

# Classroom Spice

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## What Comes to Mind When you Hear Asian American?

Chances are, you think of someone of Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Filipino, or maybe Korean descent. But did you realize that there are other Asian Americans? The growth rate of Asian "Indian" Americans, from 1990-2000, was over 105%, the largest growth within the Asian American community. While Chinese Americans make up the largest percentage of Asian Americans, followed by Filipino Americans, Indian Americans make up the third largest group, well ahead of Korean Americans, Vietnamese Americans, or Japanese Americans. In Oklahoma, the Asian Indian population is also growing, registering an 87% increase between censuses.

Briefly let us look at the interesting history of Indian immigration. Great Britain's rule over India, 1858-1947, lead many Indians to leave the country. Sikh farmers and other Asian Indians began coming to the United States essentially in the early 1900s. Many believed they could earn money by working on farms, in lumber mills, or helping with the building of the railway system. In 1917 laws prohibited Asian Indians from entering the United States. In 1946 the law was passed allowing 100 Asian Indians to immigrate each year, and even allowed them the right to become U.S. citizens if they so

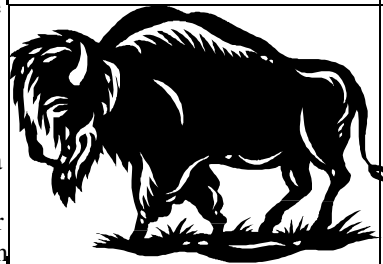
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## Quanah Parker

Many Oklahomans have heard of Quanah Parker and associate him with our state. But did you know that Texas claims him as a Texas Legend? Just how much do you know about this Indian Chief?

Quanah's mother was Cynthia Ann Parker, a Texan. She was abducted by a Comanche war party at the age of nine. After being adopted into the tribe, and learning the language, she became assimilated into the culture and thought of herself as Comanche. As a teenager she became the wife of warrior Peta Nocona. Around 1845 Cynthia gave birth to Quanah near the Wichita Mountains. When Quanah was just a boy, while he, his father, and the other men were out hunting, the Texas Rangers attacked the camp. Many were killed, the camp was burned, and his mother and little sister had been captured. Cynthia was returned to her Texas family, whom she had not seen in twenty-five years. When she tried to escape they held guard over her. After the baby died she starved herself to death. Quanah did not hear of her death for years. But he did

know of his father's death from an infected wound, shortly after the raid. With his mother, father, and sister gone, Quanah left his band and joined the most remote and warlike Comanche band, the Kwahadis. The Kwahadis lived in the Texas Panhandle, and rode about holding buffalo-hide parasols as protection from the sun, thus leading to them being called "Sun Shades



on Their Backs." The Kwahadis did not attend the Medicine Lodge Treaty Council, refused to move to a reservation, and continued to follow and hunt the buffalo. In time, as the buffalo were disappearing, the white hunters would illegally go into the Panhandle to hunt. In 1874, in retribution, an alliance of approximately 700 warriors of various tribes unsuccessfully attacked a white trading post. In 1875 Parker together with what was left of his band surrendered at Fort Sill. Shortly there after

Colonel Mackenzie appointed Parker chief over the Comanche, a controversial move for many of the older Comanche. Over the next twenty years Quanah Parker learned the White man's ways, and was even welcomed by his Parker relatives.

Acting as spokesman of the Comanche Nation he met and claimed as friends, such influential people as cattleman Charles Goodnight and President Theodore Roosevelt. He negotiated grazing rights with Texas cattlemen enabling the tribe to have income, and later became a reservation judge. Through wise investments in the railroad and his profitable ranching, he became the wealthiest Indian in America at that time. His large home was referred to as the "Comanche White House."

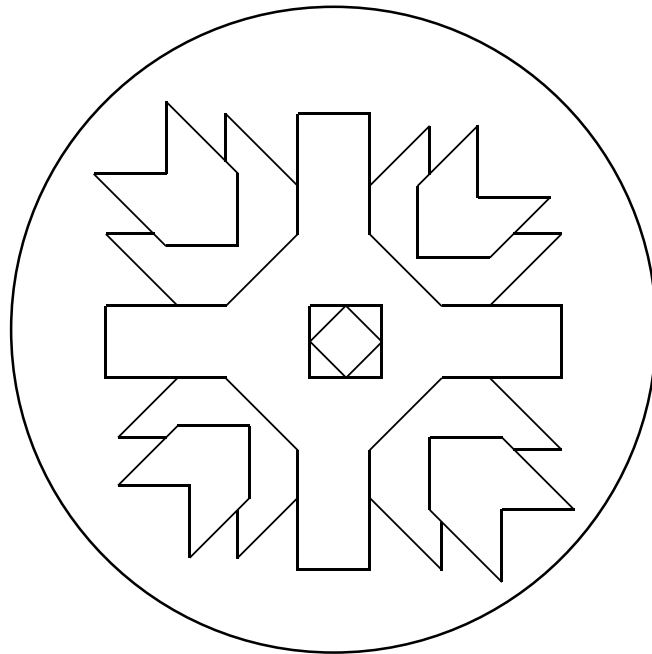
How ironic that he would one day fight to save the reservation that he had once refused to live on. But it was to no avail as the government eventually broke up the reservation. At his funeral in 1911, he was dressed in full ceremonial regalia and buried with a large sum of money. The procession stretched for 2 miles!

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## What is Rangoli ?

It is an intricate colorful design made from sandstone powder or grain-flour. Native to India, it is usually created by women or girls using bare fingers or a brush. Located in the garden near the entrance to a house it serves to welcome guests and is especially important during Diwali.



While the designs are often geometrically based, they may feature plants, animals, deities, chariots, or even temples. Typically the Rangoli is made in a circular fashion, starting with a seed pattern upon which it then builds. See the sample Rangoli design above.

### Create your own symmetrical design.

1. Use sand mixed with paint or food coloring; chalk, or colored rice powder. Draw your design, then layer colored sand or rice powder on top of it.
2. Compare this art form to the sand paintings of the Navajo. Compare Rangoli designs with those in Islamic Art. Can you find similarities in any other cultures?
3. Check out <http://www.kamat.com/kalranga/rangoli/making.htm> to see how to use a seed pattern and then build around it. Similarly, check out [www.kamat.com/kalranga/rangoli/crangoli.htm](http://www.kamat.com/kalranga/rangoli/crangoli.htm) to see colorful rangoli designs.
4. Identify all symmetry, point or line. Which if any lines are congruent? Parallel? Are there any instances of reflections? Rotations?
5. What is sandstone? Where is it found? What is it used for?
6. Find India on a map. What borders it? Looking at its location why do you think India is of particular importance in terms of global politics?

(Asian Indian Americans—cont'd from page 1)  
 desired. In 1965 a new law opened the quota to allow thousands of Asian Indians to enter the U.S. In the year 2000, more than 39,000 Asian Indians came to the United States. In the early years most Asian Indian immigrants settled in the states of Washington, California, Illinois, Pennsylvania and New York. Today the majority of Indian Americans live in California, New York, New Jersey, Texas, and Illinois. Most Asian Indians who come to the United States today, are not farmers, but rather English speaking professionals or students.

In October/November, Indian Americans traditionally celebrate Diwali, India's New Year. It is a five-day celebration, often referred to as the Festival of Lights. It is a Hindu festival celebrating victory over evil. Light is the keystone of the celebration with people everywhere in India (regardless of their religion), lighting tiny lamps, such as diya lamps, lights, or candles. Diwali generates feelings of universal brotherhood and inter-religious harmony not only in India but among Indians around the world. Each day has a different emphasis: good deeds rewarded by wealth, strength, knowledge, riddance of anger and jealousy, and seeing the good in others. Hmm, what other celebrations around the world focus on worship, food, new clothes, exchanging gifts, and visiting friends? Help your students see similarities across cultures, not just differences.

Many Indians are Sikhs. Sikhs have often been discriminated against because of their dress. As part of their religious beliefs, they cover their hair with a turban, thus making them easy targets. Following September 11, 2001 many Indian Americans were the targets of hate crimes. Perhaps as more Americans understand Indian Americans and their contributions to our nation, future incidences of hate will be prevented.



## The Literature Connection

This month's emphasis will be on resource books. As we move into Native American Month, there are several resource books which might be of interest to teachers. The first, *Native Americans: Literature-Based Activities for Thematic Teaching, Grades 4-6*, provides a bibliography of nonfiction and fiction books centering about the Native American theme. Besides, offering suggestions for the novice in how to go about teaching thematically, it provides extensive cross curriculum ideas ranging from styles of government, communication, arts and crafts, trade and math, illnesses, treaties, to food and life styles. With hands-on activities and blackline masters, this is a great resource for 4th-6th grade teachers. This book is written by Andrea Beard and published by Creative Teaching Press (1992).



The second book, *A Unit About Woodland Indians* (1995), authored by Elaine Cleary and published by Evan Moor, is designed for Grades 3rd-6th (ISBN 1-55799-389-0). It includes wonderful double sided, full-sized colored posters of famous Native Americans and woodland cultures. In addition it includes activities involving history and culture, geography and

mapping, critical thinking, written language, arts and crafts, and games.

Designed for older children, *Native Americans: A Thematic Unit on Converging Cultures*, written by Wendy Wilson and Lloyd Thompson, is published by J. Weston Walch (1997), ISBN 0-8251-3332-7. This reproducible book is designed to examine the culture of Native American groups at the point of their contact with the European culture, but not to place blame. It can easily be used to teach Native American culture and history, as well as geography and history of the U.S. Each of the ten thought provoking units has a teacher's guide, background information, a reproducible student information sheet, plus a series of reproducible activity sheets. It includes both well-known Native tribes and lesser known tribes, and not only British, French, and Spanish contact but Russian as well. It could be used in junior or senior high grades. Excellent resource.

There is another resource which you might find somewhere in your school. In 1978 the Oklahoma State Department of Education published *Mini Myths and Legends of Oklahoma Indians*. This wonderful read aloud book was the first in a series of  
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## Tips for Effectively Teaching Hearing Impaired Students

Whether you currently have, or have yet to have a hearing impaired student with an interpreter in your classroom, the following tips may be of help in making you a more effective teacher in such a situation.

1. Language development and vocabulary must be given special attention. Make sure that all new and assumed prerequisite vocabulary is identified to the student.
2. Remember the interpreter is not intended to serve as an aide or participant in an activity. They are busy communicating!
3. Make sure no "one", or no "thing," interferes with the line of sight between the student and the interpreter.
4. Look at, and speak directly to the stu-

dent, not the interpreter. Don't say "Tell him/her..."

5. For interactive situations, a semi-circle or circle works best. This allows the student to see everyone who may be speaking. In a regular class setting, make sure all students wait to be recognized before speaking and in some way indicate who is speaking.
6. If you teach block classes, or go from one activity to another, be sure and plan a 5-10 minute break for the interpreter. Interpreting requires incessant multitasking, and a break every hour or so means a more effective interpreter.
7. Have a good student with legible writing take notes, and provide copies to the

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Asian Indian Americans; Quannah Parker, Rangoli, Hearing Impaired Students, Lit. Connection

**Pancho Villa— Hero, Villain, or German Spy?**

Pancho Villa, born Doroteo Arnago, is described by some as Robin Hood, a bandit, and/or a killer. He was definitely a ruthless, revolutionary leader.

What about German Spy? There is strong circumstantial evidence, including his known dealings with German double agent Sommerfeld, to indicate that Germany financed and at times armed Villa. In addition some of Villa's military actions definitely helped the German cause. Despite his hatred of the U.S., it appears he was probably opportunistic, playing both ends against the middle.

**(Personal note:** I once asked my Mexican grandmother about him. She said both the military and the revolutionaries robbed and murdered. She remembers, as a child, all the children, women, and chickens having to flee from both sides, at one time or another.)

*(Hearing—Cont'd from page 3)*

hearing impaired student. Make sure notes of “all” examples/material are taken. Even though the note taker may already know it—the hearing impaired student may not.

8. Especially in high school provide the interpreter with a copy of the text. They may want to preview upcoming material each day.
9. Provide extended time for testing.
10. Make sure you get captioned videos whenever possible, otherwise the student is only able to watch the interpreter and misses the video.
11. Make sure there is sufficient and appropriate lighting. Watch out for glares.
12. When calling on students for questions or answers, be sure and include your deaf student.

13. Check the credentials of the interpreter. If they are not certified, you may have to remind them that they are to interpret “everything” they hear. Not just what they think is important, or what the teacher says. What the other students, or the intercom, say are equally important.
14. Be sure and have extra batteries available if hearing aids are in use.
15. Take the opportunity for you and the class to learn some sign language.
16. Enjoy the opportunity!



*(Lit. Connection—Cont'd from page 3)*  
books about Oklahoma’s Indian Tribes. It is illustrated by Indian artists, and is representative of several different tribes. See if you can find it in your school library, or maybe tucked away but forgotten in someone’s closet or the school storage area. If all else fails try the city library. It would be a shame to miss out on this classic. Track it down today.

While not Native American, *Asian Indian Americans* by Carolyn Yoder (2003) published by Heinemann, is a good informational source for upper elementary students wanting to know more about Asian Indian Americans. Part of the *We Are America* series, designed to help students learn about immigration, this book introduces the reader to Manoj Shenoy who immigrated at the age of ten. A very interesting book.