created using henna, a plant that makes red dye. Henna feels cool to the touch, so people in arid climates often covered their hair and skin with henna to keep their body temperatures down.

In India, henna is often applied to the hands and feet of a bride the night before her wedding. In some cases, both the bride and groom are decorated with mendhi to signify the love and affection in marriage. Mendhi ceremonies take place before the wedding while enjoying traditional music, dancing, and food. Today, mendhi has spread around the world.

Using the template at the end of this guide create a mendhi design of your own. If you get permission from your parent or guardian you could even purchase a mendhi kit and try out some of your designs for real!



Girl Museum

We are the first and only online museum about girlhood.

We exhibit, educate, and raise awareness about the unique experience of being born and growing up female around the world in the past and present.

As a community of passionate and creative individuals, we acknowledge and advocate for girls as forces for collective responsibility and change in the global context, not as victims and consumers.

We are a 501(c)3 non-profit educational organization.

Learn more and get involved at www.GirlMuseum.org



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Activity #4: Anjali's Art



Take a look at Anjali Sinha's artwork in the *Girl Child in India* exhibition. She has used a variety of media to create images that represent different aspects of Indian girl children such as their minds, souls, and feelings.

Using a media you feel comfortable with create your own piece of artwork about girlhood inspired by Anjali Sinha's pictures.

Once you've finished you could display your images in a gallery to share with the rest of the school.

You could even sell tickets to your art gallery and then donate your profits to a charity in India that helps young girls!

Mendhi Design Template:

