



**Educational Resource Review: In Connection to Rianna Lal's Family
History and Migration Experience as Indo-Fijian Canadians**
By: Rianna Lal

Resource #1: *Fiji-Baat: Nana comes to Sydney* by Salvin Kumar.

The book "*Fiji-Baat*" is about a 9 year old Indo-Fijian boy and his nana (grandfather) who comes to visit the boy in Sydney, Australia from the Fiji Islands. The boy struggles to communicate with his grandfather (nana) who speaks some English but mainly speaks in the Fiji Hindi language (Fiji Baat). During this trip, the boy creates a deeper bond with his grandfather by learning and understanding more Fiji Baat. As a result, the boy begins to build positive associations with his Indo-Fijian identity and family heritage.

Given the under-representation of the Indo-Fijian Community in books, this book allows for children and families of the Indo-Fijian identity to be positively represented and included in classrooms and communities. This book can be universally related to any person who has struggled to feel a sense of belonging with their community because of language barriers, the historical impact of colonization, and migration experiences.

- Bibliographic Information:
 - Publication date : July 2020
 - Publication Location: NA
 - Author and Illustrator (Except the cover): Salvin Kumar
 - Bind : Paperback
 - Language : English
 - Pages : 24
 - ISBN: 978-0-646-82128-3
 - Format: Children's Book
- Where it can be located:
 - Book for Purchase: <https://myfijistore.com/en/gifts/fiji-baat-childrens-book>
 - Book for Purchase: <https://shop.lostinbooks.com.au/p/fiji-baat>
 - E-Book (Free Kindle) - [Fiji-Baat eBook : Kumar, Salvin - Kindle Store](#)
 - Video Read Aloud by Author (gives context as well) - [Salvin Kumar - Fiji-Baat \(book launch\)](#)
- Teaching Approaches:
 - "Hello Collage" in Various Languages
 - Students will brainstorm languages spoken at home and/or in the local community
 - Students will brainstorm and research how different languages say "hello or welcome"
 - Students will sing songs or engage in a sharing circle on the different ways to greet people in various languages
 - Students will create a collaborative word collage made of of these greetings in different languages and have it displayed in their classroom
 - Additionally, students may create a living collage piece made up of sidewalk chalk writings outside of a school/community or take part in



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another way to make it accessible to be seen by the school (Ex. Hallways poster, Community posters, painted rocks with greetings, etc.)

- Topics: Social Studies - Family, identity, language, race, culture, global Indigenous nations (Fijian), home, a sense of belonging, community, multiculturalism, diversity, positive self-worth, local and global histories, heritage, ancestry, etc.
- Grades: K-3
- Learning Objectives/Big Ideas:
 - Our communities are diverse and made of individuals who have a lot in common. (K)
 - Stories and traditions about ourselves and our families reflect who we are and where we are from. (K)
 - Healthy communities recognize and respect the diversity of individuals and care for the local environment. (1)
 - Individuals have rights and responsibilities as global citizens (2)
 - Canada is made up of many diverse regions and communities. (2)
 - People from diverse cultures and societies share some common experiences and aspects of life. (3)
- Curricular Competencies:
 - Explain the significance of personal or local events, objects, people, or places (significance)
 - Recognize causes and consequences of events, decisions, or developments in their lives (cause and consequence)
 - Acknowledge different perspectives on people, places, issues, or events in their lives (perspective)
 - Content:
 - ways in which individuals and families differ and are the same (K)
 - personal and family history and traditions (K)
 - needs and wants of individuals and families (K)
 - characteristics of the local community that provide organization and meet the needs of the community (1)
 - diverse cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives within the local and other communities (1)
 - relationships between a community and its environment (1)
 - diverse characteristics of communities and cultures in Canada and around the world, including at least one Canadian First Peoples community and culture (2)
 - cultural characteristics and ways of life of local First Peoples and global indigenous peoples (3)
 - aspects of life shared by and common to peoples and cultures (3)
- Core Competencies:
 - Personal and Social:
 - Personal Awareness and Responsibility



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- Example: I can make choices that help me meet my wants and needs and increase my feelings of well-being. I take responsibility for my actions.
- Positive Personal and Cultural Identity
 - Example: I can describe different aspects of my identity.
 - I have pride in who I am. I understand that I am a part of larger communities.
- Social Awareness and Responsibility
 - Example: I can interact with others and the environment respectfully and thoughtfully.
- Critique:
 - The story takes place in Fiji and Sydney, Australia and does not directly relate to the experience of Indo-Fijian Canadians. However, it is one of the few if not the only children's book that speaks directly on the Indo-Fijian identity.
 - Locating and purchasing this book may be difficult and take some time to arrive since it comes from overseas. However, there is a free E-Book copy of the book available through Kindle.
 - Visuals are simple but created authentically by Fijian illustrators
 - Colloquial language/broken English is used at times in order to describe English Language Learners (ELL) experiences. For example, "You know Fiji-Baat (Fiji Talk)?" is a line in the book.
 - The length of the book may be more appropriate for upper primary years since the text seems to be quite small and may be challenging for students to read.

Resource #2: *Coolie Woman: The Odyssey of Indenture* by Gaiutra Bahadur

- Bibliographic Information:
 - Publication date : October 2013
 - Publishers: University of Chicago Press (US) and Hurst and Company (London, UK)
 - Author: Gaiutra Bahadur
 - Language : English
- Format: Teacher Aid or Resource - Book/Biography
- Where it can be located:
 - For purchase:
 - [Coolie Woman: The Odyssey of Indenture eBook : Bahadur, Gaiutra: Amazon.ca: Kindle Store](#)



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- [Coolie Woman: The Odyssey Of Indenture, Book by Gaiutra Bahadur \(Paperback\)](#) Chapters/Indigo
- Potential local bookstores: Iron Dog Books, etc.
- For loan:
 - UBC Library (For UBC students and alumni students and visitors)
<https://webcat.library.ubc.ca/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=7044144>
- Topics: Indentured Labour System, British India, Colonization, Migration Stories, Gender, Identity, South Asian Diaspora, South Asian Women's Studies, Sense of Belonging, Home, Language, Culture, Religion, Global (Her)story, etc.
- Teaching Approaches: For teachers to use as a basis for understanding the identity of folks from the South Asian Diaspora, especially women's lived experiences. Teachers can use this resource to plan age-appropriate lessons for K-7 that incorporate the importance of this history. For example....
 - Acknowledging and celebrating, 'Girmit Day' annually on May 14th as an important date in history to recognize the day that indentured labourers arrived to Fiji from India on May 14th, 1879
 - Creating a map of family origins (Pinpointing migration paths)
 - Family history artifact share and tell
 - Creating a classroom calendar filled of important celebrations and heritage holiday dates
 - A lesson on sugarcane: Sample tasting sugarcane, the history of sugarcane plantation workers, and how sugarcane has been modified into the sugar that we commonly see
- Grades: N/A - Teacher resource only
- Learning Objectives/Outcomes:
 - Our communities are diverse and made of individuals who have a lot in common. (K)
 - Stories and traditions about ourselves and our families reflect who we are and where we are from. (K)
 - Healthy communities recognize and respect the diversity of individuals and care for the local environment. (1)
 - Individuals have rights and responsibilities as global citizens (2)
 - Canada is made up of many diverse regions and communities. (2)
 - People from diverse cultures and societies share some common experiences and aspects of life. (3)
- Curricular Competencies:
 - ways in which individuals and families differ and are the same (K)
 - personal and family history and traditions (K)



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- needs and wants of individuals and families (K)
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- relationships between a community and its environment (1)
- diverse characteristics of communities and cultures in Canada and around the world, including at least one Canadian First Peoples community and culture (2)
- cultural characteristics and ways of life of local First Peoples and global indigenous peoples (3)
- aspects of life shared by and common to peoples and cultures (3)
- Core Competencies:
 - Personal and Social:
 - Personal Awareness and Responsibility
 - Example: I can make choices that help me meet my wants and needs and increase my feelings of well-being. I take responsibility for my actions.
 - Positive Personal and Cultural Identity
 - Example: I can describe different aspects of my identity.
 - I have pride in who I am. I understand that I am a part of larger communities.
 - Social Awareness and Responsibility
 - Example: I can interact with others and the environment respectfully and thoughtfully.
- Critique:
 - “Coolie” is a word that can be directly translated as “cargo” in the Tamil language. However, in most contexts it is seen as an offensive or outdated word since it has been used most often in the context of a racial slur towards Indentured labourers. In some contexts, the word “Coolie” has now been reclaimed and proclaimed to express the histories and the realities of the indentured labour system. It is a word that should be used with caution for its meaning and significance to members of the South Asian Diaspora.
 - This book covers topics that may be triggering to some readers including sexual violence, physical and emotional abuse, pregnancy-related issues, and racism.
 - This book covers mature subject areas and is not appropriate for young children. It should be used by professional adults to gain a better understanding of the indentured labour system that resulted in hyphenated identities including the



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“Indo-Fijian” identity and other people’s experiences from the South Asian Diaspora.

Resource #3: Indo-Fijian Sweets Recipe: “Yellow Barfi Fiji Style”

Yellow Barfi is a trademarked Fijian Sweet that combines India’s original sweets (barfi) with a Fijian Style and twist. The Fijian company “Bhikha Bhai” has famously sold this specific sweet dessert and many people are trying to recreate this one of a kind recipe in their homes. This recipe by Simply Blissful Living is the closest to the real deal if you cannot order some from Fiji. This dessert can be given as a gift to people or enjoyed on special holidays and occasions such as “Diwali”.

As Romi from “Simply Blissful Living” says, “food connects us to each other” and it can become a starting point to open up discussions around identity, family heritage, cultures, holidays from around the world and so much more. It is a great place for students to get the hands on and sensory experience of understanding new cuisines from cultures around their classroom or community.

- Bibliographic Information:
 - Website source: “Blogger”
 - Publication: 2018
 - All Rights Reserved to “Simply Blissful Living”
 - Content Creator of “Simply Blissful Living”: Romi
 - Format: Food Recipe (Online recipe and online video)
- Where it can be located:
 - Written Recipe: <https://www.simplyblissfulliving.net/2021/10/yellowbarfi.html>
 - Video Recipe:  [Yellow Barfi Fiji Style | How to make Fiji Style Barfi | Best ...](#)
 - Youtube Channel (For other videos): [Simply Blissful Living - Taste of Fiji - YouTube](#)
- Teaching Approaches
 - Food sharing and storytelling - Taking inspiration from Pacific Canada Heritage Centre - Museum of Migration Society’s “Banquet of Stories” event where people from different countries bring food from their background/culture to share while sharing stories
 - Drawing and labeling a balanced nutritional meal filled of cultural dishes important to students families or heritages



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- Classroom recipe booklet - Create a collection of family recipes or cultural significant recipes to students and families for the entire classroom to learn and share with one another
- Lessons on cultural holidays and foods
- Video:  Kids Try School Lunches From Around the World
- Books on the significance of cultural food: [Culture and Cooking: Children's Books about Diversity and Food - Bookshop.org](#) (For example: *Fry Bread* (Indigenous), *Bilal Cooks Dhal* (South Asian), etc.)
- Topics: Food from local and global communities, family traditions, cultures and celebrations, classroom recipes, community, cultural diversity and inclusion, identity, positive self-esteem, language, etc.
- Grades: K-3
- Learning Objectives/Big Ideas:
 - Our communities are diverse and made of individuals who have a lot in common. (K)
 - Stories and traditions about ourselves and our families reflect who we are and where we are from. (K)
 - Healthy communities recognize and respect the diversity of individuals and care for the local environment. (1)
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- Curricular Competencies/Content
 - Explain the significance of personal or local events, objects, people, or places (significance)
 - Acknowledge different perspectives on people, places, issues, or events in their lives (perspective)
 - Content:
 - ways in which individuals and families differ and are the same - Food
- Core Competencies:
 - Personal and Social:
 - Personal Awareness and Responsibility
 - Example: I can make choices that help me meet my wants and needs and increase my feelings of well-being. I take responsibility for my actions.
 - Positive Personal and Cultural Identity
 - Example: I can describe different aspects of my identity.



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- I have pride in who I am. I understand that I am a part of larger communities.
- Social Awareness and Responsibility
 - Example: I can interact with others and the environment respectfully and thoughtfully.
- Critique:
 - Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some classrooms may still be hesitant to make or incorporate food into their classrooms for the health and safety of staff and students.
 - Given this is a dessert, this Indo-Fijian sweet contains a high amount of sugar and low nutritional value which some students and families may feel hesitant about consuming.

Additional Resources:

- Children's Books
 - *Island Born* by Junot Díaz
 - *Binny's Diwali* by Thrity Umrigar
 - *Where are you from?* by Yamile Saied Méndez
 - *We're Different, We're the Same* by Bobbi Jane Kates
 - *All Are Welcome* by Alexandra Penfold
 - *Little Dumplings* by Jekka Kuhlmann and Krissy Kuhlmann
 - *Everybody Bakes Bread* by Norah Dooley
 - *Everybody Cooks Rice* by Norah Dooley
- Oral Histories and Testimonials
 - [No Ties 1879 on Apple Podcasts](#) - A podcast hosted by a brother and sister of Indo-Fijian heritage. The siblings talk about their experiences as Indo-Fijian Canadians growing up as children of immigrants in a suburban and predominately White neighbourhood. This resource would be best suited for high school students or older. This may be used as a teacher resource.
 - [The Cutlass](#) Podcast - A podcast that is dedicated to the Indo-Caribbean community and descendants of Indian indentureship.
- Visuals
 - National Archives of Fiji- <https://www.archives.gov.fj/>
 - National Archives of Fiji (Facebook Page) https://www.facebook.com/NationalArchivesOfFiji/photos_albums
- Maps
 - [Map of major South Asian migration flows | Striking Women](#)
- Social Media



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- Instagram creators who speak on the Indo-Fijian identity and experiences
 - @Girmitdiaries
 - @Vitivibestv
 - @Bulamentalhealth
 - @Diasporicchildrenofindenture
 - @Coolie.Women
 - @Savoringfiji
 - @Ashachristal
- Teacher Textbooks
 - Challenging Racist “British Columbia” 150 Years and Counting - Histories of migration and Indigenous communities
<https://challengeracistbc.ca/#about-the-project>
- Field Trips/Artifacts
 - Virtual Field Trip: Museum of Surrey - The Indo-Fijians: Surrey's Pocket of Paradise (No longer in person - took place in 2021)
 - Museum Page: <https://www.surrey.ca/arts-culture/museum-of-surrey/exhibitions/indo-fijians-surreys-pocket-of-paradise>
 - Virtual Tour Page: <https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=m9TfCfohURv>
 - Museum of Anthropology - <https://moa.ubc.ca/> (Contains ethnographic collections from all over the world including Fiji)
- Holidays/Heritage Dates
 - General important days in Canada: [Important and commemorative days - Canada.ca](https://www150.gc.ca/important-days)
 - May is Asian Heritage Month
 - May 14th is Girit Day