

### Summary Description

This is the eleventh in a series of 12 lessons that introduces the student to Asian American history.

### Learning Objectives

To learn a few facts about Indian American history and culture.

### Approximate Time for Lesson

50 minutes

### Suggested Maturity Level for Instruction

Student should be able to read simple words and perform simple addition and subtraction. Also, student should be able to sit still and engage in one-on-one conversation.

### References:

"A historical perspective of Americans of Asian Indian origin 1790-1997", Srirajasekhar Bobby Koritala - [http://www.infinityfoundation.com/mandala/h\\_es/h\\_es\\_korit\\_histical.htm](http://www.infinityfoundation.com/mandala/h_es/h_es_korit_histical.htm)

### Materials Needed

1. Internet Access - Pull up the following:

- a. Atlas of the World (go to <http://maps.google.com/maps>)
- b. Historical pictures of Indian Americans in the United States (go to [http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/SSEAL/echoes/chapter3/chapter3\\_2.html](http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/SSEAL/echoes/chapter3/chapter3_2.html))
- c. Picture of Indigo plant (go to [http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://farm1.static.flickr.com/239/522413382\\_348decf768.jpg%3Fv%3D0&imgrefurl=http://www.flickr.com/photos/goldtoblue/522413382/in/set-72157600335667227/&usq=\\_PWbiu5BvyvVsvQOMtRCqq6qhEFE=&h=500&w=375&sz=108&hl=en&sta](http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://farm1.static.flickr.com/239/522413382_348decf768.jpg%3Fv%3D0&imgrefurl=http://www.flickr.com/photos/goldtoblue/522413382/in/set-72157600335667227/&usq=_PWbiu5BvyvVsvQOMtRCqq6qhEFE=&h=500&w=375&sz=108&hl=en&sta))

2. Indian American Laborer Coloring Worksheet

3. Crayons

### Preparation

Make sure you have the materials open, printed and/or available prior to starting this lesson.

### Suggested Lesson Approach

#### Introduction (5 minutes)

1. Teacher: Like the Chinese Americans, the first group of Indian Americans landed in the western part of the United States. Remember what side "western" is? I'll give you a hint, it's either the left side of the country or the right side of the country. [\[Engage the Student in discussion and come to the point that western means left side of the country\]](#).
2. Teacher: Western means left side. And just like the Chinese Americans during the Gold Rush

(remember that lesson?), the Indian Americans came from India to places like California, Oregon, and Washington [[point to these states on the World Map](#)].

Lesson (40 minutes)

1. Teacher: Now, why do you think the Indian Americans came to the United States? [[Engage the Student in conversation but make the point that the Indian Americans came here for a better opportunity for to provide a better for their families](#)].
2. Teacher: That's right. The Indian Americans came here for a better opportunity. But here's where the Indian Americans were different than the Chinese. During those times in India, another country called Great Britain had control over India. And whatever Great Britain said had to be done or else you were punished. How would you feel if another country controlled your own country? [[Engage the Student in conversation](#)].
3. Teacher: Back in those days, Great Britain created giant famines in India, which is located here [[point to India on the World Map - use the zoom out function by clicking the minus sign. Then click anywhere in the map and drag to the right until you see India, located just under China](#)]. A famine is when there is not enough food to feed the people. How did Great Britain do this? They did it by ordering the Indian farmers to stop growing food and start growing other things that Great Britain could sell and make money from, like Indigo, a plant which was used to color things like clothes. Here is what Indigo look like. [[Show Student pictures of Indigo plant](#)].
4. Teacher: Since it was getting harder and harder to feed a family, the Indians started to move to the United States. The Indians helped build railroads, work in lumber mills, and some worked in farms.
5. Teacher: But, like the Chinese, the Americans did not like the Indians because they felt that if more and more Indians came, they would take the American jobs away. Also, the Indians looked different than the Americans; most had dark skin and some of them wore turbans as a part of their religion. Here's a picture of what some of the Indians looked like. [[Show picture of American Indians](#)].
6. Teacher: And because the Indians were taking jobs away from the Americans, the Americans made a new rule where they did not allow anymore Indians to come to the United States. What do you think about that rule? [[Engage the Student in conversation. If the Student asks what a turban is, inform the Student that some Indians who believe in a religion called Sikhism wear special cloths over their heads called a turban. Tell the Student that she will get a chance to see and color turbans in today's lesson](#)].
7. Teacher: In fact, there were times when a lot of the Americans would team up and charge into the homes of Indians so they could kick the Indians out of the homes and even burn the homes down. Well, do you think the Indians liked to be treated this way? [[Get Student's response](#)].

8. Teacher: That's right. I wouldn't like it either and it would be really scary. And because there was so much fear and hate towards the Indians, the Indians were forced to find other work that didn't make them team up with Americans. This is how Indians went to farming.
9. Teacher: And the Indians were really good at farming since most of the Indians who came over from India in those days were farmers. These Indians bought the land that the American people did not want for farming because it was very hard to make anything grow. But the Indians were so good at farming that they did make things grow and were even able to buy more land for their farms.
10. Teacher: Well, every time it looks good for the Indians, something bad seems to happen. And it did again because now the Americans thought that the Indians would soon buy up all the land. And so, the Americans made a rule that said Indians cannot own land anymore and just like that, all the land that the Indians owned was not theirs anymore. How would that make you feel if you worked so hard to buy some land but then it gets taken away from you because of a new rule? [[Engage the Student in conversation](#)].
11. Teacher: Well, even though times were tough for these Indians, they fought for what they believed was fair. And little by little, Americans started to understand that Indians deserved to be treated better and so, Indians already in the United States got to keep their land and Indians who wanted to come here were allowed to come in.
12. Teacher: When this happened, many other Indians came to the United States and they had skills which our country paid a lot of money for like, doctor skills, business skills, and computer skills. Why, it's true that Indian Americans as a group, out of all the Asian Americans, and out of ALL Americans, make the most money and have the most education in school, which is what makes them so successful today.
13. Teacher: [[Giving the Indian American Laborer Coloring Worksheet to the Student](#)] OK - time for a coloring activity. This is a picture of some of the first Indian Americans working in the fields of the United States. Try to remember from our lesson about how the Indians looked like and where they worked. [Give the Student 10 minutes to color the worksheet].
14. Teacher: That's a great job coloring - it looks real to me. Can you point to me where the turban is in your picture? [[Get correct response from Student](#)].
15. Teacher: Today, the Indian Americans are the second largest group of Asian Americans (the first being the Chinese Americans) and they continue to be a proud and successful group of people. OK, ready now for review questions? [[Get positive response from the Student and ask the following](#)]:

- a) Why did the Indians go to the United States? For a better opportunity.
- b) What is one thing that the Chinese Americans had in common with the Indian Americans when coming to the United States? Any one of the following: 1) Indian Americans first landed in the western side of the United States, 2) Indian Americans worked on the railroads or in farming, 3) The first Indian Americans were skilled in farming, 4) Americans felt that the Indian Americans would take away their jobs, and 5) Indian Americans went to the United States for a better opportunity.
- c) Why were the first Indian Americans so good at growing food? Because most of them were farmers in India.

Help the Student review the materials and correct any errors with the Student].

Wrap Up (5 minutes)

Teacher: [Clapping] Great job today! Guess what? One more lesson to go and you will be done reviewing the largest groups of Asian Americans today! Do you have any questions about the Indian Americans before we finish our lesson? [Engage in conversation with the Student, research questions on the Internet, and close the lesson].