

a is for anaar

Teacher's Guide



a is for anaar

My First Hindi Alphabet Book

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Illustrations by
KALYANI GANAPATHY

Meet Vidya: she loves to eat *anaar*, plays *tabla*, dances with *dandiya*, and enjoys listening to her grandmother tell stories about India's famous emperors! She lives in New Delhi (the capital city of India) and wants to share a little about her culture and her language: Hindi - the 4th most widely-spoken language in the world.

Young readers will learn over 80 common Hindi words and phrases. They will also learn about the foods Vidya eats, the holidays she celebrates with her family members, and important facts about India.

Richly illustrated by visual storyteller Kalyani Ganapathy, *A is for Anaar: My First Hindi Alphabet Book* makes Hindi fun and accessible to kids.

Welcome to Vidya's world!



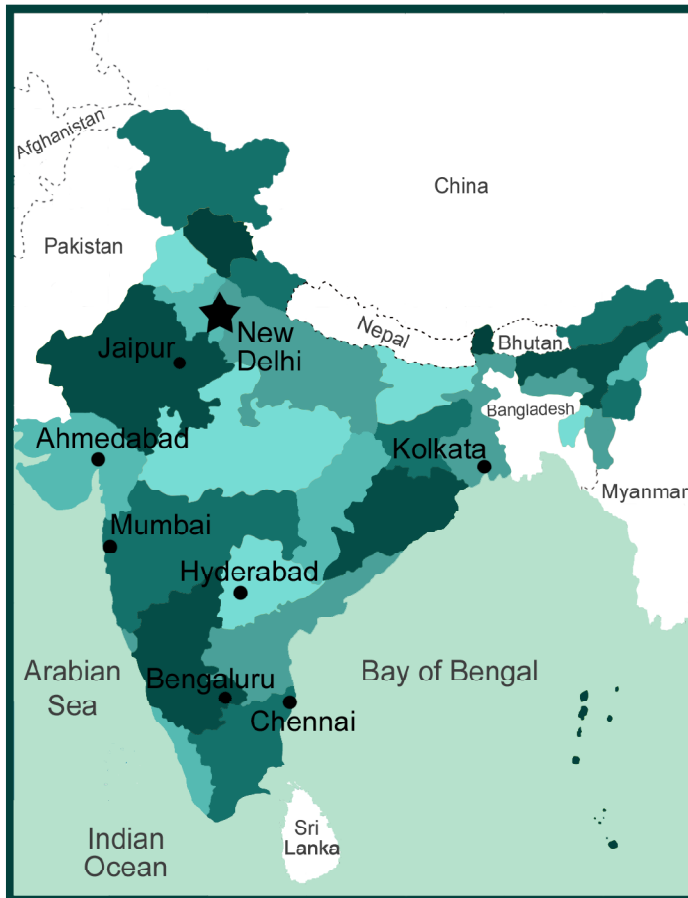
How to Read the Book



A Note to Teachers

- If you are unfamiliar with Hindi, or are unsure of how to pronounce certain words, you should take a few minutes to listen to the Audio CD. This should help clear up any confusion, especially pertaining to proper pronunciation of the alphabets.
- Prepare your listeners. Tell your students that they will be reading a book about the Hindi alphabet, and that they will be learning new words and phrases in Hindi. This may be a good time to go through the “About Hindi” page in this Teacher’s Guide (Page 4).
- Read through the entire book once - with or without the Audio CD. As they listen, remind students to think about English equivalents to the Hindi words presented in the book.
- A second reading of the book is strongly suggested. This time, pause after each page and ask students if they can define the Hindi word or phrase on that page. For example, after reading the “a is for anaar” page, ask: “Who can tell me what an anaar is? What about “ek...do...teen...chaar?”
- If your students are older and are able to read English with ease, let them try their hand at reading the book by themselves. Pass the book around the room, or ask for volunteers to read each page. Students will likely enjoy the exercise of reading the transliterated Hindi words!
- If you are using this book in a Hindi-learning classroom, you can use this book periodically during your lessons to reinforce Hindi alphabet-word associations. You can pause while reading and allow students to fill in the blanks: “a is for _____,” and let the students announce, “anaar!” For older students who are working on Hindi-writing skills, they can also practice writing the Hindi alphabets and associated words on each page.

Where Does Vidya Live?



Republic of India
भारत गणराज्य
Bhaarat Ganaraajya

Independence Day: August 15, 1947

Divisions:
29 States and 7 Union Territories

Government: Democratic Republic

Prime Minister: Narendra Modi

Official Government Languages:
Hindi & English

Currency: Indian Rupee ₹ (Rs.)

National Animal: Royal Bengal Tiger

National Bird: Indian Peacock

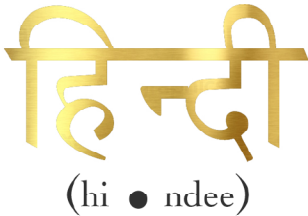
National Flower: Lotus

India is the 7th largest country in the world (and the 2nd most populous). Although India officially became an independent political country in 1947, there is evidence of human activity in India as long as 75,000 years ago! The Indus Valley Civilization is the earliest known civilization in this area and extended from Northwest India to present-day Pakistan and Afghanistan. This civilization existed from about 3300 BCE until about 1700 BCE - alongside the ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian civilizations.

There are over 150 languages spoken in India! Hindi is the most widely-spoken language, especially in the northern parts of the country. The majority of Indians practice Hinduism, while Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Christianity are also practiced.

India has made many contributions to the world, including the number zero, rulers, weighing scales, shampoo, chess, snakes & ladders, and buttons - just to name a few!

About Hindi



The Hindi alphabet has 49 letters: 13 vowels, 33 consonants, and 3 compound letters. Kids typically learn to recite all the vowels first. Hindi is a phonetic language - making it very easy to learn!



Fun Facts About Hindi

- Hindi is the 4th most-spoken language in the world! (Mandarin, Spanish, and English are 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, respectively.) Over 500 million people speak Hindi worldwide.
- Hindi, like many other Indian languages, has its roots in the Sanskrit language - one of the oldest languages in the world!
- There are no capital letters in Hindi!
- Hindi is written in the Devanagari script - which is recognizable by a horizontal line that runs along the top of most words. Hindi is not the only language that is written in the Devanagari script. This script is also used for over 120 other languages!
- You can buy Hindi typewriters and keyboards!
- Kids can also watch Sesame Street in Hindi! *Galli Galli Sim Sim* is the Hindi-language adaptation of Sesame Street. The show is produced by Sesame Workshop India.
- Bollywood, the name given to India's Hindi-language movie industry, is one of the largest centers of movie-making in the world! Bollywood is based in the city of Mumbai, which used to be called Bombay (hence the name).
- Many English words have actually been borrowed from Hindi. The words *jungle*, *verandah*, *bandana*, *pajama*, *shampoo*, *punch* (the beverage), and *avatar* all come from Hindi!

A Look at Vidya



Namaste

Do you see how Vidya is holding her palms together in front of her? This is the respectful Hindu greeting called *Namaste*. It is used as both a “hello” and a “goodbye.” The gesture symbolically means, “I bow to the divine in you.”

Bindi

The red circle on Vidya’s forehead is called a *bindi*. *Bindis* have been worn by girls and women in India since ancient times. They mark the location of the *Ajna Chakra* - the seat of power, control, and wisdom. They are beautiful symbols reminding us of the importance of using our mind and intellect.

Salwar Kameez

Vidya is wearing a *salwar kameez* - a traditional Indian outfit. It consists of 3 pieces: the *salwar* (pants), the *kameez* (long tunic top), and a *dupatta* (long scarf draped over the shoulders).

Jhumki

Take a look at Vidya’s earrings. These bell-shaped earrings are called *jhumki*. They are traditional jewelry worn in India.

Bangles

It is common in India for girls and women to coordinate their outfits with matching color bangles (called *choodiyan* in Hindi). Bangles are rigid bracelets that come in all different sizes - from newborn to adult.

Discussion Questions



Why do you think it's important to be able to speak more than one language?



Imagine that you meet a traveller visiting the United States from another country, and this person started speaking to you in an another language. How would you react? How do you think someone would react if you, in turn, were to visit another country (where English is not widely spoken) and speak in English?



Imagine that you meet a boy or a girl your age (for example, at a playground), and he or she does not speak English. Would you still be able to play with him or her? What are some ways that you could communicate with each other?



In the book, Vidya says she sees curious sights every day. What kind of interesting sights do you think Vidya sees? How do you think they are the same or different from what you see in your environment?



Vidya enjoys listening to stories about India and its culture - stories about *rishis* (sages), Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, and *The Ramayana*. What are some of your favorite stories about the United States or another country? They can either be stories about an historical event, folk tales, or mythological stories.



Vidya eats foods that are probably different from the foods you eat: *mithai* (sweets), *chaaval* and *daal* (rice and lentils), *rottee* and *sabzi* (unleavened bread and curry), and *biryani* (spiced rice). Would you like to try any of these foods? Why or why not?



Vidya celebrates holidays such as *Navratri* (a 9-night festival honoring womanhood) and *Diwali* (one of India's biggest holidays celebrated with lots of lights). Both holidays occur during the autumn months (September through November). What are some ways that you can learn more about holidays such as these?

Contributors



Author

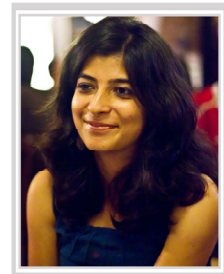
Aruna Hatti is the founder and director of Gnaana. She seeks to connect children of the global South Asian Diaspora with the region's languages, cultures, and histories through fun and child-accessible mediums. She lives in Fullerton, California with her husband and two children.



Illustrator

Kalyani Ganapathy is an illustrator and visual storyteller. She lives in the Nilgiris - the "Blue Mountains" in the Western Ghats of Tamil Nadu, India. A self-taught artist, she learns something new every day.

Her work is inspired by nature and textile patterns. She seeks to create intuitive, visuals books. She enjoys fresh air, mountains, broken orange pekoe, and four-legged company.



Narrator

Rachna Aggarwal is a professionally-trained voice-over artist, RJ, and a voice trainer. She is a Post Graduate from Symbiosis Institute of Mass Communication, Pune, India.

She has lent her voice to commercials and promos, corporate films, documentaries, and e-learning formats. She is a popular RJ at FM Channel in India.

