We Are More Common Than Not:
Connecting the Cultural Dots Between U.S. Students of South Asian and West Indian (Indo-Caribbean) Descent

Fulbright-Hays Scholar and visual arts teacher, Nikita Hunter, standing with an arts teacher at the Padma Seshadri Senior Secondary School in Chennai

Fulbright-Hays Curriculum for the U.S. Department of Education

Nikita Hunter

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Introduction and Background

Our school located in the heart of the Brownsville neighborhood of Brooklyn has a small but growing number of South Asian students and a large number of students from the Caribbean or the “British West Indies” (Guyana, Trinidad, and Jamaica), many who are of Indo-Caribbean descent. I serve them officially as their art teacher, and unofficially as a social studies teacher (meaning I supplement their art instruction with my own experiences with other cultures). To promote cultural understanding between the students of the two cultures, I will use my Fulbright experience to India to expose both groups of students to the similarities and fusions of their cultural traditions.

Outreach Related to the Fulbright-Hays Summer Seminar to India

As a result of this experience, I have had many opportunities to share this cultural exchange with colleagues and those of education institutions. On November 6th, I presented a workshop to teachers and social workers about the overlap of culture between Indian and Indo-Caribbean peoples at the Mosaic Literary Conference. In November, I submitted a Parents As Partners grant to the Center for Arts Education and partnered with the Brooklyn Arts Council to host a visiting artist to teach about Indian/South Asia/Himalayan motifs of the Mandala. On December 9, 2010, I presented an overview and my reflections of the program to the Phi Delta Kappa educational institution, at its New York University Chapter. On December 14, I presented at the Adelaide Sanford Education Institute to principals and teachers. Finally, I was accepted to the Guggenheim Learning Through Art program to train teachers on ways they can encourage their students to solve visual design problems. We will use the resources from the Guggenheim experience to inform students on how to design the patterns on a Sari or turban to convey a narrative.

Alignment to Core Common Standards

This curriculum, We Are More Common Than Not: Connecting the Cultural Dots Between U.S. Students of South Asian and West Indian (Indo-Caribbean) Descent is recommended for grade 4 and meets the following capacities of the Core Common English Language Arts Standards as developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), The National Governors Association’s Center for Best Practices, and the New York City Department of Education’s Division of School Support and Instruction – Office of Arts and Special Projects (NYCDOE OASP):

1. They demonstrate independence. (Students can evaluate and select Indian works of art for developing their own work and their work reflects a personal style.)
2. They build strong content knowledge. (Students can use the tenements of design and culture in Indian artwork to create their own work and solve design problems therein.)
3. They demonstrate independence. (Students can take their knowledge of Indian design and create their own 2-D project that will extend their knowledge of art media and the application of the principals of composition.)

4. They comprehend as well as critique. (Students will provide peer feedback to projects.)

5. They come to understand other perspectives and cultures. (Students will develop a deep understanding of Indian and West Indian cultural connections.)

NOTE: Under the Office of Arts Accountability and Support within the NYCDOE OASP, the Blueprint Standards for New York City Public Schools (2010) have been directly aligned to the Common Core Standards released on June 2, 2010.

Alignment to New York State Standards for the Arts

Standard 1: Creating, Performing and Participating in the Arts
Students will actively engage in the processes that constitute creation and performance in the arts (dance, music, theatre, and visual arts) and participate in various roles in the arts.

Standard 2: Knowing and Using Arts Materials and Resources
Students will be knowledgeable about and make use of the materials and resources available for participation in the arts in various roles.

Standard 3: Responding to and Analyzing Works of Art
Students will respond critically to a variety of works in the arts, connecting the individual work to other works and to other aspects of human endeavor and thought.

Standard 4: Understanding the Cultural Dimensions and Contributions of the Arts
Students will develop an understanding of the personal and cultural forces that shape artistic communication and how the arts in turn shape the diverse cultures of past and present society.


Skills Attained

Students will attain the following skills from this curriculum: reading for analysis, writing (reflective and analytical), note taking, painting, printmaking, preparation of work for exhibit, and a cultural understanding of traditions that are similar and diverse from their own.

Rubric Assessment

Rubrics will vary for some exercises. The rubrics used for the lessons are below.
Visual Arts Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Master Artist - Exceeding standard. You completed all of the assignment steps with great craftsmanship, care, and a style of your own.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Emerging Artist - Meeting standard. You completed all of the assignment steps with great craftsmanship, and care.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Budding Artist - Meeting standard. You completed most of the assignment steps with care.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Neophyte Artist – Approaching the standard. You completed some of the assignment steps.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Part-time Artist – Below the standard. You completed little to none of the assignment steps.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Writing Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Master Writer - Exceeding standard. You wrote clear topic sentences, and ultimately paragraphs. You used accurate spelling, grammar, and had no typos. You had legible handwriting. You answered the writing prompt or question posed in its entirety and with a voice of your own.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Emerging Writer - Meeting standard. You wrote clear topic sentences, and ultimately paragraphs. You used accurate spelling, grammar, and had no typos. You had legible handwriting. You answered the writing prompt or question posed in its entirety.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Budding Writer - Meeting standard. You wrote mostly clear topic sentences, and many coherent paragraphs. Few transitional words were missing, but were those of which could have created a better flow from one paragraph to the next. You had few spelling mistakes, inaccurate grammar, and had few typos. You had legible handwriting. You answered most or all of the writing prompt or question posed.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Neophyte Writer– Approaching the standard. You wrote somewhat clear topic sentences, and some coherent paragraphs. Some transitional words were missing to create a flow from one paragraph to the next. You used some inaccurate spelling, grammar, hand and few typos. You had somewhat legible handwriting. You answered some of the writing prompt or question posed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Part-time Writer– Below the standard. You wrote few clear topic sentences, and few coherent paragraphs. Many transitional words were missing to create a flow from one paragraph to the next. You used inaccurate spelling, grammar, had many typos and or illegible handwriting throughout. You answered some of the writing prompt or question posed.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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Unit 1: An Introduction to India

Essential Questions for Unit One are the following:

1. Where in the world is India and what countries surround India?
2. What are the major geographical entities including rivers in India?
3. What are the major regions (states) in India (as visited on the Fulbright Seminar)?
4. What religions are practiced in India?
5. What is culture and what are cultural norms. What kinds of cultural traditional clothing are worn within India?
6. Who are the Hindu gods of India?
7. What are the major symbols and motifs within Indian art?
8. Who is Ghandi and what major role did he play in shaping Indian culture and its independence?

Lesson 1: Introduction to India – Geography and Cultural Overview

(Lesson length: Three 45 minute sessions)

Lesson 1: Introduction to India (Session 1)

Additional Standards Met: Research to Build and Present Knowledge – (Through the Extension Activity – Researching an Indian topic.) Students will conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic. Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.

Materials: Laptop, LCD Projector, Power Point Presentation : “5 Questions About Getting To India”

Extension Activity Materials: Copied resources from The Art of South and Southeast Asia: A Resource for Educators published by The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Learning Objective: To introduce and discuss the country of India through its location on a map, and through recreating a virtual experience of travelling to India from America.

Motivation: How many of you know where India is in the world? Turn and talk to your neighbor on your guesses on which continent India might be located.

Connection: Well today, I am going to introduce India to you by presenting and discussing where it is located and what a journey to India may look like travelling from North America to Asia and landing in Chennai, India.

Activity: Class will discuss 5 things that they learned while virtually travelling to Chennai, India (by way of a visual virtual journey in a teacher-made power point presentation).
5 QUESTIONS ABOUT GETTING TO INDIA

By Ms. Hunter
Visual Arts Instructor and Fulbright Scholar

• How long does it take to get to India?
  • An average of 20 HOURS!
  • That’s almost a whole day!

What kind of clothes do people wear in India?

• What would YOU Wear in India?

How is the boy dressed differently than his mother?

• Is that clothing Western or Asian?
  • The mother is wearing a Sari.

Write on the back of your activity sheet...

• Two countries that are passed enroute to India.
• The number of hours it takes to get to India.
• 3 countries that are adjacent to India.
• What kind of clothing is worn in India.
• Why do you think that clothing is worn? What is its function?

Share: Students, turn and talk to your neighbors about the 5 things that you learned today about getting to India. In addition to that discuss what you might feel like travelling 20 hours or more to India and what you might experience once they arrive there.
Extension Activity: Choose a topic on India (students will pick one out of a hat). Write a report on that topic, conducting research by using materials from the class art library. Materials from the class library include The Art of South and Southeast Asia: A Resource for Educators, published by The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Only one reference from the internet can be used. The following are topics children could choose from. Students will meet with the teacher by appointment or during class to discuss their topic and check out materials for use. Please use the references provided by the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Resources for Educators located at the following two sites:


Hindu gods – Lord Ganesha, Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Saraswati, Parvati, and Lakshmi,

Buddhist Symbols – Sitting Buddha, Siddartha Guatauma, Mandala, Om

Indian Leaders – King Ashoka, Nehru, Gandhi, King Shah Jahan, Princess Mamp tess

Indian Architecture – Indian Fort, Taj Mahal, Agra Fort, Mahabalipuram

Encourage students to keep a notebook throughout Unit 1 as many of the topics above will be covered. In keeping notes, they can add information from class discussions to their research reports on each topic.

Lesson 1: Introduction to India (Session 2)

Materials: Terms sheet, map of South Asia (The Metropolitan Museum Of Art), chart papers with terms, pencils, crayons.

Click here to access the Metropolitan’s map of South and Southeast Asia:

Extension Activity Materials: Worksheet on Distinguishing the 3 C’s: Continents, Countries, and Cities

Learning Objective: To introduce the country of India through its geographical and some political (states) entities.

Motivation: How many of you know where the highest mountain peak on earth resides? How many of you can locate on your maps a general location of Mt. Everest?

Connection: Well today, I am going to inform you of the geographical entities including Mt. Everest which is the highest mountain peak on earth. We will start by looking at a map of South Asia and use this map to locate some of India’s geographical entities.

Activity: On my chart papers, I have listed various geographical areas in India as well as political entities (states). Using these terms, you will locate on your maps each entity by putting the corresponding number next to its place on the map. For example, number one is the Himalayas. I will put a number one
on the map where the Himalayas are depicted. For the neighboring countries, color the countries as follows:

- Pakistan – pink
- Nepal – blue
- Bangladesh – green
- Sri Lanka - yellow

Terms for map activity and extension activity:

**Himalayas:** the highest mount range on earth; it houses the mountain with the highest peak, Mt. Everest

**Ganges River:** one of the holiest Hindu rivers in South Asia

**Rajasthan:** an Indian state; one of its famous cities: is Jaipur, known as the “pink” city

**Gujarat:** an Indian state; one of its famous cities: Ahmadabad – where Gandhi held his Ashram

**Maharashtra:** an Indian state; one of its famous cities: Mumbai (formerly Bombay) and home of Bollywood

**Tamil Nadu:** an Indian state; one of its famous cities: Chennai, a former home for British military during India’s colonialism

**Uttar Pradesh:** an Indian state; three of its famous cities: New Delhi – the capital of India/ Varanasi (Benares) - a holy Hindu city in India / Sarnarth – a holy Buddhist city in India and the place where Buddha first taught his disciples after reaching enlightenment

**Himachal Pradesh:** an Indian state; one of its famous cities: Shimla - a mountainous city in the foothills of the Himalayas.

**West Bengal:** an Indian state; one of its famous cities: Kolkata – former British political capital during colonialism

**4 Major Countries that border India:** 1) Pakistan 2) Nepal 3) Bangladesh 4) Sri Lanka

**Extension Activity:** Study today’s terms on India geography. Prepare for an interactive activity in the form of a Jeopardy game quiz. Complete the worksheet Distinguishing the 2 C’s Continents and Countries. Please see resources section for this extension activity. Continue research for report.
Lesson 1: Introduction to India (Session 3)

Learning Objective: To identify geographical entities and terms related to India.

Materials: Chart paper, laptop, LCD projector, power point presentation “Jeopardy: India’s Geography”

Activity: Using a chart paper write the categories and points for clues. When a student gets the clue correct, place a post-it® note onto the clue to signify that it has been asked. If the clue is answered incorrectly, place a post-it® note onto the clue with a slash to signify it was incorrectly answered. The student with the most points wins. If there is a tie, use the bonus question of 5,000 points to break the tie.

NOTE: The game can be played with a wager, however for my class I chose not to use this option in efforts to reward the students who won due to good study habits and not luck.
Extension Activity: Choose one geographical entity of India. Using the internet www.brainpop.com, find and write 5 interesting facts that you found about your entity.
**Lesson 2: Overview of Religion and Introduction to Hindu gods**

**Materials:** LCD projector, laptop, chart paper, pencils, and loose leaf; resource: The Metropolitan Museum of Art’s The Art of South and Southeast Asia: A Resource for Educators [Click here to access the Metropolitan’s resources on South and Southeast Asia](http://www.metmuseum.org/explore/publications/pdfs/asia/sseasia.pdf)

See Lesson 2 Resources in the appendices for a presentation on an abbreviated number of Hindu gods and goddesses. Discovering Art History text pages (81-82).

**Learning Objective:** To introduce the 5 major religions of India, and to introduce the Hindu gods and goddesses. To learn how to take notes from a discussion.

**Motivation:** Our major religion in America is Christianity. How many of you know that some people from other countries observe different religions?

**Connection:** Well today, I am going to tell you about the 5 major religions of India, and I am going to show how to take notes from a discussion or lecture. There are 5 major religions of India. They are:

1. **Hinduism** – follows the teachings from the 4 Vedas, the Mahabharata, the Ramayana and avatars or gods and goddesses. They believe in reincarnation.
2. **Buddhism** – follow the teachings of the enlightened Siddartha Guatama They seek to reach nirvana and enter the supreme self.
3. **Islam** - followers of the prophet, Muhammad. They serve Allah. They study the Koran.
4. **Sikhism** – followers of 10 spiritual leaders called gurus. The first guru was Nanak. They serve God, study a holy book, the Adi Granth, and believe in reincarnation.
5. **Jainism/Dharma** – follow the teachings of 24 Jinas – people who have overcome worldly desires to attain knowledge and a supreme self. Its followers practice non-violence towards any living thing. A famous Jain was Mahatma Gandhi.

Today, I will give you an overview of the religions but we will focus on Hinduism, one of the most popular religions of India. First, we are going to format our papers so that we can take notes on each god or goddess of Hinduism.

**Activity:** Write the following names of avatars/ gods/goddesses on your loose leaf sheet of paper and skip two lines between each. Ganesha, Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Parvati, Saraswati, and Lakshmi. Please note that these are not all of the major Hindu avatars, but a snapshot of some of the most worshipped. As I talk about each god/goddess, please take note of the three following attributes to each avatar.

1. Its main characteristic
2. Its consort – husband or wife
3. Its vehicle

<Discuss with students each avatar. Tell the mythological stories associated with each avatar. Reference the appendix for the visual image, and information for each avatar.>

**Share:** Turn and talk to your neighbor about one god or goddess that you thought was the most interesting and why.

**Extension Activity:** Continue research for report.
Lesson 3: Motifs in Indian Art and The Mandala

Collaboration with Brooklyn Arts Council’s teaching artist, Kimberly Carmody


Learning Objective: To identify motifs within Indian Art

Motivation: How many remember Shiva’s vehicle from the lesson on Religion and Hindu Gods? Can any one name his vehicle?

Connection: In the lesson on Religion and Hindu Gods we saw Shiva’s attributes and vehicle. When we see Shiva, symbols of him come to mind. The vertical third eye on his head (Show students the picture of Shiva and point out). The hand holding fire, the bull, and the trident, to name a few. These symbols can all be considered motifs in Indian art, as most traditional Indian art is based on religion.

Activity: Review the image of Shiva from the last lesson. Look at the symbols together as a class. Students can then review each god and list the items that they see extend from each hand, their vehicle or surroundings. Students can write what they think each means, given their prior knowledge of the mythological stories told within the last discussion on religion and Hinduism in India.

Share: Using your list of symbols that you found, turn and talk to your neighbor and tell them what those symbols might mean.

Extension Activity: Look at the mandala below. (Also located at [http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/1987.16](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/1987.16) for larger viewing or in the appendix - Lesson 3 Resources.) Mandalas were a symbol in Indian art and took a strong influence in South East Asian meditation practices. List the symbols seen in the mandala. Why do you think they are arranged in the shape of a circle? When you return, you will participate in an extra-curricular activity with visiting teaching artist, Kimberly Carmody from the Brooklyn Arts Council. She will work with you to explain further the meaning and symbolism of mandalas, and how you can create your own mandala first 2-dimensionally and second, 3-dimensionally, using recyclables.

![Mandala Image]

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3 BAC Arts-In-Education Workshops: Karen Carmody – Indian Motifs - Mandala

Four workshops reaching up to 90 kids and 55 parents will be held with visiting teaching artist, Karen Carmody. To ensure reaching parents and children alike, these workshops will be held within the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meeting and the Parent Teacher Conference (PTC) open school nights. On the fourth, and final workshop, the Spring PTC open school night, on March 15, 2011, in collaboration with the school, we will hold a Diwali festival (an Indian festival of light) and students’ works will be showcased. The 4 workshops (for 2 hours each) are outlined as follows:

1. February 1, 3:15 – 5:15, Workshop 1: Introduction to Indian Art. Art making project that can be completed in that session and used for an exhibit at the end as well as a take home piece. (Introduce concept of big mandala and what recyclable materials to start collecting)
2. February 9, 5:30 – 7:30, Workshop 2: A project that introduces the concept of making temporary art work that will be eventually deconstructed. A project that explores this concept (preparing them for the larger mandala; continue to collect and sort recyclables)
3. March 9, 5:30 – 7:30, Workshop 3 (open to the flow of families coming in for Parent Teacher night) Making the mandala. Teaching Artist introduces the project, and the story of her career path to her current project. Invite families to participate.
4. March 15, 5:30-7:30, Workshop 4, in collaboration with the Art Teacher create a Diwali Festival of Light and Joy, celebration of Parent and Child art work and saying good-bye (dismantling) of the mandala. (Total exhibition run March 9 - March 30, 2011)
Enrichment Activities: Students will take a trip to the Rubin Museum in Manhattan to view first-hand the arts of India, Himalayas, and South East Asia. Also, on our trip to the Rubin Museum we will see many symbols that recur in Indian, Himalayan, and South East Asian art. Keep your eyes open for the symbolism in the works of art that you see there. Students will look for symbolism discussed in this lesson and with Ms. Carmody. Following the trip Ms. Carmody will be working with students on 3 more dates to create a 6 foot wide in diameter, mandala made from recycled items.

Students will create a 6 inch wide in diameter, mandala on brown paper to plan for their work with Ms. Carmody. Using the resources for this lesson (please reference the appendix lesson 3 extension resources). They will choose colors and symbols and attach meaning to each. Water colors or tempera paints are recommended media. Compasses, brushes, paint cups, and water bins are also materials needed for this enrichment activity.
Lesson 4: Traditional Clothing

Materials: *My Dadima Wears A Sari* by Kashmira Sheth, Chart paper, 10 Half Saris – appropriate for a child’s size (3 yards of fabric each); 10 petticoats (about ½ yard long) chart paper and markers, pencils, and loose leaf.

Lesson Length: Two 45 minute Art periods or a 90 minute ELA block for Reading and Writing

Product: 1) A reflective writing piece on the read aloud and the experience of wrapping a Sari. 2) An understanding of how to wear and use a Sari. 3) A written comparison and contrast of dress in America versus that in India. 3) An understanding of how continuing a cultural tradition of dress allows one to acclimate to a new culture while honoring cultural roots. In this case an Indian woman acclimating to becoming an Indian American.

Additional Standards Met: Core Common Standards – Reading – Key Ideas and Details - Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions). Integration of Knowledge and Ideas - compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures.

Writing – Research to Build and Present Knowledge - Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. Apply *grade 4 Reading standards* to literature (e.g., “Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text [e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions].”

Lesson 4: Session 1

Learning Objective: To learn about the function of a traditional Indian women’s dress, a Sari. To compare and contrast women’s clothing in India to that of the U.S.

Motivation: How many of you know have ever seen a woman wear a Sari?

Connection: Some of you remember back in lesson 1 that we briefly analyzed the dress of the Indian woman in a photo with her son. How many of you remember that photo? Well, we concluded that her clothing was Eastern (Asian) and the son’s clothing was Western (American). Today, we are going to look at saris and why and how it is worn.

Activity: 1) Teacher reads aloud: *My Dadima Wears A Sari*

2) Discussion (record students answers on a chart)

   1. Ask students if any of their family members wear saris, if so, on what occasions?
   If not, ask them to make a guess as to why a woman might wear a sari?

   3) What were the benefits of wearing a Sari for the Dadima in the story? Why would she prefer a sari to t-shirts and a skirt or pants?

   4) How did the Dadima use the sari as a way to bond with her granddaughter?

   5) If you had a sari, how would you use it?
**Share:** Turn and talk to your neighbor and discuss how you would use a sari and what would you prefer a sari or a t-shirt and jeans if you lived in India with 100°F weather? Also, discuss what you learned about the girl’s Dadima wearing a Sari. What did her grandma or Dadima teach the girl about Indian culture that she had not known?

**NOTE:** In my class students are of West Indian descent, and although many are Guyanese, because of the fusion of culture between Indian and African peoples from the 1800 until now, some Guyanese women wear saris for occasions such as Diwali. This was uncovered in a conversation with students during the first two lessons of this unit.

**Lesson 4: Session 2**

**Learning Objective:** To learn how to wrap a sari. To produce a piece of reflective writing about the experience of wrapping a sari.

**Motivation:** How many of you would like to learn how to wrap a Sari?

**Connection:** In the last lesson we learned the function of a Sari, today we are going to learn how to wrap a sari!

**Activity/Demonstration:** Demonstrate to students how to put on a Sari.

Step 1: Put on the petticoat and pin into place.
Step 2: Wrap Sari around waist and tuck tightly into place.
Step 3: Gather pleats and pin into place in front of the petticoat.
Step 4: Wrap Sari around and over your blouse (choli).

Have students group in pairs of two and wrap the sari around their partner, one at a time. Engage boys by asking them to assist and learn the steps, imagining themselves as an Indian child needing to help their mother or sister put on a sari.

**Share:** Students will turn and talk about the experience with the sari.

**Writing Activity** Upon completion, have students write a reflective piece on what it was like to put on or assist someone putting on a sari. Allow students to write their own answers. If some are not sure how to describe, elicit some answers by asking students if they felt regal, important, common, or weighed down.

**Demonstration:** On chart paper, show students an example of the reflective writing piece that they will need to compose.

**Share:** Choose students to share their reflective wiring with the class. Talk about why learning about a culture different from their own is useful to developing cultural understanding, tolerance, and skills for school interactions and eventually the workplace. Hold a discussion around these issues and how knowing about another’s culture can help them to work harmoniously with others who are different from themselves.

**Vocabulary:** Dadima, Sari, choli, tolerance, regal, culture, cultural understanding, diversity
**Extension Activity:** Students will write a one page reflection on a time when they encountered or befriended someone from a country or culture different from their own and later learned more about that person’s culture. This encounter could have been on a subway, in class, or another instance. Ask students to write a description of the person’s clothes or other cultural indicators. Students can describe the person’s behavior, if possible, and some ideas they had about that persons culture before actually encountering them. Also write about what you learned about the persons culture and how it was different from what they originally thought.

**Lesson 4A: Session 1 Design A Block to Print onto Fabric**

Collaboration with Guggenheim Learning Through Art (LTA) Program – Problem Solving Project: To design a print for a sari and turban while telling a story with the design

**Lesson Length:** Four sessions (45 minutes each)

**Learning Objective:** To plan a design to print onto a sari and or turban.

**Materials:** Cardboard, printing ink, measuring tape, 15 half saris (3yard wide fabric), 10 hat forms for turbans, 10 sections of fabric, 2 yards in length each for each turban, hot glue gun, hot glue sticks, ribbons (based on the measurement of each child’s head) sharpie markers, scissors, clothespins and yard sticks. Reference appendix resources titled: Chapter 5: Indigenous Graphic Design Practices from the text, *The Story of Graphic Design – Textbook for Class XI* published by the National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Dehli, India. (ISBN: 978-81-7450-944-4)

**Motivation:** How many of you have wanted to design clothing? Well today we are going to start a design for a print to be used on a sari or a turban.

**Connection:** In the last lesson we learned the function of a Sari, today we are going to design a print for a sari and a print for a turban.

**Activity/Demonstration:** Using the references from the appendix: **Lesson 4A resources**, have students create designs for their Sari or turban. Students can also reference symbols for gods to use in designs.

**Sari Print**

Step 1: Students will design their pattern on a 2 inch by 6 inch long strip of paper. Boxes would be divided by one inch. Students can design up to 6 patterns on this strip.

Step 2: Decide on two designs to be displayed alternating one another.

Step 3: Create a meaning for your designs. The symbols, the sun, flowers, and or trees can become a metaphor for something else.

Step 4: Measure out a 4 inch wide band in which you will print your design. Mark the 2-inch border with a Sharpie ® marker.

Step 5: Apply printing ink to cardboard.

Step 6: Register onto 4 inch band of sari.

Step 7: Repeat steps 5 and 6 until reaching the end of the sari fabric.

Step 8: Hang and let dry.

**Turban Print**

Step 1: Students will design their pattern on a 2 inch by 6 inch long strip of paper. Boxes would be divided by one inch. Students can design up to 6 patterns on this strip.

Step 2: Decide on two designs to be displayed alternating one another.
Step 3: Create a meaning for your designs. The symbols, the sun, flowers, and or trees can become a metaphor for something else.

Step 3: Cut out both design and trace onto cardboard.

Step 4: Measure out a 2-inch wide band near the edge of your materials in which you will print your design. Mark the 2-inch border with a Sharpie® marker.

Step 5: Apply printing ink to cardboard.

Step 6: Register onto 2-inch band of turban.

Step 7: Repeat steps 5 and 6 until reaching the end of the sari fabric.

Step 8: Hang and let dry.

Step 9: Wrap around turban hat form.

Step 10: Staple fabric along edges of form.

Step 11: Place a border ribbon around the edges of the form to obscure staples.

Step 12 (Teacher only): Hot glue the border into place.

Share: Students will share with each other the process of creating the sari or turban and any challenges they faced throughout. Periodic check-ins with each other throughout the process in groups of 3 are recommended.

Extension Activity: Between sessions, choose one aspect of your design and before cutting out and printing, perfect that one aspect to make the design more intriguing, balanced, or aesthetically pleasing.
Lesson 5: Gandhi and Indian Independence

Materials: *Gandhi* by Demi published by Margaret K. Mc Elderry Books; Eyes on the Prize video (provided by Thirteen – PBS) and a Venn diagram.

Learning Objective: **To introduce Gandhi’s contribution to the independence of India.**

Additional Standards Met: Core Common Standards – Reading – Key Ideas and Details - Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions). Integration of Knowledge and Ideas - compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures.

Writing – Research to Build and Present Knowledge - Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. Apply grade 4 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text [e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions].”

**Motivation:** How many have heard of Martin Luther King Jr. and his message of non-violence?

**Connection:** Well today, I am going to introduce you to the man who inspired Martin Luther King Jr’s message of non-violence. His name is Mahatma Gandhi. He is an Indian leader, who grew up to study law in Britain. He returned to India to learn that he was not fulfilling his purpose. He went to South Africa and experienced an earlier form of apartheid as practiced in 1906 as part of the Black Act. The Black Act, enforced by British colonists in South Africa, in short deprived black and Indian people of their civil rights. There Gandhi formed a non-violent protest. He later returned to India to experience similar oppression under the British rule in India. Gandhi seemed to have found his purpose with these movement.

**Activity:**
1) Teacher reads aloud: Read Aloud: *Gandhi* by Demi.
2) Discussion (record students answers on a chart)
3) Play a portion of Martin Luther King’s Selma march & “I Have A Dream Speech”
4) Play a portion of Mahatma Gandhi’s “My Pledge to Freedom” Speech

3) Write how Gandhi’s story connects to Martin Luther King Jr.’s message of non-violence.
   - What events in the story mirror Martin Luther King’s march in Selma?
   - What events in the story mirror Martin Luther King’s march in Washington?
   - How Gandhi’s leadership persona somewhat like Martin Luther King’s?
   - How might Gandhi’s leadership persona and image might be different from Martin Luther King Jr.’s
   - How does Gandhi’s and King’s belief in God shape their beliefs?

**Share:** Your venn diagram activity with your neighbor. Share with the class how each man affected the civil rights movement in their country.

**Extension Activity:** Write about a time when you or your peers protested something through a letter writing campaign or by simply not participating in an inconsiderate action like insulting or bullying
another kid. Write about what you did – it could be to walk away from a fight, to take up for a kid being bullied, to avoid joining in a conversation where a kid is being insulted.

Complete research for the report assigned in lesson one. Turn in report at the end of Unit 1.
Character Analysis
Mahatma Gandhi versus Martin Luther King, Jr.

Using the video clip Eyes on the Prize excerpt of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the story and audio of Gandhi by Demi, and My Pledge to Freedom speech, compare and contrast Mahatma Gandhi’s character to Martin Luther King, Jr. On each side list the characteristics of each man. In the middle list the similarities of the two men. Below list the similarities. Write one paragraph on how those similarities shaped both leaders and civil rights both in India and in America.

Mahatma Gandhi’s

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Similarities

1. ________________________________
2. ________________________________
3. ________________________________
4. ________________________________
5. ________________________________
6. ________________________________
7. ________________________________

On the back or loose leaf paper, write how these similarities shaped each man’s affect on civil rights in each country.
Unit 2: Overlapping Cultural Traditions in India and the Caribbean

Essential Questions for Unit Two are the following:

1. What kinds of foods do Indian people eat?
2. What is a major Indian holiday celebrated in both India and the “British West Indies”?
3. How does food play a role in culture and cultural norms?
4. What are some similarities and differences between Indian and Indo-Caribbean cultures?
5. How can those similarities help us understand our common existence and humans?
6. How does celebration of diversity make us more empathetic about cultures different than our own?
7. How did the infusion of Indian culture within the Caribbean impact cultural traditions that make some Indian celebrations and foods a staple in Caribbean culture today?
8. What lessons can we take from this cultural exploration to help us better interact with our peers who hail from different countries, cultures, and norms?

Lesson 6: Foods of India and the Caribbean

Materials: chart paper, markers,
Learning Objective: To introduces the similarities between Indian and Caribbean foods.

Motivation: How many of you know that curry derives from India? What is your favorite curry dish?

Share: Turn and talk to your neighbor about your favorite curry dish. (Teacher record answers onto chart paper).

Connection: Well today, I am going to introduce to you some Indian dishes that may look like or include a lot of similar ingredients to your favorite dishes from the Caribbean.

Activity: List and show Indian foods and their ingredients. Have students fill in their foods in the left column on the activity sheet following this page. List the Indian foods on the right column. Have students draw a line to match foods that sound or look like they have similar ingredients.

Share: Students share with the class how the foods are similar. Students answer some probing questions such as:

1) How does food play a role in culture?
2) How are Indian foods and culture similar to your own?
3) Did you learn that there were more similarities than you expected between cultures in terms of food and dress (from Unit 1)? How?

Extension Activity: Write about a time when you experienced a food foreign to what you are accustomed to. What were your initial reactions?
Caribbean Foods Listed By Students  

Indian Foods Listed By Instructor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roti</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Naan (flat bread)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biryani (beef, chicken, or fish in rice and cumin and yogurt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samosa (chick peas, curry, and potatoes in a hard bread shell)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dahl (lentil dish – like lentil soup)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

...
Lesson 7: Festivals – Diwali in India and the Caribbean

Background: The celebration of Diwali is practiced as a traditional holiday in India. It was brought to the “British West Indies” through settlements in Guyana (starting in 1838) by Indian indentured servants in Guyana, Trinidad/Tobago and Jamaica. Today it is celebrated by inhabitants in Guyana, Trinidad/Tobago and Jamaica who are peoples of Indian and African descent. There it is considered a major holiday. Even some Americans whose ancestry trace back to Guyana, Trinidad/Tobago and Jamaica hold small celebratory dinners for Diwali much like Americans do at Thanksgiving and Christmas. (NOTE: This information was based on interviews with American citizens whose ancestral roots from Guyana are of Indian and African descent.)

![Image of a child celebrating Diwali](image-source-getty-images)


Learning Objective: To introduce Diwali and the infusion of Indians into Guyana in the 1800’s.

Motivation: How many have heard of the holiday Diwali? How many know how it might have become a cultural tradition in the West Indies?

Connection: Well today, I am talking to you about Diwali and explain what it is. I am also going to show you a video that can help to explain how Diwali and other Indian cultural traditions such as foods and dress became staples in Guyana and throughout some of the West Indies.

Activity #1: Using a chart paper, write a definition of Diwali: Diwali is a festival of light and joy and is observed in honor of Lakshmi, goddess of wealth. People light candles, light sparklers, and cook large amounts of food for each other in celebration of Diwali. It is a festival that represents renewal and the hope for happiness, fulfillment and wealth.

1) Show the picture of the girl above.
2) Ask them if she is Indian or black or who knows.
3) Have them guess what her ethnicity might be. Explain that she is a black girl celebrating Diwali in Guyana.
4) Ask how is that possible if she is not Indian?
5) Record responses.

Show portions of video: Guiana 1838 to give students a sense of how Indian culture fused with that of African and indigenous people in the “British West Indies”. Ask students to discuss and infer how traditions such as Diwali may have came to influence Caribbean culture.
Activity #2: Ask students to complete the comparison charts below:

Name ___________________ Date ___________________

**Character Analysis**  
**Guyana 1838**

Using the video clip Guyana 1838, compare the two main characters of the movie. How are they alike or different.

**Indian male character : Laxman**  
(Main actor)

**Black Male character (supporting actor)**

S E M A R N

.similarities

1. ________________________________
2. ________________________________
3. ________________________________
4. ________________________________
5. ________________________________
6. ________________________________
7. ________________________________

**Answer:** How do you think their similarities allowed them to exchange culture?
**Activity #3:** Have a student of Guyanese/Indian ancestry present to the class on Diwali customs in India and those in the Caribbean. {Teacher} List the customs on a chart paper.  Show symbols of Diwali. (Rangoli drawings found in Lesson 4A resources) and round lit candles.  Reiterate that Diwali is a festival of light and joy and is observed in honor of Lakshmi, goddess of wealth. Ask students to compare the Diwali customs celebrated in America and in Guyana. Complete a compare and contrast analysis following this page.

A good resource for Diwali symbols is the following book: Ultimate Diwali Sticker Book (Ultimate Sticker Books)

**Share:** Students will share their answers from activities 1-3
Activity #3: Ask students to complete the comparison charts below:

Name ______________________ Date ______________________

Diwali in America and India

Responding to discussion by your peer, compare and contrast Diwali as celebrated in the U.S. versus parts of the Caribbean.

Diwali in India

Diwali in the Caribbean

Similarities

1. ______________________
2. ______________________
3. ______________________
4. ______________________
5. ______________________
6. ______________________
7. ______________________

ANSWER: What other customs, perhaps foods derive from India that you see being used or observed in Guyana, Trinidad, Tobago, Jamaica, or Barbados? What are some festivals where you light candles and or cook large amounts of food with family?
Extension Activity: At the end of class, show a video on East Indians (from the Kerala region) in the Caribbean [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YpxCZRIjJTl&feature=related]. Ask students to write a response to the video and cite any experiences they have either directly or through their ancestors (parents or grandparents) of similar customs.

Culminating Event: Diwali Festival/Art Exhibit Opening

As a culminating event concluding this curriculum and the collaboration with Brooklyn Arts Council’s teaching artist, Kimberly Carmody, an art exhibit will be held at the school on its final parent teacher conference open school night. Student and parent work from this curriculum and the small paintings of the Mandala and the 6-foot wide Mandala created with the guidance of Ms. Carmody will be on display. An accompanying Diwali festival of Joy and Light will occur. Cultural foods from both Indian and the West Indian cultures will be available for consumption. Students will be encouraged to taste foods from both regions and compare the similarities and differences.

Outline the events for the final Parent Conference Open School Night

- Students and Parents will enter the building and be escorted to a reception area.
- They will sign up for appointments with their respective homeroom teachers.
- While waiting they will be enticed to view the art exhibit in the reception area and taste some of the foods from India and the British “West Indies”
- Parents and children alike will be asked to add to the mandala in a constructive way.
- Before leaving parents will complete a feedback form evaluating the similarities of
  - Diwali in their home country – if celebrated
  - Foods that were familiar across cultures.
- At the end of the night, parents leaving conferences will be asked to “de-construct” the mandala by taking a piece of it home with them.
APPENDICES

HINDU gods and goddesses

Lesson 2 Resources

GANESHA – THE REMOVER OF OBSTACLES

Hindu god of wisdom and literature and son of Parvati and Shiva. He is the remover of obstacles. He guards the door. He was the first scribe (writer) of the Mahabharata

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Knowledge, Eradicator of obstacles.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consort</td>
<td>Riddhi (affluence) Buddh (knowledge) Siddhi (perfection)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle</td>
<td>Mouse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [http://www.sanatansociety.com](http://www.sanatansociety.com) and The Metropolitan Museum of Art - The Art of South and Southeast Asia: A Resource for Educators
**BRAHMA – THE CREATOR**

Hindu god – creator and director of the Universe. He is the father of gods and humans alike. He is apart of the trinity with Vishnu and Shiva.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Creator, Generator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consort</td>
<td>Saraswati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle</td>
<td>Swan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [http://www.sanatansociety.com](http://www.sanatansociety.com) and The Metropolitan Museum of Art - *The Art of South and Southeast Asia: A Resource for Educators*
VISHNU – THE PRESERVER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Protector, Preserver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consort</td>
<td>Lakshmi, The Goddess of Wealth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle</td>
<td>Garuda (The Eagle Bird)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [http://www.sanatansociety.com](http://www.sanatansociety.com) and The Metropolitan Museum of Art - *The Art of South and Southeast Asia: A Resource for Educators*
Shiva as (Nataraja - dancing Lord Shiva)

**SHIVA – THE DESTROYER (OF EVIL)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Destroyer, Kind Hearted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consort</td>
<td>Parvati - sons Ganesha and Kartikay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle</td>
<td>Nandi (The Bull Representing Strength and Happiness)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [http://www.sanatansociety.com](http://www.sanatansociety.com) and The Metropolitan Museum of Art - *The Art of South and Southeast Asia: A Resource for Educators*
PARVATI

Hindu goddess – divine mother and graceful aspect of shakti – Parvati means Daughter of the Mountains – her father was Hamavat – King of the mountains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Virtuous, Fertility, Marital felicity, Asceticism, Power</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consort</td>
<td>Lord Shiva sons - Lord Ganesha, Lord Kartikay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle</td>
<td>Lion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [http://www.sanatansociety.com](http://www.sanatansociety.com) and The Metropolitan Museum of Art - *The Art of South and Southeast Asia: A Resource for Educators*
SARASWATI

Saraswati – Hindu goddess for learning and instruction, arts, music and knowledge
She is also a sacred river in India
Saraswati means – watery as in a river. She gives fertility and wisdom to the earth. She is also the wife of Brahma

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consort</td>
<td>Lord Brahma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle</td>
<td>Swan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lakshmi – Hindu goddess of wealth and beauty, fertility and power.

Diwali is held in honor of her.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Wealth, Fortune, Courage and Fertility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consort</td>
<td>Lord Vishnu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle</td>
<td>Owl</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 1: Session 1:

Please use the references **provided by the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Resources for Educators** located at the following two sites:

Lesson 1: Session 2:

Name ___________________________  Date ___________________________

Distinguishing the 2 C’S:
Continents versus Countries - What’s The Difference?

Write the number of the continent or the country onto the map to correspond to the appropriate continent or country. After labeling each area with the numbers, color in the countries in yellow.

1. Africa  5. Antarctica
2. Europe  6. Australia
3. India  7. North America
4. South America  8. Asia
9. Australia  10. Russia
Lesson 3: Motifs in Indian Art and The Mandala – Resources

Lesson 3 Extension Activity Resources – The mandala


As quoted from Chapter 5 (pages 54-60):

Mandala

In Hindu and Buddhist Trantracism, a symbolic design is used in performance of sacred rites and also as an instrument of meditation. For this purpose a design is created and called a mandala.

The concept of Mandala was prevalent during the Vedic age. All hymns of the Rigveda are classified in ten classes which are called Mandalas. Mandala indicates cyclical property. There was a strong Vedic tradition to recite Vedic hymns in a cyclical manner. For instance, there are 191 hymns in the tenth Mandala of Rigveda. Therefore 191 priests used to sit in a circle. The first priest used to recite the first hymn of the
Mandala. Then the 96th priest used to recite the second hymn. Then again the second priest used to recite the third hymn and the fourth is recited by the 97th priest. …In this arrangement, there are two interesting graphical patterns. Firstly, probably the circular setting arrangement is visualized to symbolically represent the cyclical nature of the world phenomenon and secondly, the pattern of recitation follows diametrically opposite sequence or order of recitation of hymns indicating that the Mandala is formed by connecting diametrically opposite points.

The Mandala is basically a representation of the universe, a consecrated area that serves as receptacle for the gods as a collection point for universal forces.

**Constructing A Mandala**

Mandalas are constructed from the center outward, beginning with a dot in the center.

…Lines are then drawn through the center dot to the four corners, creating a triangular geometric pattern. These lines are then used to construct a square palace with four gates. …From the inner square, the monks move outward to a series of concentric circles. Here the monks work in tandem, moving around the Mandala. They wait until each section is entirely completed before moving outward together. This ensures the maintenance of balance in composition.

…The shaped temple’s four gates symbolize ideas including:

- Four boundless thoughts: kindness, compassion, sympathy, and equanimity
- Four directions: east, west, north and south

[Examples are below:]
Lesson 4A: Designing a print for a Sari or Turban - Resources


As quoted from Chapter 5 (pages 54-60):

Is graphic design only a modern idea or do we have art practices from earlier times which could be called graphic design practices?

...What do you think? Yes, we can see many art activities that come under graphic design among the pre-modern and traditional people and communities. It ranges from drawings on thresholds to corners, walls, roofs, and front-yards of houses. ...handloom cloth, ceramic decorations, tattoos, designs on hands and palms, mehendi to religions icons and yantras, talismans, walls, and roofs of temples and forts in India and so on. All of the art activities can be distinguished from the modern or contemporary graphic design practices and may be called indigenous graphic design traditions...

Based on the tradition to which they belong, living Indian indigenous graphic designs and motifs may broadly be classified as under:

- Vedic and earlier design practices
- Folk and popular traditions
- Tribal design practices
- Tantric design practices

Vedic and Earlier Design Practices

...shapes such as the circle, square, and triangle are used to represent different gods and goddesses.

[Examples are below:]

Folk and popular traditions – Threshold Decorations

Traditionally in Indian villages, front yard or threshold is either plastered by mud or cow dung and some drawings are made on specially prepared walls and floors. The threshold could be understood as an intermediary space between the outer and inner world of the home.

Usually, the drawings are made in powder. This powder appears to be white in color in most parts of India. In some parts this white powder is powdered from a soft brittle white stone. But today, in most places, rice flour is being used for this purpose.

The practice of decorating floors is known with different names as Alpana or Alpona in Bengal, Aripana in Bihar, Jhuniti in Orissa, Mandana in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, Salhiya in Gujarat, Rangoli in Maharashtra, Muggu in Andhra Pradesh and Kalamezhuthu, Kolam in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala and in Uttar Pradesh it is known as Chowkpurna or Aripan.

[Examples are below:]
Kalamkari

...There are two distinctive styles of Kalamkari design in Indian – one, the *Srikalahasti* style and the other the *Masulipatnam* style of art. Both styles are different to practice. *Masulipatnam* is influenced by Persian art. The motifs used are trees, flowers, and leaf designs and are printed using blocks. The *Srikalahasti* style flourished around temples with Hindu patronage, thus has an almost religious identity, where in the kalam or pen is used for freehand drawing of the subject, and filling in the colors is entirely done by hand. The themes and deities are drawn from great epics like the *Ramayana, Mahabharata, Puranas*, and other mythological classics. These are depicted on scrolls, temple hangings and chariot banners.
References

Core Common English Language Arts Standards as developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), The National Governors Association’s Center for Best Practices. 2010. Website: [http://www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)


Jahari, Horash. Sanatan Website: [http://www.sanatansociety.com](http://www.sanatansociety.com)


