



A day to discover...

# AMAZING INDIA!

Welcome to India, one of the world's most fascinating countries! India is the country with the second highest population (number of people) on the planet. It has many busy cities, a huge desert and some of the world's largest mountains. There is so much to explore - let's start!

## Kangchenjunga

(Kan-chun-joong-ga)  
The third highest mountain in the world - it's 8,586m high!



**1.3 BILLION**  
people live in India - wow!

**23 LANGUAGES**  
are spoken, with Hindi and English the most common

**7 IN 10**  
girls in India miss out on going to school

The national symbol is the endangered **BENGAL TIGER.**  
Aren't they beautiful?

**Thar Desert**  
Almost as big as Great Britain!

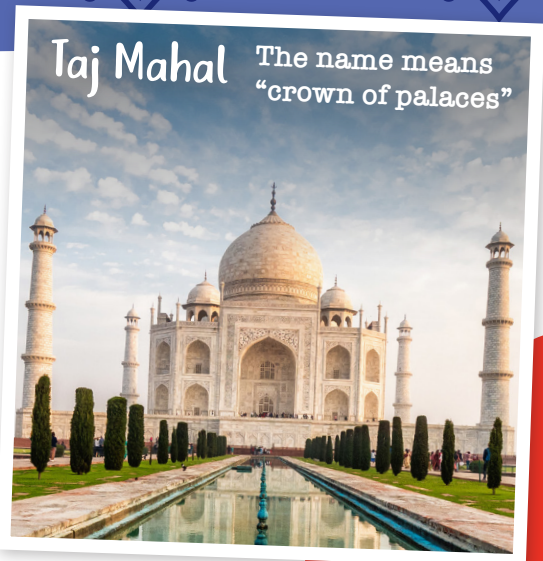


# Wonders of India

India has a unique culture. There are new people to meet, flavours to taste and sights to see, everywhere you go.

There's the capital, New Delhi, known for its packed marketplaces. There's the boiling hot Thar Desert, as well as the snowy Himalayan mountains. There are tropical rainforests, where you'll find the rare Bengal tiger and snow leopard.

And we can't forget the most famous sight of all, the Taj Mahal – a beautiful white monument built by an emperor!



## Have a taste

Of course, when in India, you can't miss the delicious food! Best known for its colourful curries, India is the home of spice – and produces **75% of all spices** in the world. The most popular are called **cumin**, **turmeric**, **coriander** and **garam masala**, and they taste so good, they're used in cooking all over the globe.

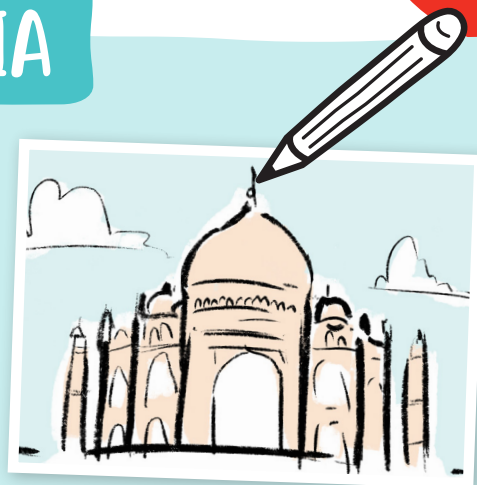
**Do you have any of these spices in your cupboard at home? If you do, why not try smelling them – can you describe their scents?**

## A POSTCARD FROM INDIA

Now you've learned more about this amazing country, why not tell your family and friends?

Take a piece of paper and write a postcard to a relative, as if you've just arrived in India to explore.

**What would you want them to know?** You could talk about all the **sights**, **smells** and **tastes** you've experienced – and draw something from India you've discovered today on the front!



## DID YOU KNOW?

India gets its name from the River Indus – the valley where people first settled here.

# Get colourful

Blue and red are traditional colours in India, and lots of women wear dresses and saris that have been printed with natural dyes (colours) made from plants and flowers.

Mehndi (men-dee), or henna, is a paste that girls use to paint patterns on their hands and feet for special occasions like weddings. In Indian culture, it brings **good luck** and the **dark red colour means love**.

Wooden blocks are used to print patterns. **Mandalas** look like flowers, and animals found in India, like elephants and peacocks, are also printed on saris and shawls to decorate them.



## Meet Kavya

Kavya is nine years old, and she's in Year 4 at her school in **Bangalore**. Many girls in India don't have the chance to go to school, but Kavya loves her classes, especially drawing. Kavya's teacher showed her how to practise on white paper first, then create her pictures and patterns with colourful crayons and bright paper.

Kavya lives in a very poor area where it can be unsafe for girls to play outside. But ActionAid helps to look after girls in Kavya's community, so they can grow up happy and safe.



## CREATE AND COLOUR

Here's a mandala – the flower print you'll find on women's clothing in India. Take your pencil and see if you can finish the pattern yourself, following the different curves and lines. Then, get colouring!



# Life in the big city

Nearly a quarter of Indian families live in cities – and most cities are very, very big! The three biggest cities in India are New Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai. They are bustling and crowded, full of beautiful buildings, colourful markets and the smell of spices.

Every city is filled with bright yellow rickshaws, beeping as they drive people through the busy streets. Rickshaws are like three-wheeled taxis – some have motors like a car but some have pedals like a bike.

It's very unusual to see a woman driving a rickshaw – but Talat is a rickshaw driver in a city called **Bhopal**.

*“Some people said I wouldn't be able to drive because I was a woman,” she says. “But other people were happy. Girls and women should have a way to bring them good money.”*



## Talat's story

Talat was only 17 when she got married. She was very happy at first, but then her husband's family started to treat her badly. So her mum helped her find a new home, at an ActionAid centre for women and girls who need somewhere safe to live.

Talat soon made new friends, and learned the skills she needed to become a rickshaw driver. **She's proud to be one of the first women in her city to do this job.**

## RICKSHAW ROLEPLAY!

Use your imagination and take your family on a rickshaw adventure. Will you drive them around a city you know, or will you drive them through an Indian city with all its sights and sounds?

First make your rickshaw. Maybe under a table with cushions to sit on? Or put two chairs next to each other and cover them with a colourful blanket. **Don't forget to beep your horn if anyone gets in your way...!**

**BEEEP!**



**DID YOU KNOW?**

In some countries, rickshaws are called tuk tuks because of the noise they make.

# Celebrating women and girls

Many families in India don't have enough food, or enough money to send all their children to school. When this happens, it's often the women and girls who miss out. But some girls and women are doing things to change this unfair situation! They're not just making life better for themselves, they're making life better for everyone. Let's discover more...

**ONLY 1  
IN 100 GIRLS**  
enrolled in school  
in India finish  
secondary  
school



## Girls' clubs

Some girls are getting together in clubs to talk about their right to go to school and to grow up healthy and safe. They help each other be confident to speak up about this to other children and to grown-ups. This is helping more people to see that girls and boys have the same rights. **Do you go to a club that helps you talk about important things?**

## Working together

Some women are starting small businesses together. They grow or make things people want to buy, and share the money they make. Then they use it to help give their whole families better food, and make sure all their children can go to school. **What would you sell if you started a business?**

## FOR SOMEONE SPECIAL...

**Today, tell a girl or woman (it could be someone in your family, or one of your friends) why they are special to you.**

Make a thank you card to tell them that you appreciate them. Maybe you could draw a picture of them on the front. Then on the inside, you could write what you like about them!



**Hope you've discovered lots of new things today. On your next Discovery Day you'll be learning what school is like for children in other countries – see you then!**