

# South Asia

## RESOURCE GUIDE



**AFGHANISTAN • BANGLADESH • BHUTAN  
INDIA • MALDIVES • NEPAL • PAKISTAN • SRI LANKA**

Chicago Public Schools | Office of Language and Cultural Education

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# Acknowledgements

The South Asia Cultural Heritage Guide was made possible with the support and encouragement of Mr. Arne Duncan and Mr. Manuel Medina. This guide will enhance the existing multicultural curriculum of the Chicago Public Schools and will be instrumental in promoting respect for, as well as an awareness and understanding of all cultures.

The Office of Language and Cultural Education of the Chicago Public Schools facilitated this resource guide.

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

RICHARD M. DALEY  
MAYOR

April 19, 2004

As Mayor and on behalf of the City of Chicago, I am pleased to introduce you to the South Asian American Heritage Resource Guide.

The guide presents the rich history, culture, customs, and artistry of the countries of South Asia, as well as information to help students and staff appreciate the beauty of the region. South Asia's history and contributions to art, music, dance, religion, food, science, and medicine, are well presented in this volume, from prehistoric times to the present.

As Mayor of a city with a large South Asian American population, I welcome this curriculum resource guide and urge administrators and staff to utilize this book to explore the history and heritage of this fascinating region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Richard M. Daley".

Mayor



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June 10, 2004

To Our Teachers:

America is rich in diversity and ethnicity. Every day our country welcomes immigrants from all over the world. Diversity means strength, strength means power and power equals opportunities.

The Chicago Public Schools also values those same characteristics of diversity and ethnicity. Therefore, it is with great pleasure that we provide the *South Asia Cultural Heritage Resource Guide*, designed to assist teachers and students in learning about the history and cultures of South Asia.

Each and every day we, at the Chicago Public Schools, strive for excellence. It is our job to prepare our students to function in a global society. This resource guide is one of many tools we use to help prepare our children to live and work even better in today's world.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael W. Scott".

Michael W. Scott  
President  
Chicago Board of Education

MWS:pf



CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Arne Duncan  
Chief Executive Officer

April 19, 2004

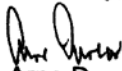
Dear Educators:

This *South Asian* addition of the Resource Guide series is a fantastic source of information that vividly presents South Asia and its customs. It gives teachers and students a better understanding of South Asian contributions in society, both historical and contemporary. I am sure that teachers will find it useful both in teaching South Asian children about their heritage and in introducing this growing cultural group to other children.

It is important that we do this. The United States continues to be an amalgam of people from all corners of the world. We are striving to create a truly multicultural society, in which the contributions of each group are recognized and appreciated. This is a difficult task, but the Heritage Resource Guides are making it easier.

The teachers who contributed to this guidebook are to be commended for their outstanding work.

Sincerely,

  
Arne Duncan



Dr. Barbara Eason-Watkins  
Chief Education Officer

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Chief Education Office • 125 South Clark Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor • Chicago, Illinois 60603  
Telephone 773/553-1490 • FAX 773/553-1399

May 2004

Dear Teachers:

The South Asia Heritage Resource Guide signifies the commitment of Chicago Public Schools to develop diverse, inclusive curriculum representative of our multicultural student population. The Office of Language and Cultural Education developed this guide to assist you in introducing our students to the ancient history of South Asian countries, as well as their rich contributions to contemporary Western culture.

One of a teacher's key responsibilities is to help students understand and appreciate their multicultural environment. The many activities and information in this guide will enrich and broaden the lives of all students as they learn about a magnificent cultural heritage and traditions other than their own.

I am positive you will find ways to incorporate this rich compendium into your teaching material.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Eason-Watkins". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Dr. Barbara Eason-Watkins  
Chief Education Officer



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Manuel J. Medina  
Officer

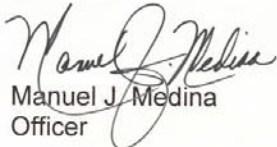
Dear Readers:

The South Asia Heritage Resource Guide is a welcome addition to the multicultural series initiated by the Office of Language and Cultural Education. It offers materials covering the very beginnings of civilization to present day South Asian Culture. I encourage you to use the guide and celebrate the rich heritage and history the South Asian.

The guide, developed for elementary and middle school level students, covers South Asian discoveries and contributions over the centuries. It is hoped that this guide will further encourage students, teachers, administrators and community members to discover and learn more about the fascinating South Asian cultural legacy.

I wish to thank all the persons who worked to help make this guide a reality. One of the educational goals of Chicago Public Schools is to foster an appreciation of Chicago's magnificent cultural tapestry. The South Asia Heritage Resource Guide will serve to broaden our students' horizons and enhance multicultural education in Chicago Public Schools.

Sincerely,

  
Manuel J. Medina  
Officer

*Children First*

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