

Lesson Plan: Two New Countries - The Story of the Partition of India

Materials Needed:

- A large piece of paper or whiteboard
 - Markers or colored pencils
 - Printed map of British India (pre-1947)
 - Printed map of modern India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh
 - Access to a short, age-appropriate video explaining the Partition (e.g., a simple animated explainer from YouTube; teacher should pre-screen for suitability)
 - **For the Creative Activity (choose one):**
 - **Option A:** A small shoebox or cardboard box, scissors, glue, old magazines or construction paper
 - **Option B:** A large sheet of drawing paper
 - **Option C:** A notebook or lined paper and a pencil
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Lesson Details

Subject: World History / Social Studies

Grade Level: 4th-5th Grade (Age 10)

Time Allotment: 60-75 minutes

1. Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- Explain in their own words the basic reason for the Partition of India.
- Identify India and Pakistan on a map and trace the approximate border that was created in 1947.
- Create a project that expresses an understanding of the human experience of Partition, such as leaving one's home and starting a new life.

2. Introduction: The Club Decision (10 minutes)

Let's start with a story. Imagine you and all your friends are in one giant, awesome club. You have different hobbies and different ideas, but you've always been in the club together. Now, the main leader of the club is leaving, and you have to decide how to run things.

- One group of friends has a very strong opinion about how the club should be run.
- Another group has a very different, but also very strong, opinion.
- After a lot of discussion, they just can't agree. So, they make a huge decision: to split the giant club into two separate clubs, so each group can run their club the way they want.

Ask the student: "How do you think the friends would feel about this? Would it be easy to split everything up? What challenges might they face?"

This is a very simple way to think about what happened in 1947 with a huge country called British

India. People had to make a very difficult decision to create two new countries: **India** and **Pakistan**.

3. Guided Instruction & Activity (25 minutes)

Step 1: One Big Country (Map 1)

Show the student the map of British India (pre-1947). Explain that all of this land was one territory under British rule. Point out major areas. Explain that many different groups of people, including Hindus and Muslims, lived together all across this land for centuries.

Step 2: The Big Idea & The Big Problem

Explain in simple terms:

- In 1947, the British were leaving, and India was going to be independent.
- Leaders of the two biggest religious groups, Hindus and Muslims, couldn't agree on how to share power in the new country.
- The solution they chose was to "partition," or divide, the country. They created one country for Muslims (Pakistan) and one for Hindus and other faiths (India).
- The problem was that millions of people were now on the "wrong" side of the new border. Muslims living in the new India were encouraged to move to Pakistan, and Hindus and Sikhs living in the new Pakistan were encouraged to move to India.

Step 3: A Quick Look (Video)

Watch the pre-selected, short (2-4 minute) animated video that explains the Partition. This will provide a helpful visual summary of the event.

Step 4: Two New Countries (Map 2)

Now, bring out the modern map. Help the student find India and Pakistan. Have them use a marker to trace the new border that was drawn. Point out that Pakistan was originally in two parts: West Pakistan and East Pakistan (which later became the country of Bangladesh). This map activity makes the abstract concept of "new borders" very concrete.

4. Creative Application: The Journey (25-30 minutes)

Explain that this was the largest migration in human history, and it was a very difficult and emotional time. Millions of families had to pack up their lives and walk or take crowded trains to their new country. We are going to make a project to think about what that experience might have felt like.

Let the student choose ONE of the following projects:

Option A: The Suitcase of Memories

Using the shoebox, the student will create a "suitcase" for someone leaving their home during Partition. They must decide what few, precious items a person might take. They can draw these items, write them on slips of paper, or find pictures in magazines to put inside the box. Examples: a family photo, a special toy, a religious book, a piece of jewelry, or seeds from their garden. Decorate the outside of the box like an old suitcase.

Option B: Before and After

Fold the large drawing paper in half. On the "Before" side, draw a picture of what a peaceful village might have looked like, with neighbors from different religions living and working together. On the "After" side, draw a scene from the journey of Partition—a crowded train, a long line of people walking, or a family looking at a map. This helps visualize the immense change people experienced.

Option C: A Poem of Hope

Even in sad times, people have hope for the future. The student will write a short, 6-8 line poem from the perspective of a child moving to their new home. The poem should mention something they left behind, but also something they are hoping for in their new life. This focuses on the resilience and hope of the people.

5. Conclusion & Reflection (5-10 minutes)

Have the student share their creative project and explain the choices they made.

Ask thoughtful questions to wrap up the lesson:

- What part of this story stood out to you the most?
- If you were making the "Suitcase of Memories," what is one thing you would absolutely have to bring from your home? Why?
- Why is it important for us to learn about difficult stories from the past like this one? (Guide them to understand that it helps us learn empathy and the importance of living together peacefully.)

6. Differentiation (Suggestions)

- **For Extra Support:** Work alongside the student during the creative project, helping them brainstorm ideas. Focus on the visual projects (Suitcase or Drawing) and provide sentence starters for the reflection questions.
- **For an Extra Challenge:** Encourage the student to research the story of one specific city affected by Partition (like Lahore or Delhi) and incorporate a fact they learned into their project. Or, have them write a short journal entry from the perspective of a child experiencing the journey.