

#8771

INDIA: COUNTRY GIRL

Grade Levels: 5-10

15 minutes

BENCHMARK MEDIA 1999

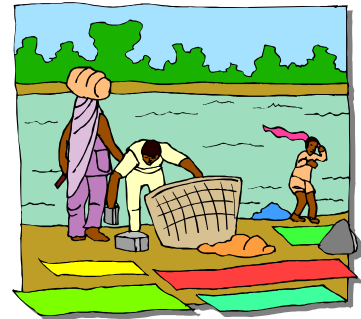
DESCRIPTION

Kaushalya lives in a village 60 miles from New Delhi. She attends the free high school, and dreams of becoming a doctor, but a parentally-arranged marriage may end those plans. Features the traditional and basic lifestyle of her village, a typical school day, and the restrictions and influence of the caste system. Village life changes as young people move to the cities.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Subject Area: Geography

- ◆ Standard: Understands the physical and human characteristics of place
 - Benchmark: Knows the human characteristic of places



INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To show how a girl and her family typically live in rural India.
2. To show how much tradition and the Hindu caste system determine so many aspects of rural life in India.
3. To show the small but steady improvements in village life.

BEFORE SHOWING

1. Using a wall map, have students locate India. How far is it from where they live? Note the locations of the subcontinent's major bodies of water and rivers, mountain terrain and lowlands, and major cities. The village of Fatehpur Beri, which is where the girl in the video lives, is about 60 miles from New Delhi. It lies in the fertile northern plain, in central India. Note that the Himalayas, the highest mountains in the world, form a barrier between the Indian subcontinent and the rest of Asia. How do these physical geographic features and climate compare with those of the United States?
2. Discuss elements that make up a regional or local culture such as religion, education, language, sports and leisure activities, foods, music, art, clothes, family structure and socioeconomic status, and other elements. Ask students to make a list of how various cultures have shaped their lives.

3. Discuss how terrain, climate and natural resources affect the way people live and work in your local area. Expand the concept to various regions of the country. When viewing the video, ask students to notice the specific links between terrain and climate and the way people in the village of Fatehpur Beri live and work.
4. Discuss how transportation and communications have influenced life today in the local area. How have historic land and air transportation routes with outside regions affected the local economy, local cultural values? What changes in local commerce and culture has been the result of modern communications? Ask students to note the transportation and communication links between the village and New Delhi.

AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

Stimulate a class discussion about physical geography and climate of Fatehpur Beri, and how it compares to the rest of India. Where are the largest cities located? Why? How do the mountains of India affect where the monsoon rains fall?



Applications and Activities

1. Divide the class into two groups, and assign one to a village girl like Kaushalya, who is attending school whereas her parents are illiterate farmworkers, and the other to a city girl of middle-class professional parents, who attends private school (as in the companion video *India: City Girl*). Ask the students to prepare a class presentation on a typical day in the life of their subject. What trends do they see for village girls, and city girls?
2. Ask students to plan a trip to rural and urban India, using maps, consulate tourist information, information from the Internet, books and articles, and the video. Reports should address how they would travel; where they would visit; what they want to see, do, and buy; when to travel and why; what clothing to bring; and what the weather and landscape would be like.

SUMMARY

More than 70% of the population in India live in small villages like Fatehpur Beri, about 60 miles from New Delhi. This fortunate village, however, is located in the fertile northern plain known as "India's Breadbasket." Occupations are still determined by a rigid social structure, or the caste system, which is closely linked to Hinduism. Most villages have craftspeople that serve basic needs, but for medical care, one must go to a larger town. Fatehpur Beri boasts both a primary and secondary school, which are free. Conveniences are few; some classes are held outdoors without desks. Classes are taught in English, the legacy of colonial Britain. Kaushalya, our country girl, lives with a typical extended family, which they jointly work on the land and their homes are clustered around a central courtyard, where most daily activities take place.

Kaushalya takes her studies seriously because she wishes to go to a university and become a doctor. But, it is more likely that she will soon have an arranged marriage, and meet her husband for the first time on her wedding night.

While some villages have electricity, few have sanitation or running water. Heavy rains during the monsoon season are vital for the crops. Now, television, a new luxury, is bringing the outside world to these people. Many young people are leaving the villages to seek opportunities in cities, and to escape the rigid lifestyle defined by the caste.

RELATED RESOURCES



Captioned Media Program

- Ashok by Any Other Name #3333
- Bengal Tiger #8631
- India: City Girl #8770
- My World Calcutta #3384



World Wide Web



The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and “kid-safe” sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **INDIAN CASTE SYSTEM**

<http://www.csuchico.edu/~cheinz/syllabi/asst001/spring98/india.htm>

Clear pictures of what kinds of groups Indian people are classified according to the caste system.

- **WELCOME TO INDIA**

<http://www.welcometoindia.com/index.asp>

Read about India’s basic facts, culture, cuisine, monetary exchange rate converter, and more.

- **APPU KIDS**

<http://www.appukids.com/>

Click on “AppuSafari” to learn about animals on an Indian safari. Also learn about Indian arts, dance, festivals, celebrities, mythology, and more.