

Organised by  
 INDIAN  
HERITAGE  
CENTRE

A Heritage Institution of  
 National  
Heritage  
Board

Supported by  
 MCCY  
Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth





Boys and girls,  
before we explore  
the galleries,  
let us remember:



Enjoy your  
food & drinks  
at Level 1 of  
the Centre



Use only pencils  
to write on  
the materials  
provided

2



Walk calmly  
in the  
galleries

4

Speak  
softly in the  
galleries



5

See and  
observe but  
do not touch



Take  
photographs  
without  
using flash

6



Handle the  
touch-screen  
equipment  
with care

Symbols and scripts found on craft objects  
often tell a hidden story or message. Today,  
you will embark on a journey to discover  
the hidden messages found in craft objects  
across India. Keep your eyes peeled as we  
test your abilities through various tasks!

## Spot The Harappan Seal



Harappan seals are some of the earliest hand-crafted objects found in the Indian Subcontinent produced during the ancient Indus Valley civilisation. They are approximately 5,000 years old and are typically square in shape. They have a set of characters (called the Indus script) at the top, one animal in the centre, and one or more symbols at the bottom of the seal.

Around 3,500 seals have been dug out from various sites in India, Pakistan and parts of West Asia. In the past, traders needed a way to keep track of their goods. Each trader had a unique seal which they would stamp onto materials such as clay. The clay tablets were then used to mark their goods. For safe keeping, these seals usually have a hole for thread so that they can be worn as necklaces.

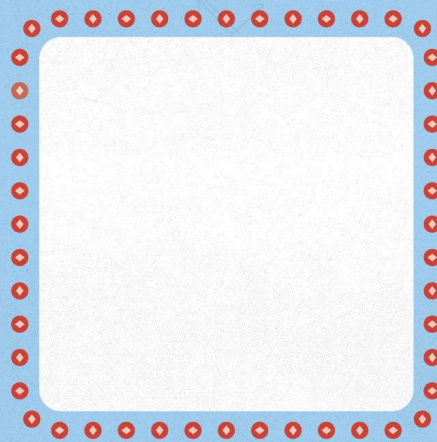
Take a close look at the three types of seals shown here. Which one of these do you think is a Harappan seal?

**Circle it!**



# Design Your Own Seal

If you could create your own secret seal, what would it look like? Look around the exhibition to discover objects with symbols and scripts in them to help you decorate your seal. Share your seal with your friends!



Here are some symbols that you can use to decorate your seal.



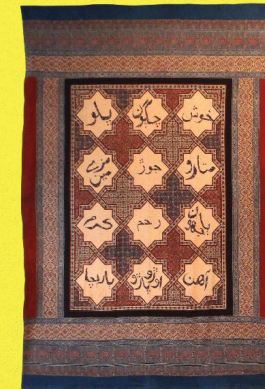
Calligraphy is an art that transforms words into a decorative form. It is usually done using a flat brush or pen.

Islamic calligraphy is an example of this art form. Did you know that everyday objects such as jewellery, clothes and bowls have calligraphic writings on them too? Look around the exhibition and spot some of these objects.

# Trace The Calligraphy

Master the skill of calligraphy by tracing along the dotted red lines below. This word is pronounced *bhalo*, which means 'Are you well?' in a local Indian dialect called Kutchi.

پلو  
*bhalo*



A \_ R \_ K



A M \_ L \_ T



A \_ K \_ O \_ A



# What's Behind The Mask

Masks are commonly used by performers in traditional Indian ritual performances, dance and theatrical art forms. Performers often put on masks that symbolise mythological characters or gods, making the masks diverse and colourful. Their design, form and appearance are often inspired by the region they are produced in.

Can you guess which parts of India these masks are from?

A



WSET BNGEAL

B



KNAKATARA

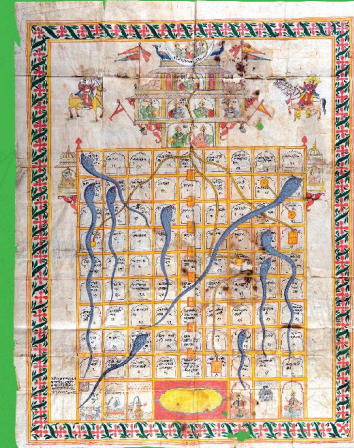
C



KEALAR

Which is your favourite mask and why?

# Let's Play!



Traditional Indian toys and games such as board games were produced for play and for moral lessons. Did you know that popular board games such as Chess, Ludo, and Snakes & Ladders had their origins in India?

**Gyan Chaupar** is the original version of the Snakes & Ladders where the player rises up and overcome many worldly challenges (represented by the snakes) in order to reach the top and attain *moksha* (enlightenment).

There are positive values that you can learn from the Snakes & Ladder game. Spot these values in the word search and circle them.

- PATIENCE • RESILIENCE
- INTEGRITY • DETERMINATION

O	V	B	R	T	U	F	D	F
A	R	X	E	K	I	J	E	O
L	O	N	S	G	B	L	T	U
P	A	T	I	E	N	C	E	H
K	V	H	L	G	U	S	R	J
O	T	U	I	A	O	K	M	H
K	B	L	E	V	H	S	I	A
O	J	G	N	K	T	G	N	O
A	L	H	C	U	A	L	A	K
I	N	T	E	G	R	I	T	Y
H	K	S	J	X	V	A	I	G
V	O	G	U	B	H	A	O	B
X	L	J	O	A	U	V	N	L

Write down two examples on how you have displayed these values in your life.



# Uncover The Patterns

Indian motifs and patterns are inspired by nature, including flora and fauna, and geometric shapes such as squares and circles.

Spot the artefacts below in the exhibition and match the motifs they represent.



Bidri Hookah Base



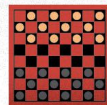
Sari Cloth



Scissors



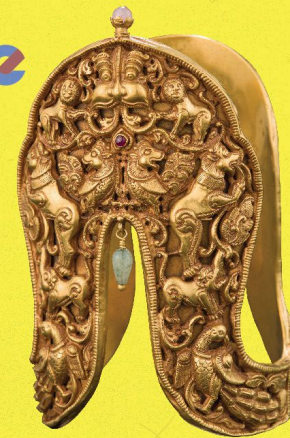
Lotus-petal Stand



# Decode The Symbols

Images and symbols can even be found in Indian jewellery! This is a unique gold armlet made in Tamil Nadu, South India. It is at least 100 years old and was probably created for a royal lady or bride.

Look closely at the armlet and circle all the animals that you can spot.



Mythical Lion



Lion



Peacock



Fish



Elephant

Animals and mythical creatures are commonly found in Indian culture as they symbolise unique qualities and characteristics.

Match the qualities to the animals to learn what they symbolise.

Lion	•	•	Wisdom
Peacock	•	•	Prosperity
Fish	•	•	Strength
Elephant	•	•	Beauty

Which two qualities above describe you the most?  
What other qualities would you like to have and why?



# Dress Up!

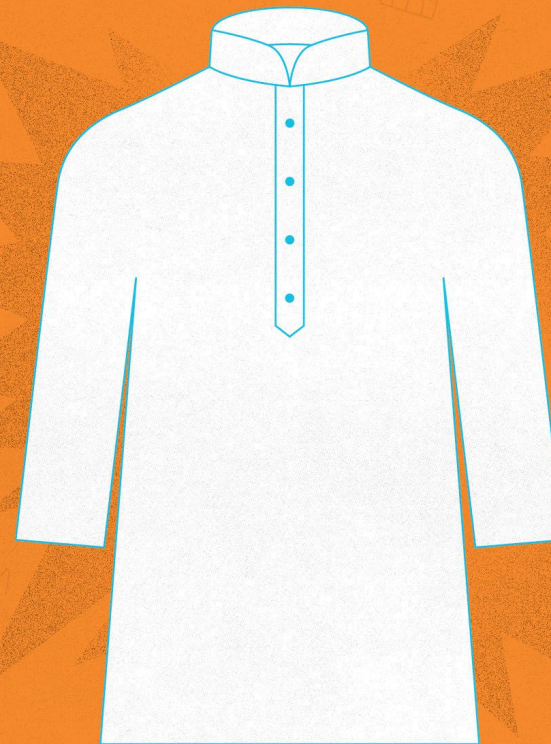
Jewellery designs differ from region to region. The design and elaborate details would indicate the social background of the person who wears it.

Explore the jewellery in the exhibition and use the stickers to dress the Indian lady below.



# Design Challenge

How would you design your own clothing with the patterns and motifs found in this exhibition? Be creative and decorate your own outfit below!



Sticker sheet can paste on the same page



# Invent A New Script

Now that you have seen the various symbols, scripts and patterns in the exhibition, it is time to invent your own script!

Create your own symbols and characters and match them to the alphabet below. Then, try writing your own name using the symbols and characters you have created! The first 2 symbols have been added for you.

a	b	c	d	e	f	g
						
h	i	j	k	l	m	n
o	p	q	r	s	t	u
v	w	x	y	z		

My name in my own script looks like this:


# The Ultimate Challenge

You are close to the end of the exhibition. Are you ready for your final task?  
Spot the hidden artefacts featured in the exhibition in the doodle below.





# Reflections

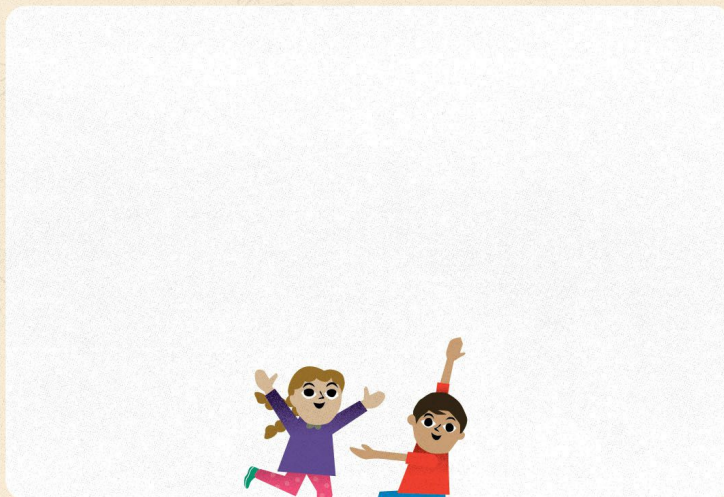
Congratulations, you have completed all the tasks. We hope you had a wonderful journey learning about Symbols and Scripts - The Language of Craft.

What are three things that you have learnt in the exhibition today?

1.	2.	3.

My Favourite Artefact in the Exhibition /  
My Most Memorable Moment in the Museum Today

Draw or write about it below:

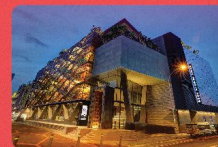


## About IHC

The Indian Heritage Centre (IHC), under the management of the National Heritage Board and with support from the Indian community, traces the history of the Indian and South Asian communities in the Southeast Asian region.

The four-storey IHC building is an iconic, unique and sustainable building that blends both traditional Indian as well as modern architectural elements. The architectural design for the facade of IHC is inspired by the *baoli* (or Indian stepwell), and seeks to create an urban forum for the celebration and appreciation of Indian culture. It houses five permanent galleries, small scale museum facilities, a museum shop as well as programming and activity spaces.

Situated at 5 Campbell Lane, the Centre also serves as a springboard for visitors to explore Little India and enjoy the sights, sounds and scents of the historical precinct. IHC was opened by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong on 7th May 2015 and will offer year-round exhibitions, programmes and activities to promote greater public awareness and appreciation of Indian heritage, arts and culture.



**Address**  
5 Campbell Lane,  
Singapore 209924  
Contact: 6291 1601

**Website**  
[indianheritage.org.sg](http://indianheritage.org.sg)

**Email**  
[nhb\\_ihc@nhb.gov.sg](mailto:nhb_ihc@nhb.gov.sg)

**IndianHeritageCentre**  
@ihcsg

**Opening Hours**  
Tuesdays - Thursdays: 10am to 7pm  
Fridays - Saturdays: 10am to 8pm  
Sundays/Public Holidays\*: 10am to 4pm  
Closed on Mondays

Last admission to the galleries is half an hour before closing.

\* The Indian Heritage Centre is closed on Public Holidays that fall on a Monday unless otherwise stated.