

# This is Your Heritage...

## Stories from the South Gloucestershire Indian Community

### Resources for Schools - JOURNEYS

The video clips, discussions and activities are appropriate for **Key Stage 2**. You will find National Curriculum, PSHE and RE links in the overview sheet.

Watch the video of extracts about different journeys with the children [Journeys](#) (total duration 7minutes 20 seconds).

There is a prompt to pause the video between each person allowing you to ask focus questions and have group discussions.

If you don't have access to a video player, you can read the transcript below with the children. The children can work in pairs, or groups, or as a whole class.

#### **SUGGESTED MATERIALS FOR ACTIVITIES**

Print out pictures of the four people in the video (or simply write their name on a card). Paper and pens, drawing materials.

#### **BACKGROUND AND FOCUS QUESTIONS**

Before watching the videos, you might like to discuss with the some of the following:

**Immigration** – means a person and/or their family move to a new country from the country where they were born.

**Migration** – a long journey to a new home. When people migrate they are often changing homes permanently.

**Windrush** - In 1948, Britain was beginning to recover from the devastating effects of the Second World War.. There was a huge shortage of labour.

In this year, the British Nationality Act was passed, which gave everyone who lived in the United Kingdom (UK), or any of the British colonies around the world, the same rights to live and work in the UK. At that time, the British colonies included many of the Caribbean islands, including The Bahamas, Barbados, Trinidad and Jamaica.

On 15th April 1948, a small advertisement was placed in a newspaper announcing a 'passenger opportunity' to sail from Jamaica to the UK on the *HMT Empire Windrush*, 500 people bought tickets. Between 1948 and 1971 many more people from the British colonies, **including India** migrated to the UK. People who arrived in Britain during this period are often called The **Windrush Generation**.



**MARIA COELHO** - *Winterbourne*.

I think he (Dad) came over here because it was in that first wave of mass migration to this country. It was post-war. This country was asking for people to come, and just like people came over on the Windrush, my dad got himself on P&O Strathnaver. It took him about two weeks to get over here and I don't know whether he had a plan. I think he just knew that he'd find out what the opportunities were when he got here.

He felt that he needed to leave school and support his brother. I think that might have been some of the decision of coming over here because he felt he could then send money back to support his mum and his brother back in India.

Later on, I actually was going through my mum's possessions, and I found some postcards that he'd actually bought on the ship, and he'd written on the back of the postcards, 'this is where we held mass', so because obviously his religion was quite important to him, 'this is where we had had dances in the evening', 'this is where we ate our lunch'. And so it's clearly scribed on the back of the postcards, and those were really significant to me because up until that time I knew he'd come over on the ship, but I didn't know which one. I've subsequently been able to look it up on the internet, because obviously it's a fascinating part of my history.

### **FOCUS QUESTIONS** (can be rephrased to ask before or after film)

1. Have any of you ever been on a journey on a ship? How long for? How long did Maria's dad travel on the boat?
2. If you were taking a one suitcase with everything you needed to move home, (not a holiday) what would you pack?
3. What reason did Maria give for her father wanting to come to the UK?



**ANJU PATEL** - *Bradley Stoke, Bristol*.

My father had a friend who was already living in England in the West Midlands and obviously Dad had kept in touch. It transpires that he sponsored him to come to England for a better life, basically. So, Mum and Dad came with my brother and my younger sister back in 1966. Yeah, me and my older sister, we stayed behind with my grandparents.

Back in those days, there was no telephones and things like that, so you just got a letter every week, ten days, you know, and we'd write a letter back to Mum and Dad and that was our form of communication for three years.

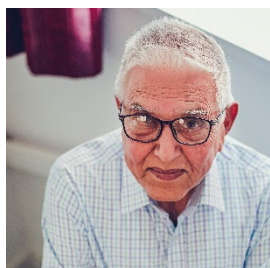
They sent us letters saying, 'here you're going to be coming over.' And my uncle arranged our passports and our tickets and everything and dropped us off at Mumbai airport. Me and my sister were traveling on our own. It was arranged with the airline company that one of the air hostesses

was going to be sort of our guardian looking after us until we landed. We didn't go like all the normal passengers would go; we went with the crew.

We met or were greeted by hailstones, and it was like something I've never seen before. It was cold. We drove what seemed like forever and ever. And we drove to the West Midlands because my parents and the uncle, they lived in Wolverhampton, so we arrived in Wolverhampton.

## FOCUS QUESTIONS

1. When Anju's parents came to England? Who did Anju and her sister stay with and where?
2. How do you think they might have felt when they left India and their grandparents to come to England?
3. What was one of the things about the weather in the UK that Anju noticed that she had never seen before?



**PREM SAGAR MIDHA** - *Little Stoke, Bristol*

I came to this country just to do my post-graduation and also to get some experience. I was curious. How these people have ruled the world. What qualities they have got? I want to see, to experience those qualities. So those two reasons, money didn't bring me to this country, I was doing well financially, a good job, everything is fine. They advertised in national papers that the British Government that they wanted engineers, doctors, and teachers. And they said they will, anybody who wants to come, and that person is successful, they give him a permanent visa over here.

After getting off the plane to collect my luggage and there was none, my suitcase was not there. After some time they brought a suitcase to me, I opened it and it belonged to a woman, not me. A similar suitcase and they had sarees and this and that, and my warm clothing was not there. So, I was at the Heathrow Airport with, more or less, a jumper and it was snowing outside, actually.

## FOCUS QUESTIONS

1. Why did Prem want to come to the UK?
2. Why did the British Government want people from other countries to come to the UK?
3. How do you think he felt when he realised his suitcase was missing?



## **NITHYA BALASUBRAMANIAM AND PRABU KARUPPANNASAMY -**

*Kingswood, Bristol*

Nithya: I wanted to study abroad, but I wanted to come here with a purpose to learn how businesses work here. To understand how this country works. I mean, my idea was to learn businesses and in the Western world, take those principles, go back, and start a business on my own.

So, I sat in the bus and my dad dropped me and he sat next to me in the bus, and he said, "All these years I thought you were going to finish your school, you're going to finish your college. And I was prepared to get you married to someone and all these years I was prepared to do that for you. I never thought you would have this ambition."

And then he said, "When I was young, I wanted to be in the Navy, and I even got selected. But my grandparents, his parents, wouldn't let him go because he was a precious child, only son. So however, I don't stop you. I want you to go pursue what you want to do." But, coming from a man who has never seen a place beyond India; he said, "This is the opportunity for you, make the best use of it and set a good example so other girls could follow you."

*(Interviewer: when you arrived in England, what did you think?)*

Honestly, I was shocked. You know what? I was used to Hollywood movies, I thought it was going to be very colourful and fabulous and different kind of. But it was so traditional. The country was so, I felt it was no different from India, the modern version of India is what I saw in London at that time.

Prabu: As soon as I stepped out of the lift out of Heathrow, so I was like freezing. I didn't know what to expect. I didn't bring my jacket. I probably had a shirt, probably had my, you know, the slippers on and so a pair of jeans, that's it. I didn't have a jacket. So, it was freezing honestly. (You was not prepared?) No, not one bit.

### **FOCUS QUESTIONS**

1. Why did Nithya want to come to the UK to study?
2. Why had her father thought her life would be like and why was he happy to let her come to the UK?
3. When she arrived Nithya was shocked at what the UK was like. What had she expected and why?
4. Prabu was coming from a hot country to a much colder country. If you were travelling in the winter from the UK, what do you think you would pack in your suitcase?

## Who said that?

Print out the four pictures of the people in the film. Put one on four different tables around the classroom. (So, there is a Prem table, Anju table etc)

Read out the statements below about the stories and ask the children to go to the picture of the person who the statement is about.

Alternatively, you could write out their name, or stay seated and do as question and answers.

Nithya and Prabu



Prem



Anju



Maria



	Questions	Answers
	Reasons for leaving	
1	I left India because I wanted to study abroad	Nithya
2	My father needed to earn more money to support his mother and brother in India	Maria
3	My parents came for a better life	Anju
4	I was curious about England. I wanted to see what these people who had ruled the world were like	Prem
	Leaving	
5	It was just after the Second World War and England was asking people to come to England to work	Maria
6	My dad said he never expected me to want to leave India, but he told me to go and set a good example to other girls	Nithya
7	The British Government advertised in a newspaper that they wanted teachers, doctors and engineers	Prem
	Journey	
8	On the ship there were dances, and religious services	Maria
9	We travelled on our own, but were looked after by an air hostess	Anju
10	I lost all my luggage and didn't have any warm clothes	Prem
	Arriving	
11	I was surprised at how traditional London was. It was more like modern India.	Nithya
12	I was at the Heathrow Airport with, more or less, a jumper, and it was snowing outside	Prem
13	I was freezing. I had no jacket and slippers on	Prabu
14	We were met by hailstones. It was something I'd never seen before	Anju

## Postcards home



Anju said that when her parents left for England, she and her sister lived for three years with their grandparents in India. Each week they wrote a letter to their parents.

Maria found the post cards her father bought on the ship on his journey to England. He wrote on them about his journey.

Ask the children to imagine they have arrived from India to England for the first time in their life. Write a postcard home telling all about the journey and what their first impressions of England are.

Or, imagine they are like Anju and her sister and write a letter telling someone all about their week.

## Suitcase

Maria's father would have only carried one small suitcase on the ship. Prem lost his suitcase at Heathrow Airport. Prabu didn't have warm enough clothes when he arrived.

Ask the children to imagine they are leaving home to live somewhere else. They can only a small suitcase. What do they think would be the most important and sensible things to pack? They could write a list or draw the items they would pack.

## Your Own Journeys

Say to the children: 'Think about journeys you have taken in the past. Maybe to go on holiday, a visit to family or friends, or to go on a club camp. Can you write about that journey? Think about why you went, how you felt, what the journey was like. Did you go by car, plane, boat? What was the place you arrived at like?'

