

India – a country of contrasts, dreams and nightmares

by Rita Reinheimer-Wolf



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In dieser Unterrichtseinheit setzen sich Ihre Lernenden mit den verschiedenen Facetten Indiens auseinander. Unter anderem mithilfe von Fakten, Texten, einem Film und einem Romanausschnitt erarbeiten sich die Lernenden Wissen über Geschichte, Alltag, Probleme, Herausforderungen und Zukunftsperspektiven des Staates. Hierbei trainieren und erweitern sie ihre Les-, Schreib-, Analyse- und Sprechkompetenz. Auf spielerische Weise vertiefen die Schülerinnen und Schüler schließlich das Gelernte in einer fiktiven Fernseh-talkshow.

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Competences and skills

By working with the material, students enhance their **reading comprehension**. They also improve their **writing skills** by writing a comment, a film review and a creative text. Additionally, they train their **viewing competences** by filling in a post-viewing questionnaire after having watched a film. **Speaking** is improved by giving a short speech on a topic. **Discussion skills** are enhanced when students participate in a discussion representing a protagonist from the material. Finally, the skills of working with a non-fictional text are practiced.

Overview:

List of abbreviations:

A Analysis

D Discussion/debate

PR Presentation

T Working with the text

W Writing

C Comment

M Mind map/visualising

R Research

V Vocabulary work

CT Creative Task

PM Placemat activity

RC Reading comprehension

VC Viewing comprehension

Topic	Material	Method
1: India – its past and present	M1–M3	C, PR, T, V, W
2: Slums and poverty	M4	M, PR, VC, W
3: Human trafficking	M5–M6	A, PR, R, RC, V
4: <i>My Name is Khan</i>	M7	PR, VC, W
5: <i>(Un)arranged Marriage</i>	M8–M9	A, CT, PM, PR, RC
6: Bangalore – India's Silicon Valley	M10–M11	D, T, V

Topic 1: India – its past and present

M1 A brief history of India



In the early 17th century, the British started being interested in India. At that time, the country had a rich culture, an efficient system of roads and a stable currency¹ throughout the Mughal Empire. Unfortunately, the Mughals² were weakened by invasions in the course of the 18th century. In 1804, the emperor³ had to ask the British East India Company (BEIC) for protection. At first, the Company ruled India in the name of the Mughal emperor, later on its own. During the time of the Company rule, the country underwent a tremendous change on many levels: railways and canals were constructed, a postal service was created and British-style courts were initiated. Additionally, a civil service⁴ was instituted. The Indian people, however, did not get used to being ruled by a foreign power. They considered the British to be arrogant and found it difficult to put up with the fact that the British demanded taxes on many goods which were necessary in everyday life. As a consequence, dissatisfaction of the Indian people was the cause of the First War of Indian Independence in 1857, also known as the Indian Mutiny⁵. This revolt had its origin in the Company's army and was only put down with the help of British regular soldiers. After the rebellion, India was directly administered⁶ by the Crown. Queen Victoria was the empress of India.

The British managed to enhance⁸ the infrastructure during the British Raj⁹. On the other hand, the economy was weakened. Furthermore, millions of people died as a consequence of famines¹⁰ and epidemics during this period. Government policies were blamed for this. Finally, the British agreed to allow the Indian people some limited self-government. This system was criticised by many intellectuals who were Western educated because they claimed complete independence. The Indian Independence Movement was formed by the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League. When the British finally withdrew from the Indian subcontinent in 1947, however, it was mainly Mahatma Gandhi's merit¹¹ who initiated the non-violent movement of civil disobedience.

Before the withdrawal, the British separated the Hindu and the Muslim populations in order to prevent sectarian¹² violence. Thus, a commission was set about drawing up boundaries¹³ for the Partition¹⁴ of India. The commission decided on new borders for a Muslim Pakistan and a secular India. The British Parliament approved these

Language



2. Read the text *A brief history of India*. Collect all the terms from the text that relate to the British Empire. Choose five expressions from your list and explain them using your own words.

Working with the text

3. Choose the most decisive events or incidents mentioned in the text and explain why they are essential.



4. Take a look at the *Facts and figures about India's present*. Write a brief factual and informative text on the basis of the data. In order to improve the style of your text, use some of the following connecting words and adverbs:

Listing arguments/facts:	Comparing facts:
to begin with in the first place last but not least	likewise in the same way compared with ...
Adding arguments:	Summarising/concluding facts:
furthermore moreover in addition to	in conclusion briefly it follows that taking everything into account
Giving reasons:	Emphasising facts or arguments:
because of consequently for this reason on account of ... not explain why	absolutely entirely seriously thoroughly utterly

[...] to combat human trafficking have yielded mixed results. [...], the Indian government will likely need to do more to aid victims and crack down on officials who are involved in human trafficking. [...] The cycle of human bondage in India must be broken, and only time will tell if the efforts, past and present, of the Indian government and other outside organizations will pay off.

Source: Victoria Watson: *Human Trafficking in India: Abuse from the rural elite and the wider implications*, in: [foreignpolicyblogs.com, 18th July 2018](https://foreignpolicyblogs.com/2018/07/18/human-trafficking-in-india-abuse-from-the-rural-elite-and-the-wider-implications/). Source: <https://foreignpolicyblogs.com/2018/07/18/human-trafficking-in-india-abuse-from-the-rural-elite-and-the-wider-implications/>

Annotations

- 1 **prevalent**: common, widespread – 2 **bondage**: Gefangenschaft, zur Begleichung von Menschen – 3 **servitude**: vertraglich abgesicherte Sklaverei – 4 **enticement**: Lockung, Reiz, Verführung – 5 **illusions**: not being able to see what is really going on / write

M6 Worksheet: Human trafficking

Pre-reading activity

1. Collect expressions that belong to the semantic field of human trafficking.

.....

Reading comprehension



2. Summarise the content of the article.

.....

Analysis



3. Analyse the tone of the article.

.....

Research



4. Conduct a research on the driving forces of modern slavery.

.....

Speaking



5. Prepare a speech on measures to be taken in order to end human trafficking. Include the results from your research.

Topic 4: *My Name Is Khan*

M7 Worksheet: *My Name Is Khan*

Pre-viewing activity

1. Bollywood – what do you associate with the term? Collect ideas on your own first and then share your associations in small groups.

Working with the film



2. Watch the film *My Name Is Khan*. Analyse it with the help of the questions below. Choose 3 questions from the list. Your teacher will make sure that all questions are covered.
 - a) Describe a key scene of the film *My Name Is Khan* (What is the main conflict? Who? What? Where? When? How? Why?)
 - b) Is there anything that surprised or annoyed you about the film? If so, why?
 - c) Characterise the protagonist Khan.
 - d) Characterise Khan's wife Mandira.
 - e) Summarise the message of the film.
 Use the grid below for your notes.

Speaking



3. In a group of four students, think of questions you could ask Khan about his situation in society. Decide who of you represents Khan, the protagonist of the film. Adopt a hot seat activity with Khan in front of the class.

Writing



4. Write a film review on *My Name Is Khan*. Consider the guidelines below when writing your text.

Guidelines for writing a film review

First step: Plot/characters/theme

- Briefly summarise the plot of the film. Do not forget to mention the title and the type of the film and the director.
- Briefly present the main characters and their relationship to each other.
- Briefly describe the theme(s) dealt with in the film.

Second step: Cinematic aspects

- Point out essential cinematic devices which contribute to the atmosphere of the film.
- Explain the film's message and the director's intention.

Third step: Evaluation

- Describe what you like/dislike about the film.
- State whether the film has succeeded in conveying its message.
- Evaluate the actors' performance. (In how far have they portrayed the characters well?)
- Mention weak and strong points of the film.

Fourth step: Conclusion

- Is the film worth viewing?
- To whom would you recommend the film?

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You may use the following websites as examples of film reviews:

www.asinmovieweb.com

www.rottentomatoes.com

Khan

- You refer to your psychological disability and its consequences for your life.
- You talk about your inner conflicts.
- You refer to the ups and downs in your life.
- You talk about your greatest wishes, hopes and fears.
- You talk about your attitude towards the USA.
- You ask Manjit questions about the challenges in his life.

Manjit

- You talk about your special situation as an individual living in two cultures.
- You talk about your relationship to your father.
- You describe your emotional reaction to your father's determination to find a wife from India for you.
- You explain in how far you feel more British than Indian.
- You talk about your attitude towards Indian culture and tradition.
- You ask Khan questions about the challenges in his life.

Talk show host

- You welcome the two guests introducing them to the viewers.
- You start the conversation by asking an adequate question referring to the general topic of the talk show.
- You make sure that the conversation keeps going.
- You also make sure that the two guests get an equal share of talking time.
- You can intervene by asking provocative questions about the guest's lives during the conversation.
- You have the task to sum up the main ideas at the end of the show and to finish the conversation.