

Global Studies Professional Development for K to 12 Educators



Teach India Project

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Introduction

The workshops and lecture demonstrations offered by Teach India Project as part of the Professional Development programs for K to 12 educators are based on the following three themes:

- Cultural Explorations: Traditions, Music, Art and Folk Life,
- Discover Vedic Math: A fast, easy and fun way to do math
- Modern India

Additionally, there are two other sessions that are stand-alone offerings. We also offer site visits, which are described later in this document.

We plan to offer five sessions for each of these themes. Each session is two hours long. The typical structure is as follows:

- Introduction (10 minutes)
- Lecture/demonstration (45 minutes)
- Break (15 minutes)
- Individual activity (20 minutes)
- Group activity/discussion (20 minutes)
- Wrap-up (10 minutes)

Group activities will be by grade level.

The list of the topics for the sessions is a work-in-progress as we reach out to more presenters.

We invite you to browse this menu of offerings and encourage you to suggest more topics.



Cultural Explorations: Traditions, Music, Art and Folk Life

Through this series of lecture/demonstrations participants, are invited to explore aspects of Indian culture. Each session is 2 hours long and structured to meet the needs of elementary, middle and high school educators. The lecture will be followed by individual and group activities organized by grade level.

Rites of Passage: Cultural traditions of rice in India: We will trace the symbolism and meaning of rice used in ceremonies throughout one's life in India. We will discuss the place of rice in cultural traditions in different parts of India while exploring the region's geography, climate and foods.

Introduction to Indian music with three musical instruments: We will explore the basics of Indian classical music, compare with Western classical music, and explore the influences of classical Indian music on pop music from Bollywood. Three musical instruments – the tanpura, tabla and harmonium will be demonstrated along with videos and music clips.

Folk life and folk art: Heart of cultural traditions

Even though India is developing and changing rapidly, it still lives largely in its villages. The key to understanding India lies in its deep traditions that sustain the unique Indian ethos and affect its current world views. Folk and tribal art forms provide an unadulterated view into the soul of India's most sustaining values. Experience "Madhubani" art with a practicing artist who is passionate about promoting a deeper understanding of India through her art.

Elements of Indian classical dance and music

Indian classical dance and music is arguably an important key to understanding Indian cultural traditions and its evolution. Indian classical dance and music forms dating back many centuries are still practiced all over the world. While there are many variations of the form, they all are rooted in the 'Natya Shastra', a text of dramaturgy dating back 2000 years. Many Indian American children learn dance and music and in fact spend significant number of hours during the week learning the art form. For many non Indian children, after Indian food, dance and music is their first introduction to Indian culture. We hope to present elements of the art form and a few structured activities that are an interesting way to understand Indian culture.

Indian Dance: Religious and cultural themes and current practice

The influence of religion is evident in the performing arts of India. Dance, music and poetry emerged as soulful expressions of nature and led to the creation of pastoral deities in temples, the formal places of worship. Soon the temple emerged as a sanctuary for the performing arts and its patrons as the greatest and most generous supporters of the sustained growth of dance and music. Performing arts became the reflection of the

passion and dreams of the people. In the most sublime and beautiful sense, dance became a form of yoga transcending the limits of the body and mind. The teacher and student (Guru-Shisya) formed a life-long bond in their pursuit of artistic concepts and creativity. This session will discuss high-level aspects of specific dance forms from Southern India. In this session, we will discuss the relationship between religion and specific dance forms from Southern India, explore the power of dance to communicate and understand the nuances of bond between Guru and Shisya. The participants will have an opportunity to learn specific hand and body movements that are used to emote stories and poetry.

The Mahabharata: The great Indian epic

Session 1: The Mahabharata is an Indian epic set in pre-history. It has almost 100,000 verses of 24-32 syllables each, about the events that led up to a Great War between members of a royal family. The Mahabharata is the key to understanding the Indian ethos and world-view. We will present a summary of the Mahabharata, followed by a discussion of the Mahabharata as a literary tour-de-force, pre-empting literary techniques we consider modern such as self-referential composition, flashbacks and flash-forwards, magical realism, embedding of story-telling within story-telling, metaphors both known and yet-to-be-discovered, a carrier of living advice, and a guide to strategy in negotiation.

Session 2: A Reimagined Mahabharata and parallels with modern times

A Reimagined Mahabharata is an alternative pseudo-history, set around 2000 B.C.E. In this session we will map the events that must have occurred during the crisis, with developments in the story set on a sub-continental scale. This is speculative fiction, intended to evoke questions and seek answers to the issues that will be familiar to us as we face our own climate change crisis. A summary of the original Mahabharata will be presented but some familiarity with the original will be useful.

Discover Vedic Math: A fast, easy and fun way to do math

We offer this workshop as a set of 5 sessions of two hours each to teach simple Vedic Math strategies to solve a wide range of mathematical problems. The sessions are developed and designed to focus on practical tools that can be easily and effectively used in math classrooms to make math learning more fun, and to build the confidence and competence of students.

Session 1:

In this session, we will understand the history Vedic Math and the advantage of learning Vedic Math. We will then learn the strategy to quickly subtract any number from the base and the sub-base number. We will also discuss the concept of the digit sum. Participants will do exercises to practice the strategies learned and discuss the best way to introduce the concept in math classrooms at different grade levels.

Session 2:

In this session, we will learn strategies to quickly multiply numbers in special conditions. We will learn different rules and understand when to apply them. We will learn different ways to approach the same problem, thereby giving us a chance to explore the flexibility that Vedic Math offers.

Participants will do exercises to practice the strategies learned and discuss the best way to introduce the concept in math classrooms at different grade levels.

Session 3:

Is this math or magic? Mentally multiply numbers like 9998×9992 in less than 10 seconds.

In this session we will learn to quickly multiply numbers with two or more digits that are near the **same** base numbers. Easy-to-understand and easy-to-remember rules will be taught in order to apply learn multiplication when both numbers are greater than the base numbers, both numbers are less than the base numbers, and one number is greater and the other number is less than the base number.

Participants will do exercises to practice the strategies learned and discuss the best way to introduce the concept in math classrooms at different grade levels.

Session 4:

Is this math or magic? Mentally multiply numbers like 100115×10002 in less than 10 seconds.

In this session we will learn to quickly multiply numbers with two or more digits that are near **different** base numbers. Easy-to-understand and easy-to-remember rules will be taught in order to apply learn multiplication when both numbers are greater than the base numbers, both numbers are less than the base numbers, and one number is greater and the other number is less than the base number.

Participants will do exercises to practice the strategies learned and discuss the best way to introduce the concept in math classrooms at different grade levels.

Session 5:

In this session, we will quickly review strategies learnt in the previous four sessions.

Then, we will discuss topics such as:

- Vedic Math vs. Conventional Math
- Can Vedic Math be integrated in the school curriculum?
- How is Vedic Math helpful to teachers and students?
- What is the best age to introduce the concept of Vedic Math?

By the end of the session, we aim to find answers to these questions with inputs from participants.

Modern India

Modern India is a mind boggling mixture of complexities that include issues of religion, caste, gender, language, nationalism, colonialism, democracy, secularism and the economy. In the words of scholar Ramchandra Guha, “These issues have a resonance in our own times, not just in India but everywhere in the world where violence is opposed to non-violence, where people of different faiths have to learn to live with each other, where the marginalized struggle for their rights, and where states have to chose between privileging a single 'national' culture or permitting a hundred flowers to bloom.”

Introduction to Modern South Asia: A historian’s perspective

The Genesis of the India-Pakistan conflict in Kashmir

More

Three lessons mapped to the NCSS national standards for social studies: Teach India Project will share the analysis and design process we followed to review the requirements of the NCSS national standards for social studies while creating three lessons for our website. We will demonstrate these lessons, which take a blended approach to online learning and then review them with workshop participants. Participants will do exercises and activities described in the lessons using the internet and other resources.

Connections:

Essential question/s:

Cultural Parenting: A parent workshop: Presented by author Meenal Pandya who will lead a discussion about how to raise a culturally balanced child, one who is confident of his or her own cultural heritage and respectful of others. [More here](#)

Site visits: To the “other” places in your neighborhood: Site visits to ethnic grocery stores, temples and restaurants offer a look into the day to day lives of immigrant groups living in our neighborhoods. We can arrange one or more site visits based on the group’s interests.

Contact us

