



Producing Partner

Resource Guide for Educators and Audiences

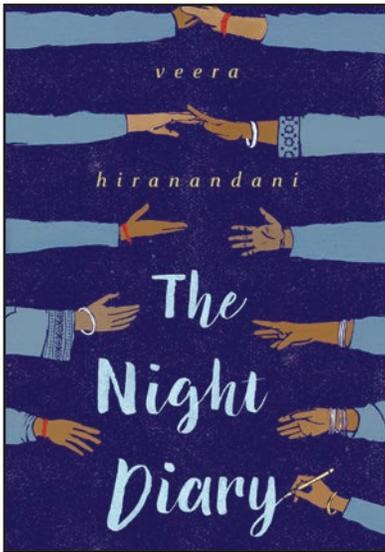
We include information about our production along with creative activities to make connections both before and after the show. For educators, all activities are aligned to the Common Core Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards. Look for the symbol below throughout the guide.



NCES-TheaArts.(K-5).TA.A.1: Analyze literary texts and performances. NCES-TheaArts.(K-5).TA.A.1.1: Recall the basic parts of a story, such as characters, setting, and events.

Mainstage production

Recommended for ages 8+



Adapted For The Stage By Mukta Phatak | Based On The Book The Night Diary By Veera Hiranandani | Book Cover Illustration Used By Permission Of Penguin Random House | Designed And Illustrated By Kelley Brady | Dramaturgy By Anurag Wadehra | Producing Partner Enacte Arts

Directed by Anjalee Deshpande-Hutchinson

Themes explored
Identity, loss, hopefulness

Summary of *THE NIGHT DIARY*

Twelve-year-old Nisha is half-Muslim and half-Hindu struggling to figure out where she belongs. Her personal conflict deepens as India - the country she lives in - is divided into pieces during the Partition of 1947. When her father decides it's too dangerous to stay where they are, they embark on a long and dangerous journey as refugees. Told through her journal entries to her mother, this stirring and heartfelt story reminds us that home is more than a place. It's a feeling and a sense of belonging that comes from within.

Audience expectations

You may wish to have a discussion with your students about their role as an audience member. Live theatre only exists when an audience is present; their energy and responses directly affect the actors in performance.

Younger audiences should know watching live theatre isn't like watching more familiar forms of entertainment: there is no pause or rewind button, there are no commercials for bathroom breaks, and they can't turn up the volume if someone else is talking. Encourage your students to listen and watch the play intently, so they may laugh and cheer for their favorite characters when it is appropriate. At the end of the play, your applause is an opportunity to thank the actors for their performance. Here are some other guidelines to remember as well:

- Respect others audience members. Stay seated and keep your hands to yourself.
- Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during the performance.
- Photography and recording of the performance is prohibited by copyright law.
- We do not permit food and drinks in the theatre.



NCES-TheaArts.(K-5).TA.CU.2: Understand the traditions, roles, and conventions of theatre as an art form. NCES-TheaArts.3.TA.CU.2.1: Illustrate theatre etiquette appropriate to the performance situation.



This project is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.



BIG QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SHOW

1. What was the Partition of India in 1947? How did it affect the different communities like Hindus and Muslims living there? What circumstances led to people getting dislocated from their homes?
2. In *The Night Diary*, Nisha is a young girl living in Sindh (Pakistan today) who is forced to flee with her family to India. Loss of home is a big theme of the story. How does Nisha and her family deal with this loss? How do they rebuild their home?
3. What lessons do you think we should take away today from the story of Nisha and millions like her?



CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.(K-5).2: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media. NCES-TheaArts.2.TA.A.1.2: Analyze the relationships between events, characters, and settings. NCES-TheaArts.(K-5).TA.AE.1.2: Understand how costumes [and technical elements] enhance dramatic play.



DID YOU KNOW?

What language do the characters speak at home?

In MirpurKhas, the most common language spoken was Sindhi [80% pop]. The second most common language was Urdu. Other languages like Hindi and Punjabi were not commonly spoken. In Jodhpur, Rajasthani would be the common vernacular.



Want more activities and content?

[Click to access our Pinterest board.](#)

Can't access Pinterest? [Click here.](#)

THEATRE CORNER

Every play Children's Theatre of Charlotte produces is created by a talented team of designers, technicians, actors and a director. As a class, discuss what you experienced when you saw the performance.

1. Kitchen, food and cooking plays an important role in the story. How did the play bring that to life?
2. The play shows a journey across different places. How was this journey shown on stage?
3. Costumes were critical to show different characters, especially their different communities. How did the costumes help the characters?
4. Weather plays an important role in the play. What role did lighting play in telling the story, especially of changing weather? How did the lights enhance what you were seeing?
5. Talk about the actors. Were there moments you were so caught up in the story you forgot you were watching a play? Were there any actors who played more than one character? What are some ways you can be the same person but play different characters?
6. How did music enhance your experience of the story?



NCES-TheaArts.(K-5).TA.A.1: Analyze literary texts and performances. NCES-TheaArts.(K-5).TA.AE.1.2: Understand how costumes [and technical elements] enhance dramatic play.



Write to Us!

Children's Theatre of Charlotte
300 E 7th St.
Charlotte, NC 28202



CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.(K-5).1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Veera Hiranandani earned her MFA in creative writing at Sarah Lawrence College. She is the author of *The Whole Story of Half a Girl*, which was named a Sydney Taylor

Notable Book and a South Asian Book Award Finalist. A former book editor at Simon & Schuster, she now teaches creative writing at Sarah Lawrence College's Writing Institute and Writopia Lab.



> [Listen to interview here](#)

Partition, Through A Child's Eyes, In 'The Night Diary'
by Renee Montagne



ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

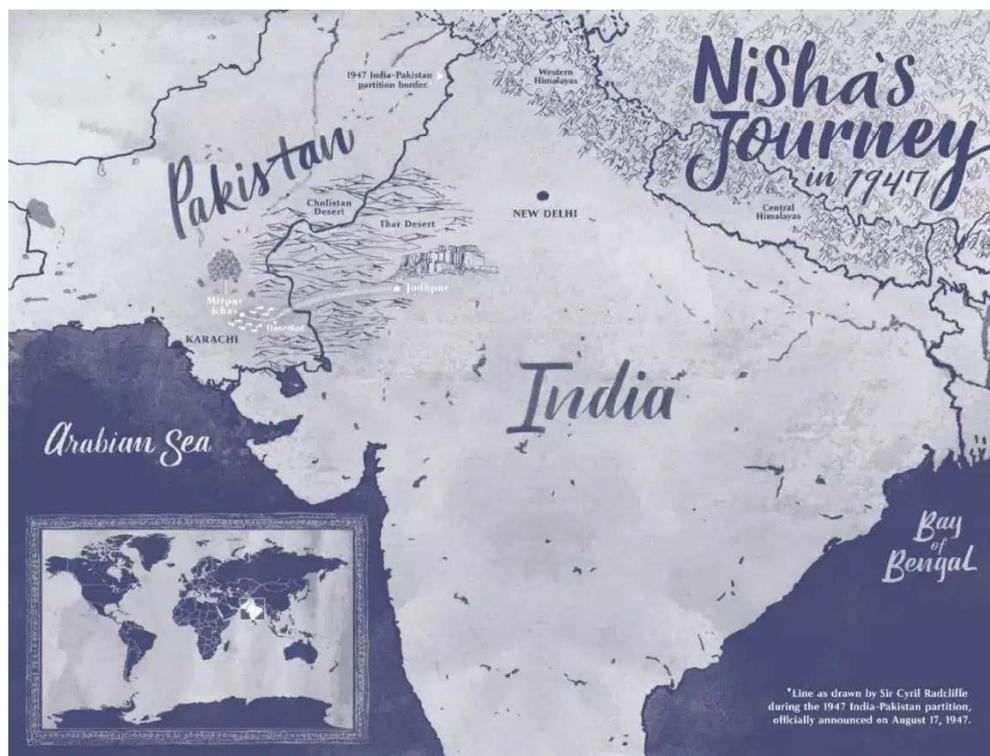
Mukta Phatak is a playwright, actor, teaching artist, and creative living in NYC. She graduated from Bucknell University with a B.A. in Theatre. She has taught

playwriting and theater to youth writers through her work with TWUSA, Colt Coeur and the Bushwick Starr. She has worked on several new works as an actor - from fringe devised plays, to indie plays, to large scale musicals, to TYA shows. Her poetry has appeared in collaborations via film, dance, music and social media. A proud daughter of Indian immigrants, her intersectional identities are at the core of her artistry. In her writing, acting and everyday life she works to elevate the unheard stories of her ancestors, as well as make space for others to do the same. Through her projects she strives to be a force for justice, learning, and play. > [Learn more here](#)

THE PARTITION AND NISHA'S JOURNEY

Our story of *The Night Diary* begins in Mirpur Khas in Sindh province in Pakistan and finishes in Jodhpur city in Rajasthan, India. That's approximately 460 km or 285 miles. Just how far is that? It's similar to the distance between New York and Washington, D.C.

[Read more survivor and witness stories here from 1947 Partition Archive.](#)





FOOD AND THE JOURNEY

In The Night Diary, the family carries dal (a type of dried split pea or lentil) and rice during the journey, and also roti [wheat bread]. Most people survived the migration by carrying food that didn't need cooking but some would carry a few pots to cook.



Image courtesy of Bianca Zapotka

INGREDIENTS

- 1-2 tbsp coconut oil or other neutral oil for frying
- 2 onions chopped
- 4 garlic cloves minced
- 2 tsp ginger minced (or more to taste)
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp coriander
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp red paprika powder
- 1 tsp garam masala or other curry powder to taste
- 1 2/3 cups (300 g) dry red lentils
- 3 1/4 cups (780 ml) vegetable broth
- 1 cup (240 ml) coconut milk
- 1 cup (240 ml) strained tomatoes or chopped tomatoes, optional
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tsp coconut sugar or to taste
- 2-3 tbsp lime or lemon juice or to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

Heat the coconut oil in a skillet or saucepan. Add the chopped onions, and sauté for 2-3 minutes until translucent. Then add the garlic and ginger sauté for another minute until fragrant. Lastly, add the spices, and sauté for a few seconds to unfold flavors.

Place the lentils in a fine-meshed sieve and rinse until cold running water. Then add them to the onion mixture in the skillet. Pour in the vegetable broth, stir to combine, and bring to a simmer. Cook covered for 8-10 minutes, or until the lentils have absorbed most of the liquid.

Add the coconut milk and strained tomatoes (if using) and simmer another 5-10 minutes, or until the lentils are tender. (If the sauce is too thick, add a little more broth or coconut milk, until the desired consistency is reached). Season with salt, pepper, coconut sugar, and lime juice to taste.

Garnish your dahl with a swirl of non-dairy yogurt, fresh chopped parsley or coriander, and sesame seeds or other toppings you like. Serve over rice or with homemade vegan naan or aloo paratha or use it as a filling for your favorite hearty pancake, crêpes, or tortilla recipe. Enjoy!

DID YOU KNOW?



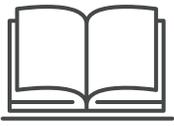
Water was carried in clay pitchers or small metal pitchers. A common water vessel was lota - this is still used in all South Asia. Carrying and storing water was a big problem during the partition marches. Thousands died due to thirst.



All kitchens at that time had wood, cow-dung or coal burning stoves. A large kitchen may have multiple stoves.



Food was served directly by the cook to the family who sat on the floor on a mat. Some would use low wooden stools or ottomans, a direct result of proximity to British life where these items were accessible.



RECOMMENDED READING

If you enjoyed the show, check out these books at your local Charlotte Mecklenburg library branch. Check availability at cmlibrary.org

The Bridge Home
by Padma Venkatraman

Red, White, and Whole
by Rajani LaRocca

Inside Out and Back Again
by Thanhha Lai

Santiago's Road Home
by Alexandra Diaz

I Lived on Butterfly Hill
by Marjorie Agosin

When You Trap a Tiger
by Tae Keller



ADDITIONAL READING & WEBSITES

MEDIA	FORMAT	RELEVANCE
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Partition_of_India	Wikipedia	An overview of the political history of the partition of India
Cracking India by Bhapsi Sidhwa	Book	A fictitious story of a young Parsi girl whose family is affected by violence during the partition of India. The book was made into a film called Earth in 1998.
Train to Pakistan by Khushwant Singh.	Book	The most famous novel of Partition literature. A short but powerful story about a few passengers who journey across the border on a train during Partition.
The Day India Burned - BBC Documentary	YouTube	A brief introduction to the history of partition. Watch for human stories and imagery. The political analyses may be limited or contested.
India, Pakistan & Partition Part 1 and Part 2 Al Jazeera Documentary	YouTube	Two part documentary on history of Partition. Watch for human stories and imagery. The political analyses may be limited or contested.
1947 Partition Archive Non-profit community site	Website	A non-profit community program based out of Berkeley, California, that has crowd sourced and recorded over 10,000 video testimonies of Partition survivors from 14 countries in 36 languages.
Partition Museum located in Amritsar, India	Site	The world's first museum and memorial to Partition, based in Amritsar, Punjab in India.



GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN THE SHOW

FOOD & KITCHEN

CHAI: the Hindi word for tea, a mix of spices steeped in a tea-like beverage

DAL (OR DAHL): a type of dried split pea or lentil that serves as both an ingredient and a dish. This lentil dish is a staple of Indian cooking.

HALDI: Turmeric. Haldi is used in cooking, but also is used as an anti-inflammatory powder for cuts, bruises and sore throats.

JEERA: Cumin seeds which are often used in Indian cuisine

MASALA: Any of a number of spice mixtures ground into a paste or powder for use in Indian cooking

KHEER: A sweet dish and a type of pudding popular in the Indian subcontinent, usually made by boiling milk, sugar or jaggery, and rice.

ROTI: a traditional tortilla-style flatbread from India

PARATHA: A flat, thick piece of unleavened bread fried on a griddle. Parathas keep for a long time, so they were a common cooked item for long trips.

RELIGION & CULTURE

DEVA/BHAGAVAN: Hindi and Sanskrit word for the divine being, or God. “Hai Deva” and “Hai Bhagavan” are phrases similar to “Oh God” or “Goodness Me” but also can be used as reverent calls to god.

JHULELAL: A folkloric deity popular in the Sindh region, where The Night Diary is set. Jhulelal as a phrase is similar to “Oh God” or “Goodness Me” but also can be used as a reverent call to god.

NAMASTE: A Hindi greeting, a simple hello

SALAM ALAIKUM: A greeting in Arabic meaning “Peace be upon you”. Typically this is used among Muslims as they greet each other.

PRAYERS

Om Tryambakam Yajamahe Sugandhim Pushtivardhanam; Urvaarukamiva Bandhanaan Mrityormuksheeya Maamritaat.

This Hindu mantra is often chanted before a long journey, or for protection.

Subhanallazi Sakkhara lana haza wama kunna, laho muqrineen, wa inna ila Rabbina Lamunqalibun.

This Muslim dua is recited before beginning a journey.

HINDU: A person who practices Hinduism, a religion focused majority in India, with over 1.2-1.35 billion followers worldwide.

MUSLIM: A person who practices Islam, with almost 1.9 billion followers worldwide.

SIKH: A person who practices Sikhism, an Indian religion that originated in the late 15th century in the Punjab region. There are about 25-30 million followers worldwide.



GLOSSARY OF TERMS CONT'D

BATWARA: A partition or division into parts. This was the term used for Partition in Hindi.

PARTITION: The Partition of India was the process of dividing the subcontinent along sectarian lines, which took place in 1947 as India gained its independence from the British Raj. The northern, predominantly Muslim sections of India became the nation of Pakistan, while the southern and majority Hindu section became the Republic of India. However, there were many Hindus and Muslims living on the “wrong side” of this new border. This led to one of the largest human migrations in history, and millions of people died while millions more were displaced and forced to flee their homes.

MISCELLANEOUS

BETA: Literally meaning “kid” or “son”, this is a term of endearment for a child - gender neutral.

BETI: Literally meaning “daughter”, this is a term of endearment for a young girl.

BACCHA: Literally meaning “child”, this is a term of endearment for young kids

DADI: Paternal grandmother

MAMU: The casual version of “Mama” which is the word used when referring to your mother’s brother. Instead of “Uncle Rashid”, the kids call him “Rashid Mamu”.

CHUHA: Mouse, based on the squeaky sounds they make - “chu chu chu!”

CHAL/CHALO: This phrase means “let’s go” and depending on context and tone can feel different.

BESHARAM: Literally meaning “shameless” this is what you call someone who is behaving without concern for other people.