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# Journey Through Time: Understanding the British Raj and Partition

## Materials Needed:

- A large piece of paper or several sheets taped together for a timeline
- Marker pens or colored pencils
- Index cards or small pieces of paper
- A blank outline map of pre-1947 India (easily found online by searching "blank map of British India")
- A notebook or journal for the main activity
- Access to the internet to watch one short, age-appropriate video

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## Learning Objectives:

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

1. Create a simple timeline showing the major events from the start of the British Raj to the Partition of India.
2. Explain in your own words what the British Raj was and why Partition happened.
3. Use a map to show how British India was divided into India and Pakistan.
4. Empathize with the experiences of people during Partition by creating a personal journal entry.

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## Lesson Activities

### Part 1: The Time Traveler's Mission (10 minutes)

#### Introduction & Hook:

Let's pretend you are a time traveler! Your mission today is to travel back to a very important and complicated time in the history of India. We are going to explore a period when Britain ruled over India, called the **British Raj**, and a huge event that changed everything, called the **Partition**.

- **British Raj:** The word "Raj" means "rule" in Hindi. So, this was the period of British rule in India, which lasted for a very long time.
- **Partition:** This word means "to divide something." In 1947, when British rule ended, the country was "partitioned" or split into two new, independent countries: India and Pakistan.

Our goal is not to memorize every date, but to understand the story of what happened and how it affected people.

### Part 2: Building Our Timeline (15-20 minutes)

**Activity:** Let's lay out the story of this time period. On separate index cards, we'll write down these key

events. Then, we will arrange them in order on our big timeline paper.

1. **Card 1: A Company Arrives (Around 1600s)** - A British trading group called the East India Company comes to India to trade for spices, tea, and cotton. They are not rulers yet, just traders.
2. **Card 2: The Raj Begins (1858)** - After a major rebellion, the British government takes direct control. This is the official start of the British Raj. Now, British leaders are in charge.
3. **Card 3: A Call for Freedom (Early 1900s)** - People in India begin to demand independence. Leaders like Mahatma Gandhi inspire millions to protest peacefully for the right to rule their own country.
4. **Card 4: The End of an Era (1947)** - After World War II, Britain is weak and agrees to grant India independence. Hooray! But there's a big problem...
5. **Card 5: Partition & Independence (August 1947)** - Leaders couldn't agree on what the new country should look like. Because of deep disagreements, especially between Hindu and Muslim leaders, the decision was made to divide the country. The part with a mostly Hindu population became **India**. The parts with a mostly Muslim population became the new country of **Pakistan** (which was split into West and East Pakistan).

*(Lay out the cards in order on the long paper and draw arrows between them to create your timeline.)*

### Part 3: Mapping the Change (15 minutes)

**Activity:** Let's see what this "Partition" actually looked like on a map.

1. First, let's watch a short, simple video explaining the Partition. (Search on an educational site for "Partition of India for kids"). This will help us visualize the changes.
2. Now, take your blank map of British India. Using the video and discussion as a guide, let's do the following with our colored pencils:
  - Color the area that would become **India** one color (like orange).
  - Color the areas that would become **West Pakistan** and **East Pakistan** another color (like green).
  - Draw a thick line to show the new borders, known as the "Radcliffe Line."

**Discussion Question:** Look at the map. What do you think happened to people who were on the "wrong" side of the new line? For example, a Hindu family living in the new Pakistan, or a Muslim family living in the new India? (This leads into the next creative activity).

### Part 4: A Story from the Past - The Time Traveler's Journal (20 minutes)

**Creative Application:**

This was a very scary and sad time for millions of families. They were forced to leave their homes with very little notice and walk for miles to get to the "right" side of the border. This was the largest migration in human history.

Your task is to use your imagination and empathy. In your journal, pretend you are a 10-year-old living in a small village in 1947. You've just been told your village is now in a different country and your family must leave everything behind and move.

**Choose one of these prompts for your journal entry:**

- **A Drawing:** Draw a picture of the one small bag you are allowed to pack. What special things would you put in it and why? Label the items.

- **A Letter:** Write a short letter to the best friend you have to leave behind. What would you tell them? What memories would you share?
- **A Diary Entry:** Write about your feelings. Are you scared, confused, sad? What will you miss most about your home?

This is your chance to think about how big historical events affect regular people, especially kids just like you. There is no right or wrong answer.

### **Part 5: Time Traveler's Debrief (5-10 minutes)**

#### **Conclusion & Reflection:**

Let's share what you created in your journal. It's powerful to think about these stories.

Let's discuss:

- What was the most interesting or surprising thing you learned today?
- Why do you think it is important for us to learn about difficult and sad events from the past?
- Looking at your timeline and map, how did India change in 1947?

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#### **Assessment:**

- **Timeline and Map:** Assessed for basic understanding of the sequence of events and the geographical division.
- **Time Traveler's Journal:** Assessed on creative effort and the ability to express empathy and an understanding of the human side of this historical event.

#### **Extension Ideas (Optional):**

- Research the story of Mahatma Gandhi and his role in India's independence.
- Learn what happened to East Pakistan (it became the country of Bangladesh in 1971).
- Cook a simple dish from India or Pakistan to connect with the culture of the region.

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