



VOL. 858



Ministry of Culture
Government of India



A DAY AT THE MUSEUM





TITLE

A DAY AT THE MUSEUM

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Published by

Amar Chitra Katha Pvt. Ltd

Printed in India

Edition I

ISBN - 978-81-19242-34-4

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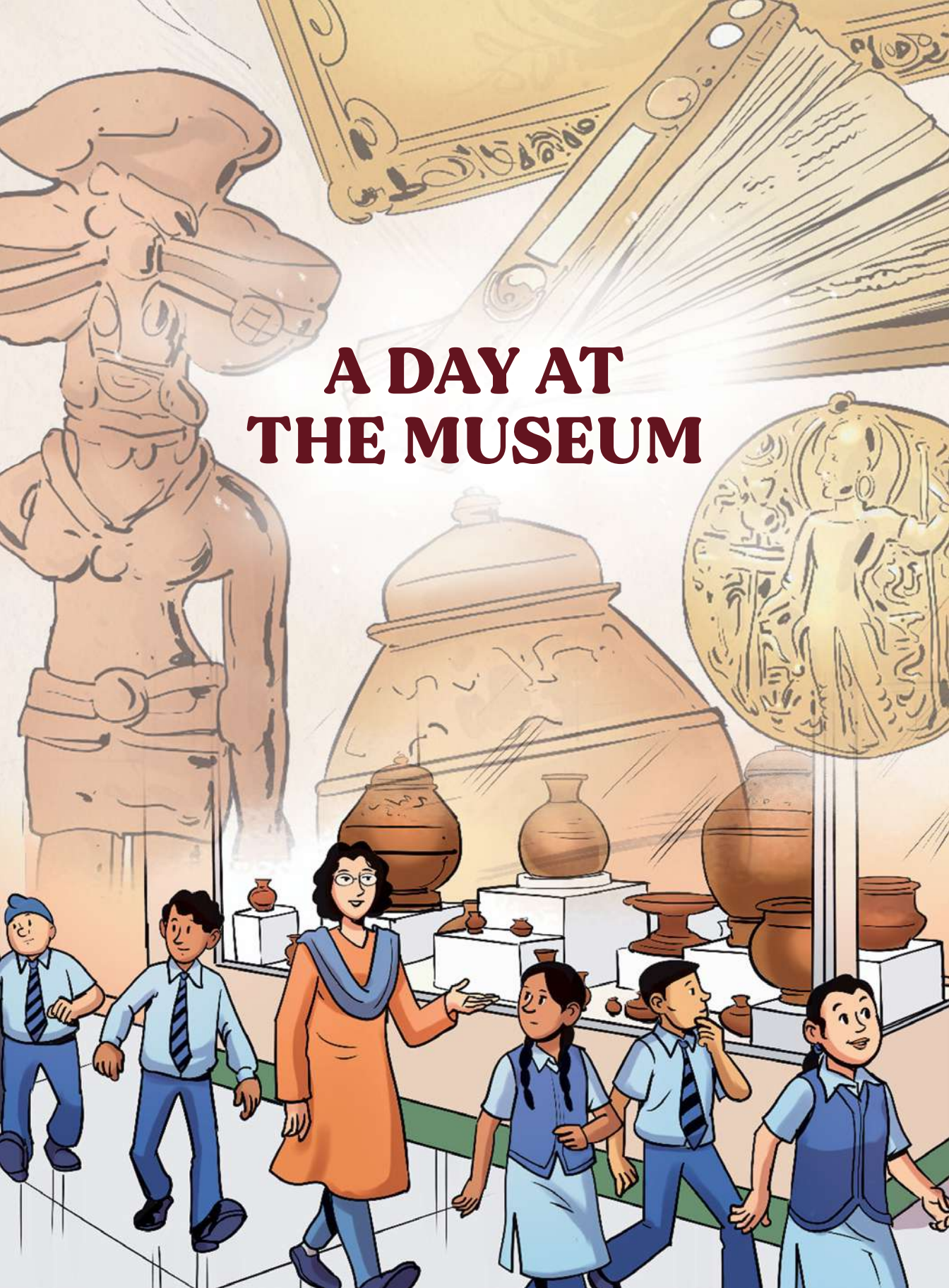
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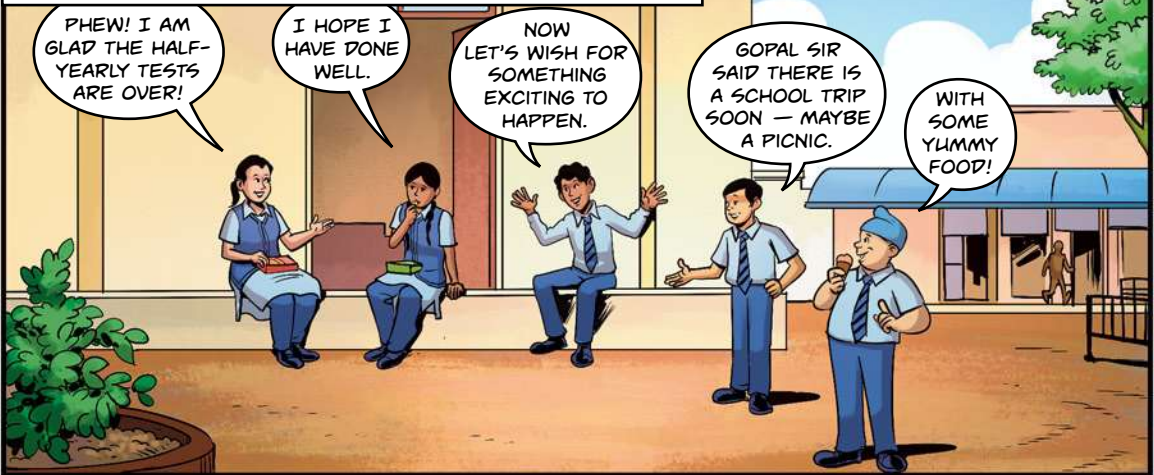
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A DAY AT THE MUSEUM



MONIKA, DEEPAK, HANIA, GURTEJ AND LEN WERE CLASSMATES IN STANDARD VI AT SARVODAYA VIDYALAYA IN NEW DELHI. ONE DAY —



BACK IN CLASS —



THE CHILDREN WERE FULL OF QUESTIONS.

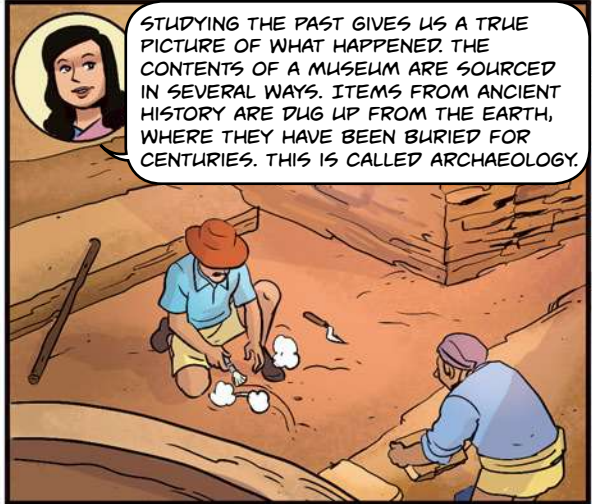
WHY DO WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT OLD STUFF?

HOW DOES THE MUSEUM FIND ANTIQUES?

WHAT CAN THEY TELL US? OBJECTS CAN'T SPEAK!



STUDYING THE PAST GIVES US A TRUE PICTURE OF WHAT HAPPENED. THE CONTENTS OF A MUSEUM ARE SOURCED IN SEVERAL WAYS. ITEMS FROM ANCIENT HISTORY ARE DUG UP FROM THE EARTH, WHERE THEY HAVE BEEN BURIED FOR CENTURIES. THIS IS CALLED ARCHAEOLOGY.



HUMANS LOVE TO COLLECT BEAUTIFUL THINGS — PAINTINGS, CLOTHES, JEWELLERY, BOOKS, FURNITURE AND SO ON. A LOT OF PEOPLE DONATE THEIR ANCESTORS' COLLECTIONS. SOMETIMES MUSEUMS BUY OBJECTS AS WELL, SO THAT THEY CAN BE PRESERVED.



MY GRANDMOTHER HAS A TRUNK FULL OF OLD SAREES!

AND MY FATHER HAS A BIG STAMP COLLECTION.



ALL OBJECTS HAVE A STORY TO TELL; WE JUST HAVE TO READ THE CLUES. YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT THIS WHEN YOU VISIT THE MUSEUM TOMORROW.

I GOT MY WISH! THIS SOUNDS LIKE AN EXCITING TRIP.

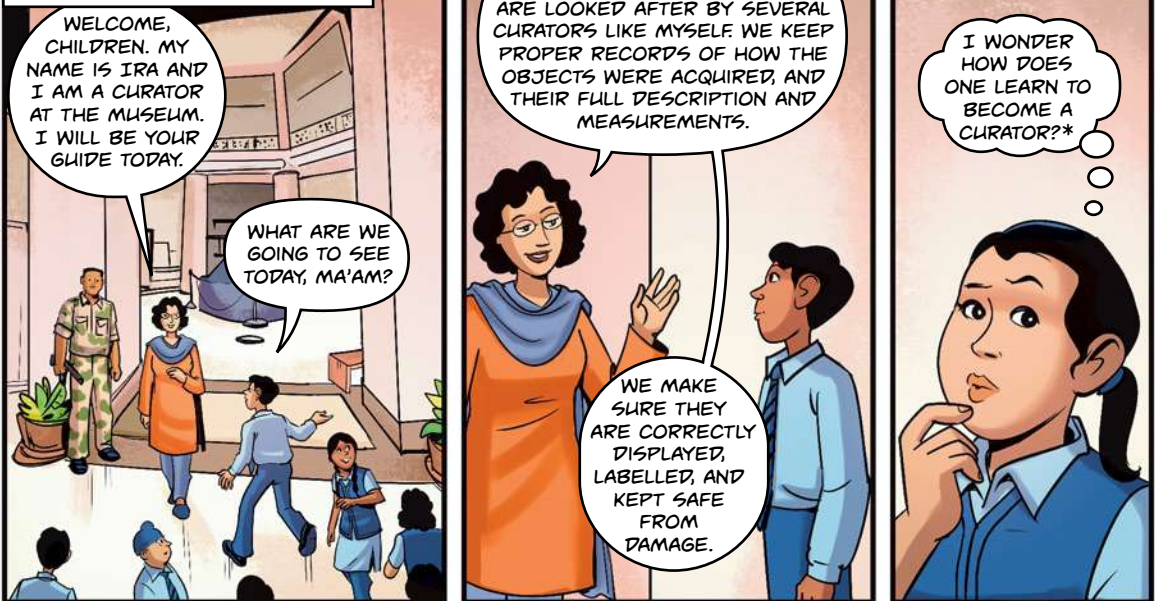
YES, HISTORY IS MY FAVOURITE SUBJECT!



NEXT MORNING, A BUS FULL OF EAGER CHILDREN REACHED THE MUSEUM. THEY FIRST WENT THROUGH THE TICKET BARRIER AND THE SECURITY CHECK.



THEY HAD SOMEONE WAITING FOR THEM IN THE MUSEUM LOBBY.

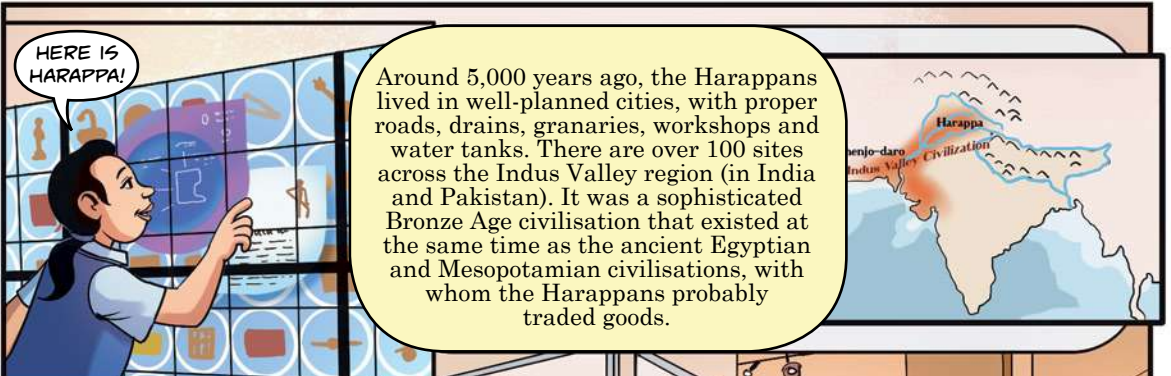
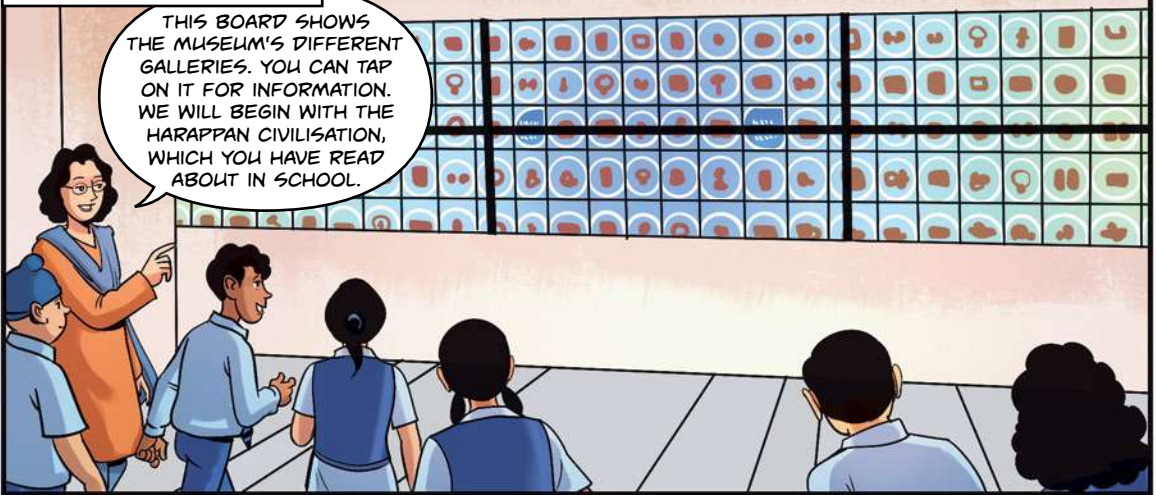


On 15 August, 1949, the National Museum, New Delhi, was inaugurated in the Rashtrapati Bhavan by Shri R.C. Rajagopalachari, the Governor-General of India. The foundation of the present building was laid by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India, on 12 May, 1955.

At present, it has 2,07,000 items in 23 galleries. Recently, 262 valuable artefacts have been repatriated from abroad. There are many special exhibitions and outreach activities for children. Scan the QR code to explore the National Museum website.

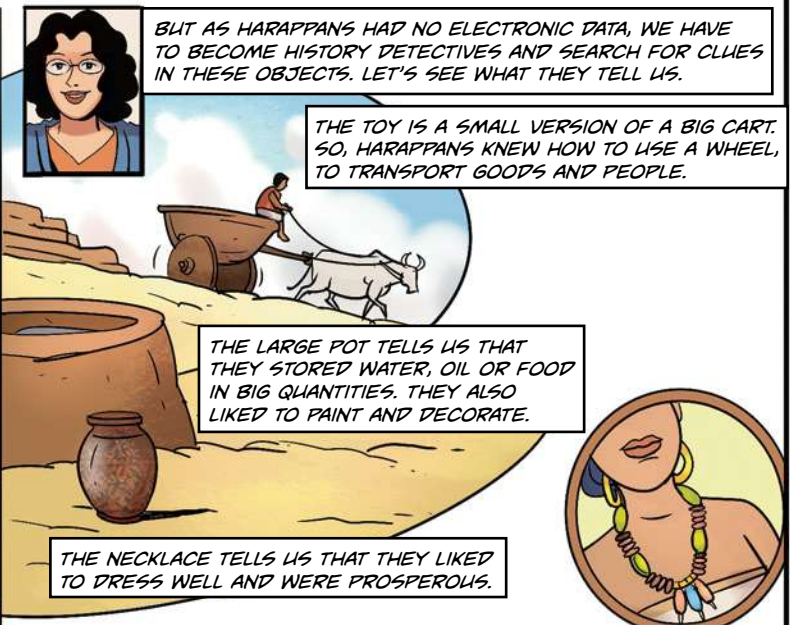
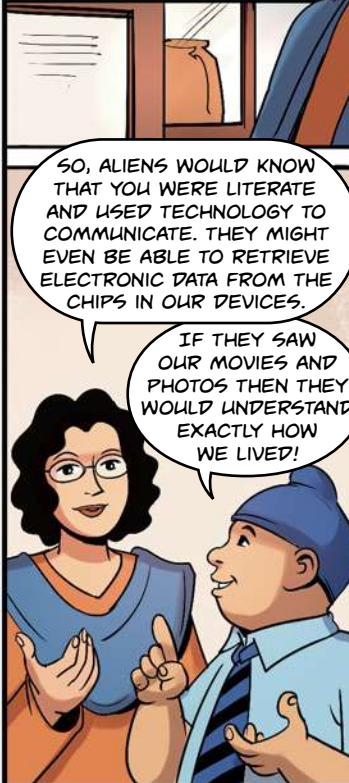
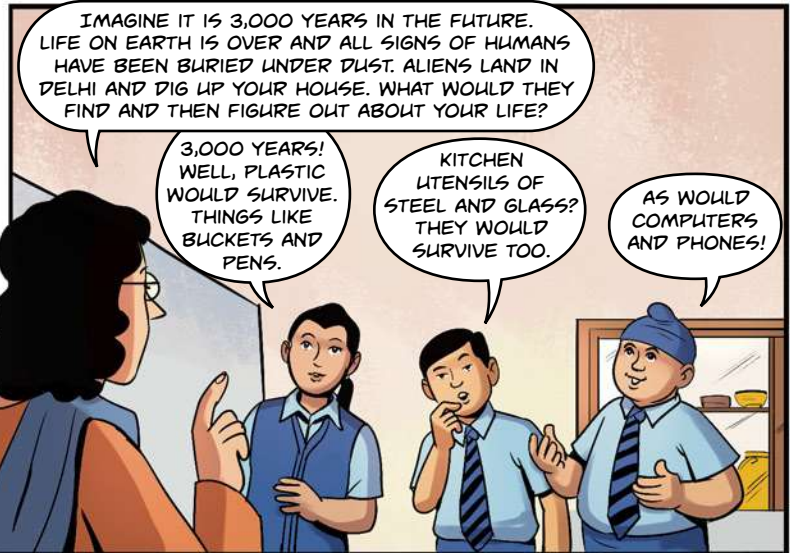


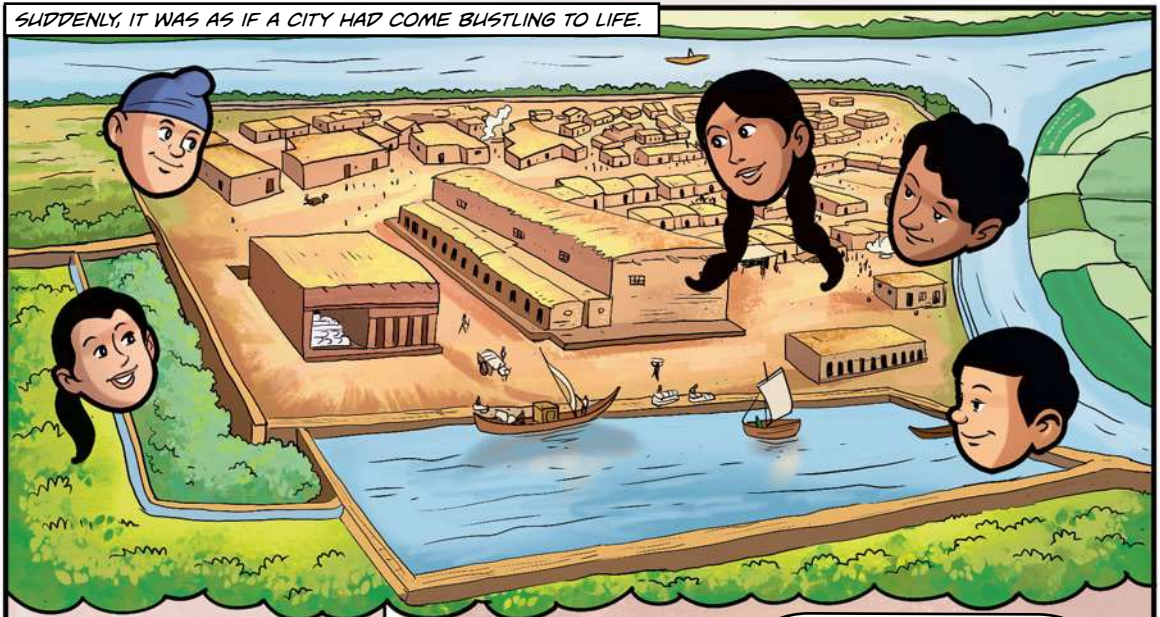
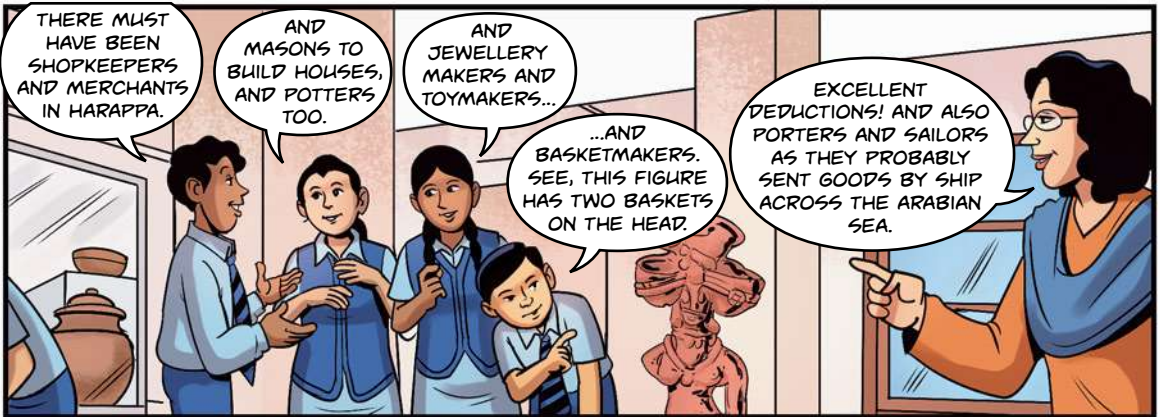
IN THE ENTRANCE LOBBY —



THE CHILDREN ENTERED THE HARAPPAN GALLERY.

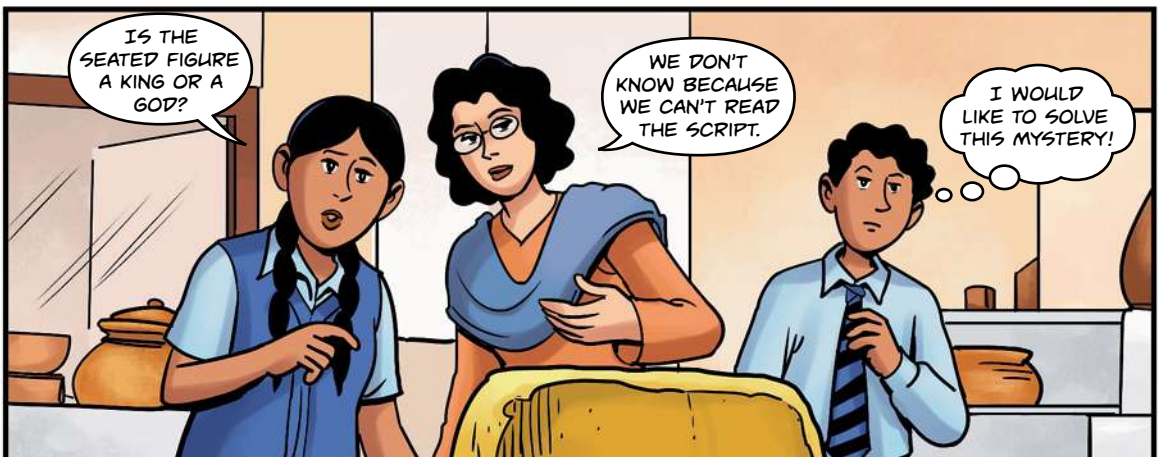
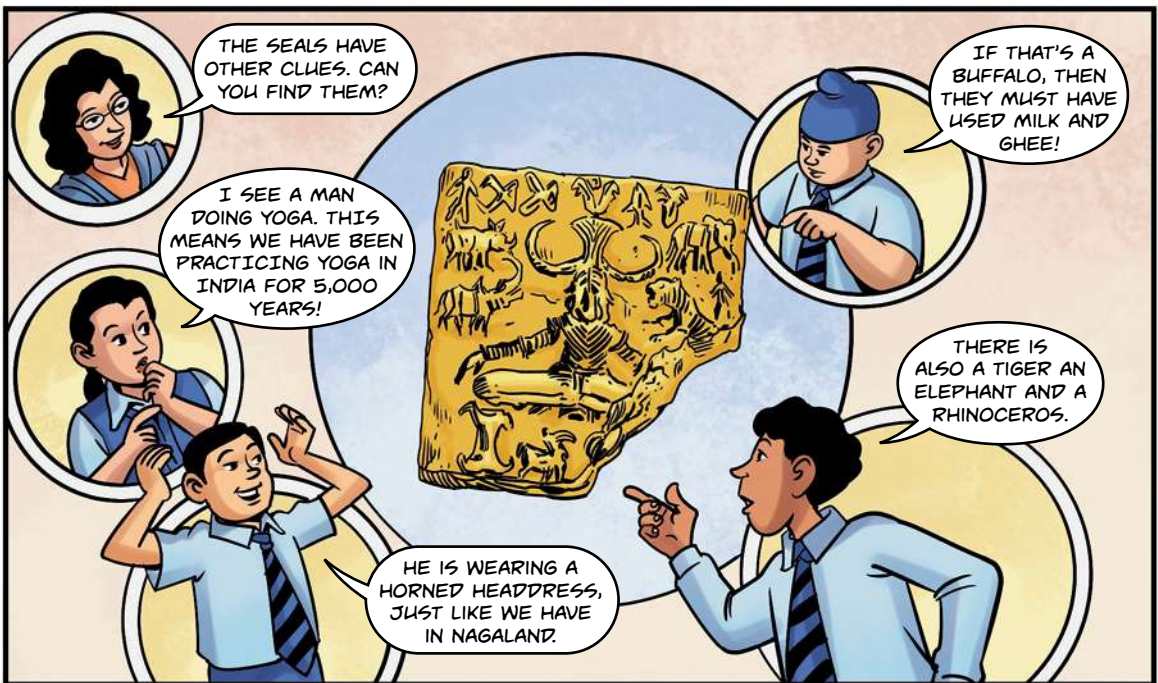






*MOULDS USED TO MAKE STAMPS.

¹A SOFT STONE

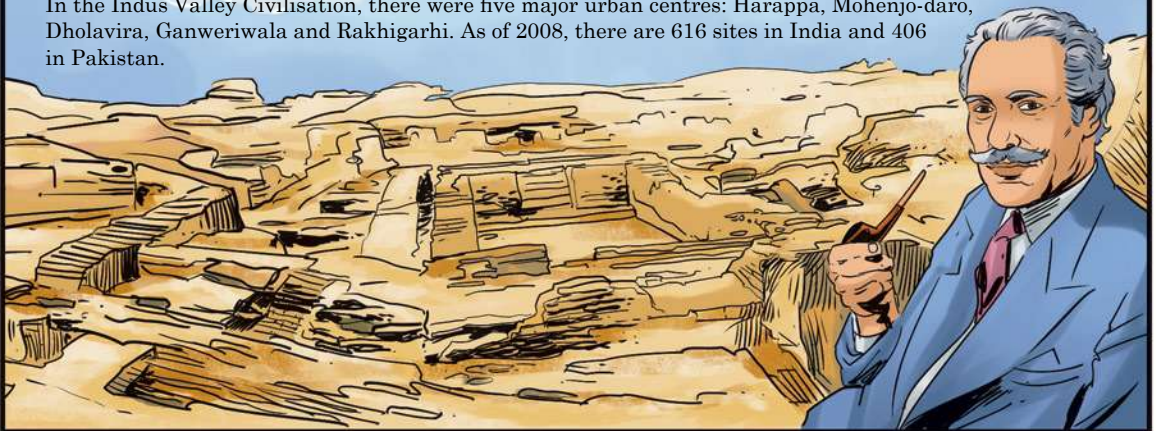


*A SYSTEM OF PICTORIAL WRITING USED ON ANCIENT EGYPTIAN MONUMENTS

[^]THE SCIENCE OF STUDYING LANGUAGES, BOTH CURRENT AND OLD

Charles Masson, a British adventurer, came across the ruins of Harappa, in 1829, while searching for old coins. Sir Alexander Cunningham, a British engineer with a passion for history, founded the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and conducted excavations in the 1870s. But it was Sir John Marshall, appointed Director-General of the ASI in 1902, who identified Harappa as the site of a hitherto unknown culture, and also began digging at Mohenjo-daro. By the 1930s, the Indus Valley or Harappan culture had revealed thousands of artefacts, many burial sites and skeletons, and the remains of well-planned brick settlements.

In the Indus Valley Civilisation, there were five major urban centres: Harappa, Mohenjo-daro, Dholavira, Ganweriwala and Rakhigarhi. As of 2008, there are 616 sites in India and 406 in Pakistan.

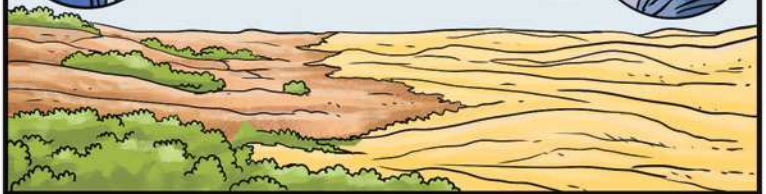


ANOTHER MYSTERY NEVER FULLY SOLVED IS WHY THE HARAPPAN CIVILISATION ENDED. BOTH THE ELEPHANT AND THE RHINOCEROS NEED A WET REGION WITH FORESTS AND MARSHLAND. BUT THE PLACE THIS SEAL WAS FOUND IS LIKE A DESERT TODAY. SO WAS IT A WETLAND 4,000 YEARS AGO? DID THE LAND BECOME SLOWLY DRY AND BARREN SO EVERYONE HAD TO MOVE AWAY?



YOU MEAN THE CLIMATE CHANGED AND A GREEN, FORESTED LAND BECAME LIKE A BROWN DRY DESERT?

PERHAPS. AND AS RIVERS AND WELLS DRIED UP AGRICULTURE STOPPED AND THE PEOPLE DRIFTED AWAY.



SO CLIMATE CHANGE IS REAL, AND CAN AFFECT WHOLE CITIES AND VILLAGES.

ABSOLUTELY. THAT IS A LESSON FROM HISTORY WE CANNOT IGNORE.



NEXT, THEY ENTERED THE SCULPTURE GALLERY.

LET'S MOVE FORWARD BY A 1,000 YEARS. BY NOW, THERE WERE MANY KINGDOMS AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES. PEOPLE LIVED MOSTLY IN MUD, THATCH AND TIMBER HOMES. GODS WERE PLACED IN STONE SHRINES.

ALL THESE FIGURES LOOK SO REAL!

THE CHILDREN GAZED IN WONDER AT THE TALL STONE STATUES IN SO MANY SHAPES AND SIZES.

HOW CAN ONE TELL THEM APART? IT'S CONFUSING!

WE HAVE TO LOOK FOR CLUES, BUT THIS TIME, WE HAVE THE WRITTEN WORD TO HELP US. THE JATAKAS, PURANAS, THE RAMAYANA AND THE MAHABHARATA, ALL DESCRIBE THE GODS AND THEIR STORIES.

IRA MA'AM EXPLAINED THAT IT IS NECESSARY FOR A CURATOR TO KNOW WHAT IMAGES AND SYMBOLS COULD BE USED TO IDENTIFY A SCULPTURE.

THE PURANAS TELL US THAT VISHNU WEARS A CROWN AND A GARLAND OF FLOWERS, HOLDS A CONCH SHELL, A MACE, AND IS STANDING OR SEATED ON A LOTUS. HIS MOUNT, GARUDA, WILL ALSO BE WITH HIM.

HERE IS A STATUE OF VISHNU! I CAN SEE THE CONCH SHELL AND THE MACE.

AND THE GARLAND OF FLOWERS AND THE LOTUS HE IS STANDING UPON.

THE CHILDREN WERE FASCINATED BY THIS INFORMATION. THEY LOOKED CAREFULLY AT THE OTHER STATUES.

MY NANI SAYS LONG EARS MEAN BIG BRAINS! THIS STATUE OF THE BUDDHA HAS VERY LONG EARS.

HA! HA! YES, THAT WAS A COMMON BELIEF, SO ONE OF THE WAYS WE IDENTIFY STATUES OF WISE MEN LIKE YOGIS AND ASCETICS IS TO CHECK THE EARS!

DEEPAK, LET ME CHECK YOUR EARS.

GODS AND THEIR VAHANAS

Most gods and goddesses in the Hindu pantheon have specific animals as their mounts. Can you match the vahanas with the deities?

A.



Vishnu

Lion



1.

B.



Indra

Nandi



2.

C.



Durga

Garuda



3.

D.



Shiva

Airavat



4.

IT WAS TIME FOR A BREAK. THE CHILDREN SAT IN THE ROTUNDA* SIPPING LIME JUICE AND MUNCHING PEANUTS.



IN A FEW MINUTES, THEY HAD DONE QUICK SKETCHES OF THE MUSEUM.

LEN AND HANIA DECIDED TO EXPLORE A LITTLE AND WENT UP THE STAIRS.



THEY MADE A QUICK STOP AT THE MUSEUM GIFT SHOP.



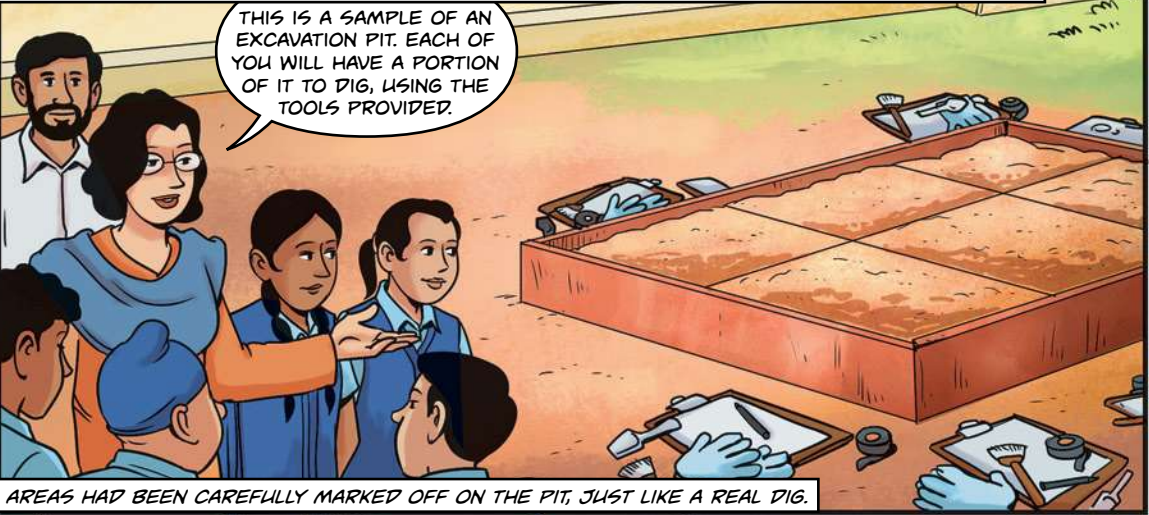
THEN, THEY WENT INTO THE GALLERY OF ANTHROPOLOGY.



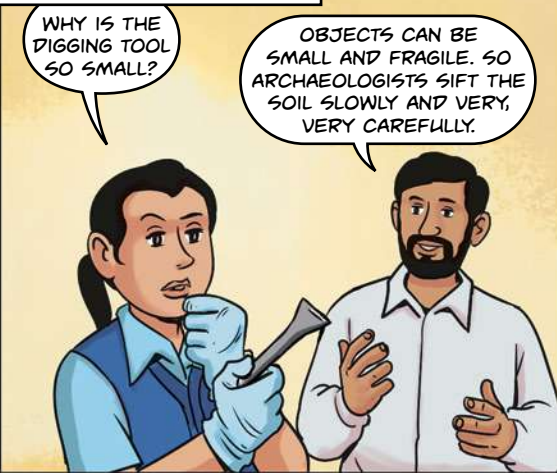
HA! HA! THESE ARE TRIBAL MASKS FOR FESTIVALS. WE ALSO HAVE THEM IN NAGALAND.

*ROTUND GALLERY

EVENTUALLY, THEY FOUND THEIR CLASSMATES OUTDOORS GETTING READY TO DO SOME EXCAVATING.



THE CHILDREN GOT TO WORK.





MAKE A RECORD OF YOUR FIND. DRAW A SKETCH, AND GIVE A DESCRIPTION WITH MATERIAL, SIZE, PATTERN, AND DATE — IF IT IS GIVEN THERE.



Pit find
Monika

Object: 20p coin
 Material: Mixed metal?
 Shape: Hexagon
 colour: Light grey
 Size: 1.74cm diameter
 Date: 1983



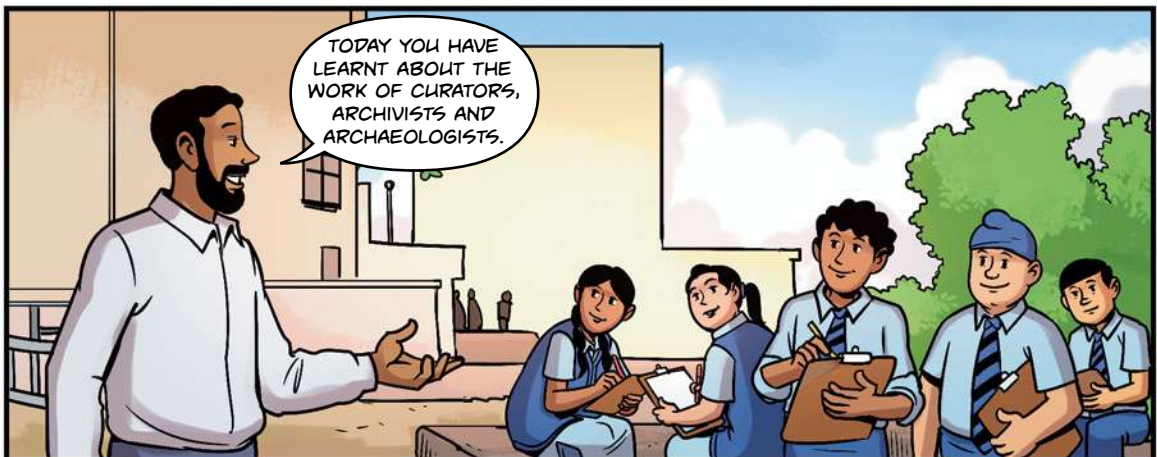
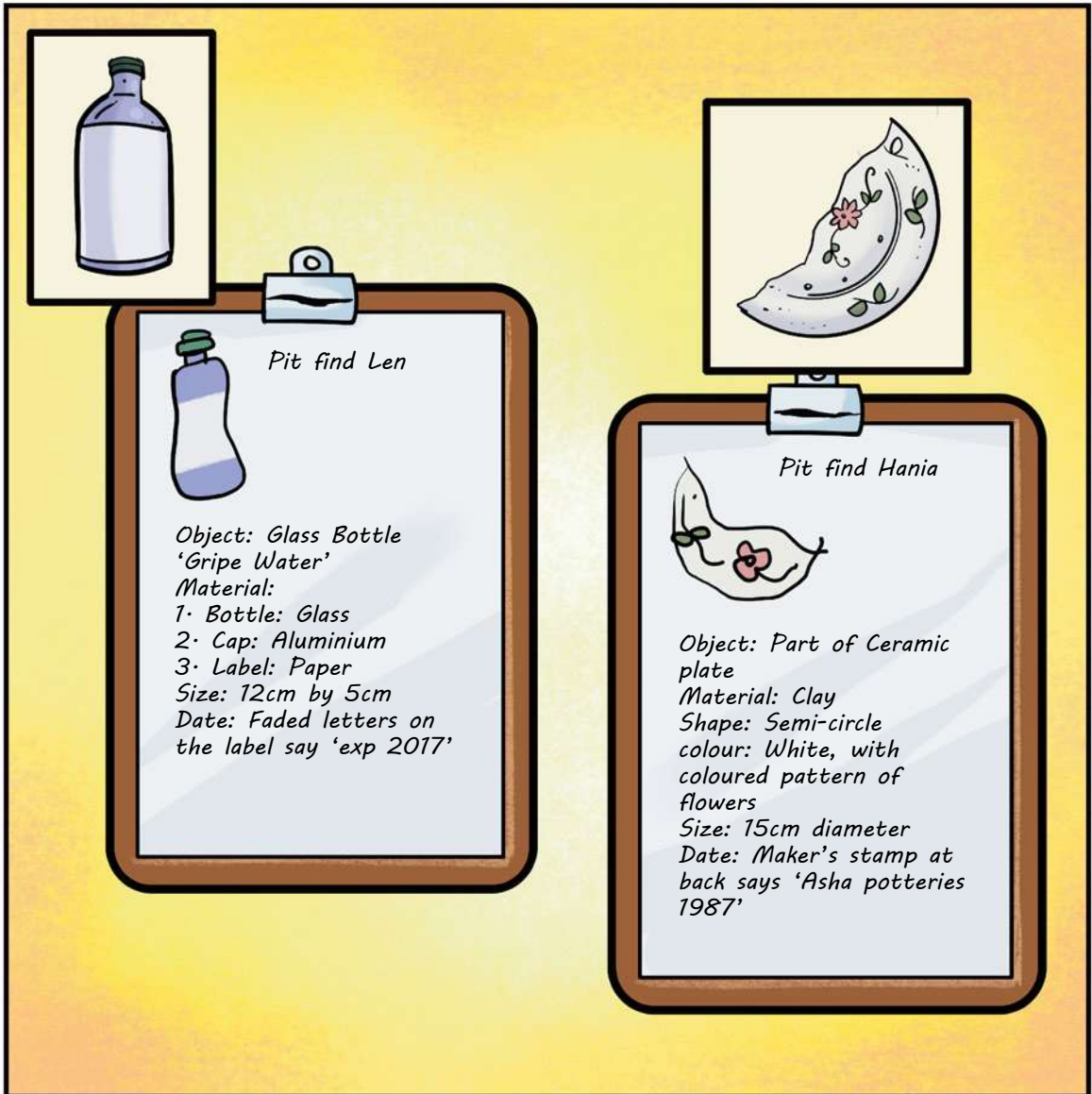
Pit find
Deepak

Object: Padlock
 Material: Brass? With
 steel lock clasp
 Shape: Square
 Size: 2.5cm x 3cm x
 1.5cm
 Manufacturer: Tigers
 Date: Not known

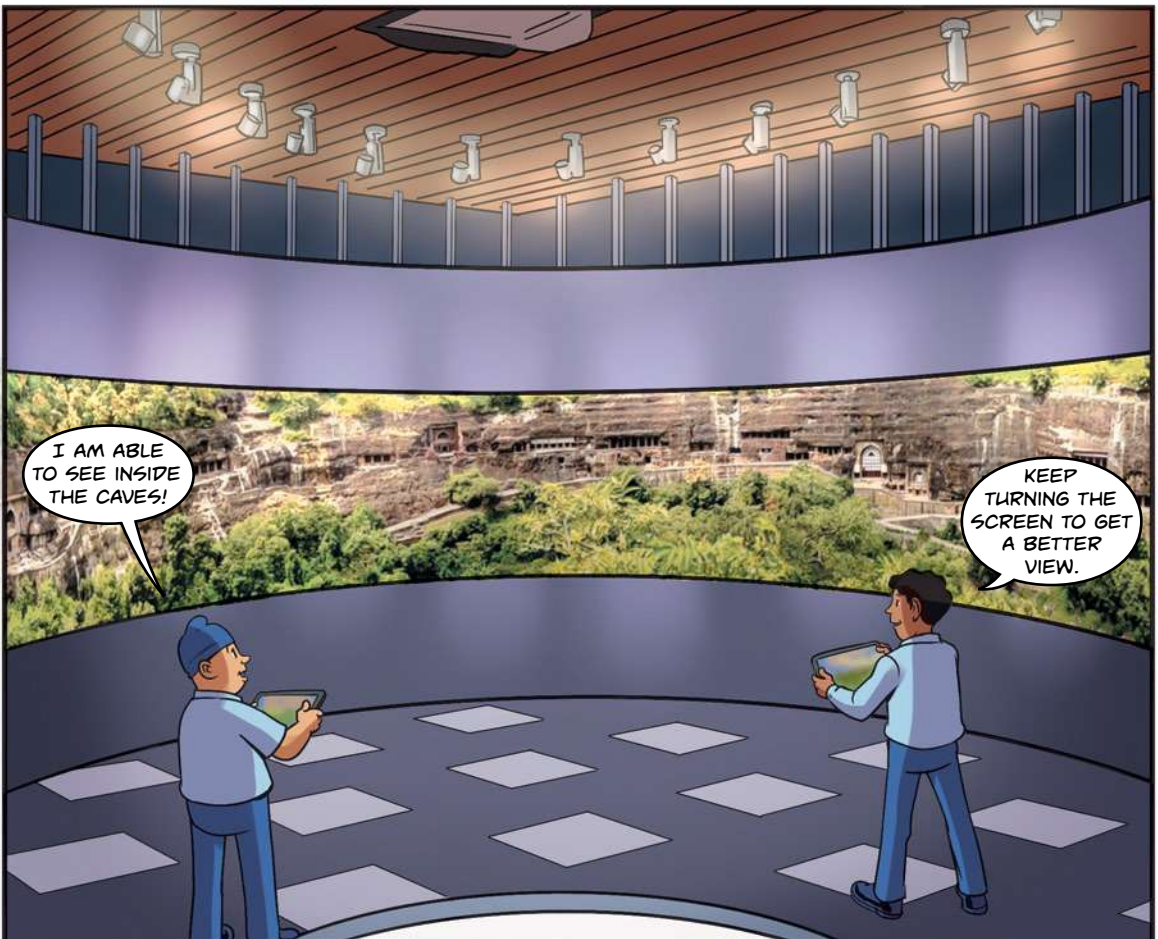
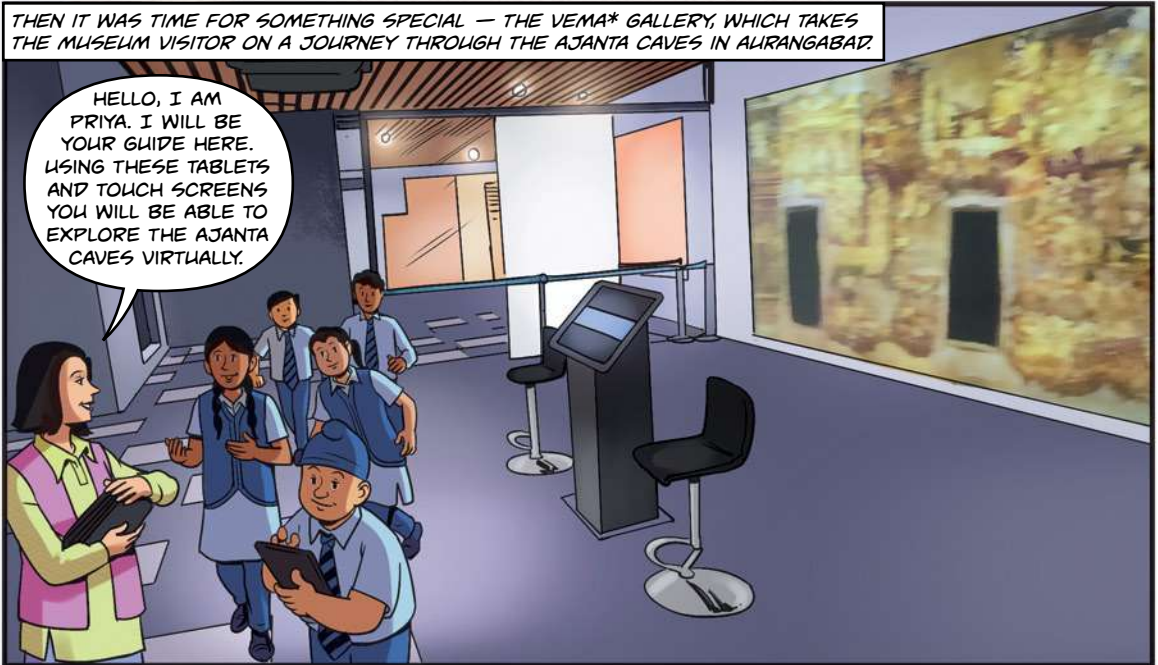


Pit find
Gurtej

Object: USB stick drive
 Material: Plastic, computer
 chip
 Shape: Rectangular, narrow
 at one end where it fits
 into device
 Colour: One side black,
 other red
 Size: 4cm x 1.5cm x .6cm
 Date: Unknown, but 21st
 century
 Maker's name: 'Sundisk'



THEN IT WAS TIME FOR SOMETHING SPECIAL — THE VEMA* GALLERY, WHICH TAKES THE MUSEUM VISITOR ON A JOURNEY THROUGH THE AJANTA CAVES IN AURANGABAD.



*VIRTUAL EXPERIENTIAL MUSEUM
ON AJANTA CAVES

ON ANOTHER SIDE THERE WAS A LARGE WALL SCREEN.



ON ANOTHER SCREEN, HANIA AND LEN WERE HAVING FUN MAKING THE PAINTED FIGURES COME ALIVE.

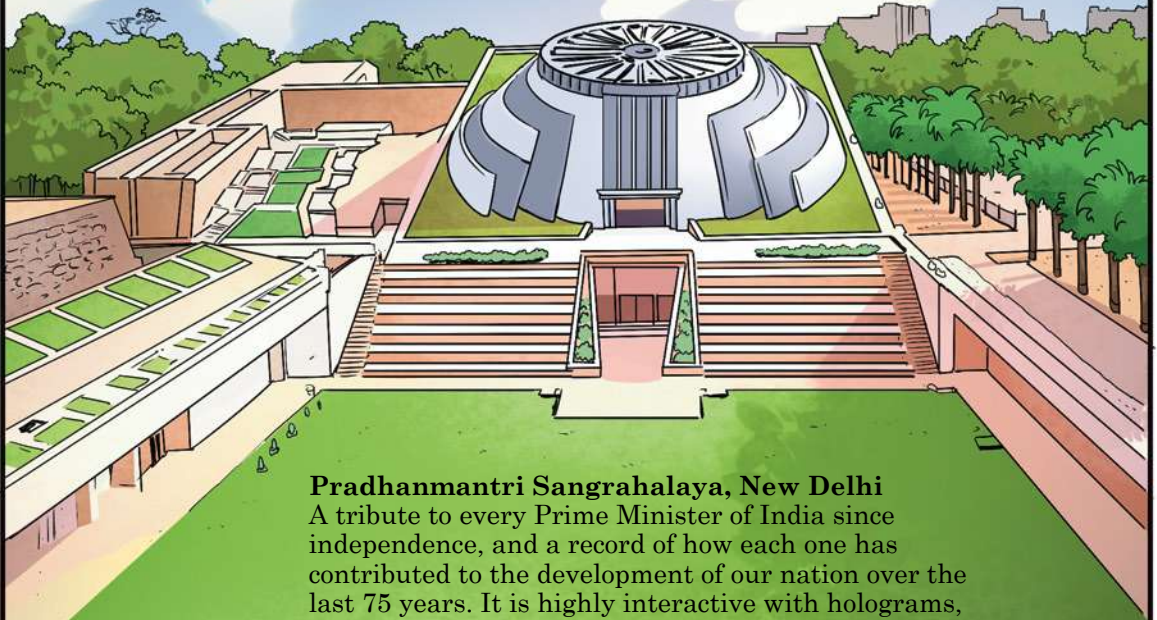


GURTEJ USED THE OCLULUS* TO DO A VIRTUAL WALK THROUGH THE CAVES.



*A VIRTUAL REALITY HEADSET

SOME THEMED MUSEUMS OF INDIA



Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya, New Delhi

A tribute to every Prime Minister of India since independence, and a record of how each one has contributed to the development of our nation over the last 75 years. It is highly interactive with holograms, virtual reality, augmented reality, multi-touch, multi-media, interactive kiosks, computerized kinetic sculptures, smartphone applications, interactive screens and experiential installations.

National Crafts Museum, New Delhi

The National Handicrafts and Handlooms Museum, popularly known as the National Crafts Museum & Hastkala Academy was designed by architect Charles Correa. The collection has over 33,000 specimens of various crafts from various states of India.

National Philatelic Museum, New Delhi

Located on the ground floor of Dak Bhawan, this museum shows us a panorama of India through postage stamps. Commemorative postage stamps issued since India's independence are displayed under specific themes like Mahatma Gandhi, Science and Technology, Flora and Fauna, Art and Culture, Children's Day, etc.

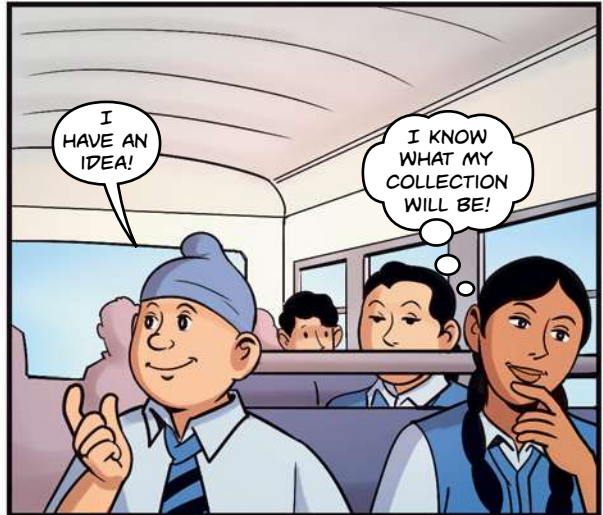
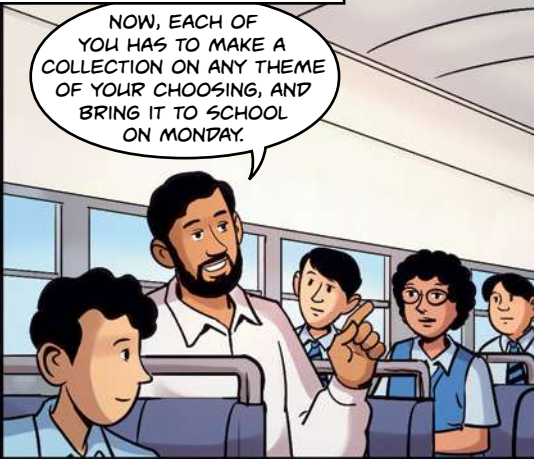
Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, Bhopal

Spread over 200 acres, the museum houses ten open-air exhibitions and an indoor museum building. Twelve galleries on various topics – Ethnic Art, Belief Systems, Ethnic Music, and Habitat – depict the story of mankind.

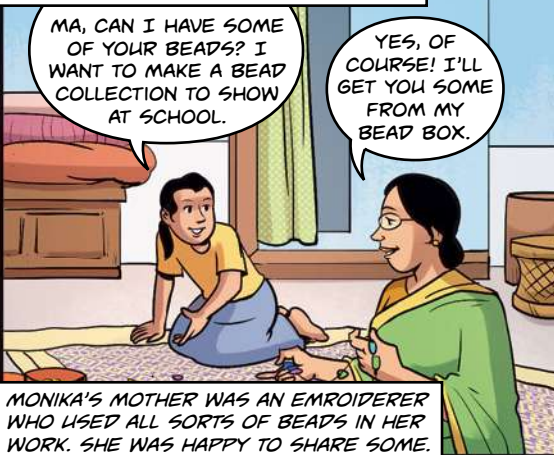
Museo Camera, Gurugram

The largest not-for-profit crowd-funded Centre for Photographic Arts in South East Asia has 18,000 sq. ft. of space dedicated to the art of photography.

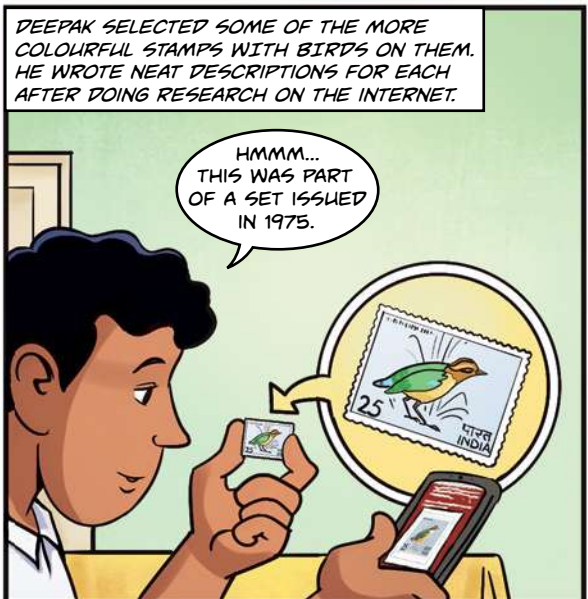
IT HAD BEEN AN EXCITING MORNING. ON THE WAY BACK —



AT HOME, MONIKA RAN TO HER MOTHER.



DEEPAK'S FATHER WAS A POSTAL WORKER.



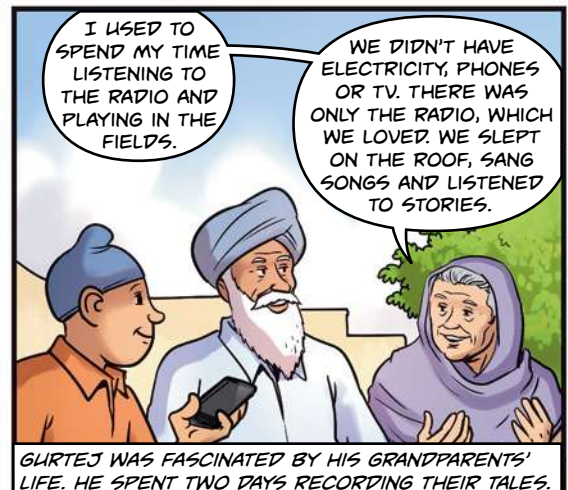
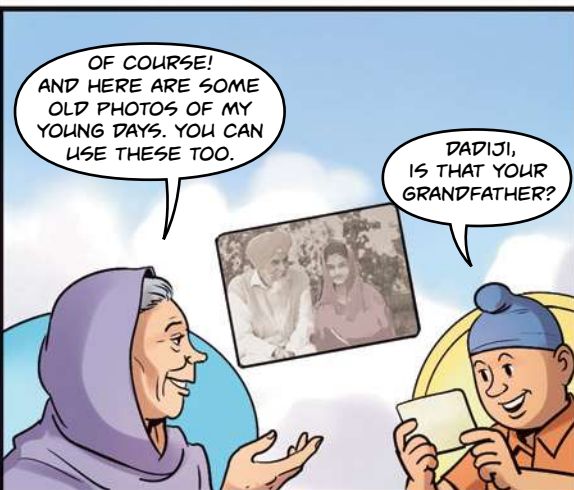
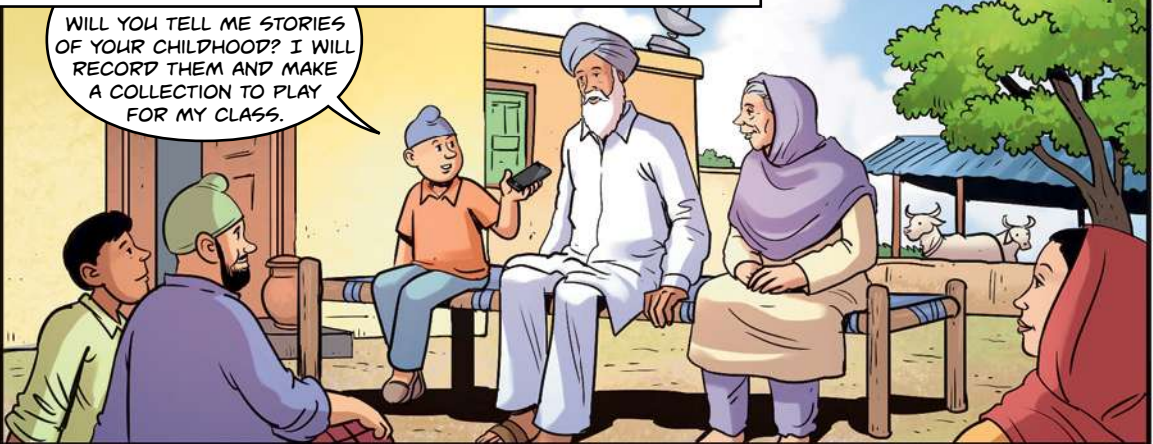
HANIA'S FATHER WAS A TAILOR. SHE WENT TO HIS WORKSHOP.



HANIA SELECTED A DOZEN PIECES AND HER FATHER EXPLAINED EACH ONE CAREFULLY.



GLIRTEJ'S FAMILY WENT TO THEIR VILLAGE OVER THE WEEKEND. THERE, HE TOLD HIS GRANDPARENTS ABOUT HIS IDEA FOR A STORY COLLECTION.



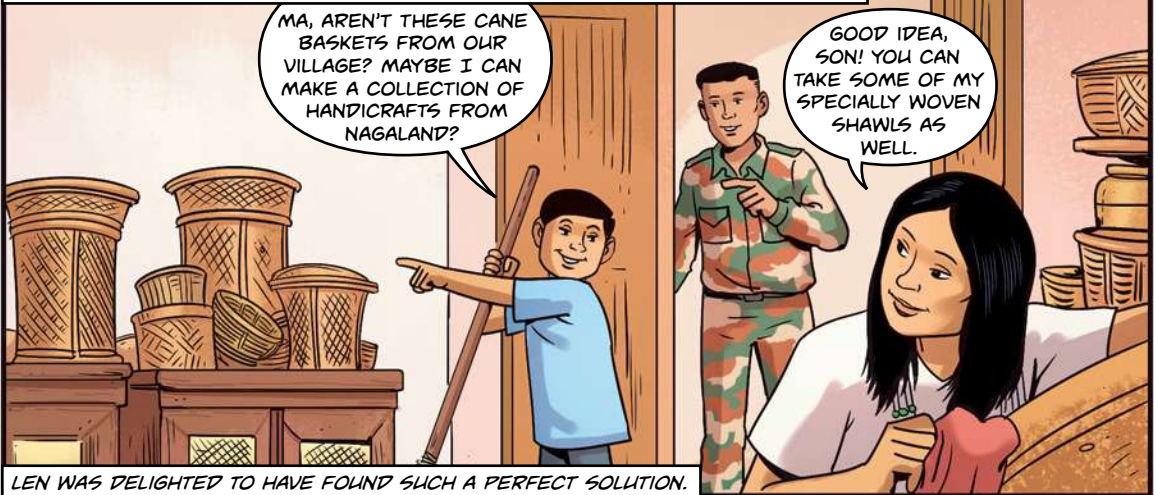
*NOW VARANASI
*DECORATIVE GOLD THREAD USED ON CLOTHING

**MEANING 'OF OUR OWN COUNTRY', IT WAS A MOVEMENT FOR INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE

LEN WAS UNABLE TO DECIDE ON ANY IDEA FOR HIS COLLECTION.

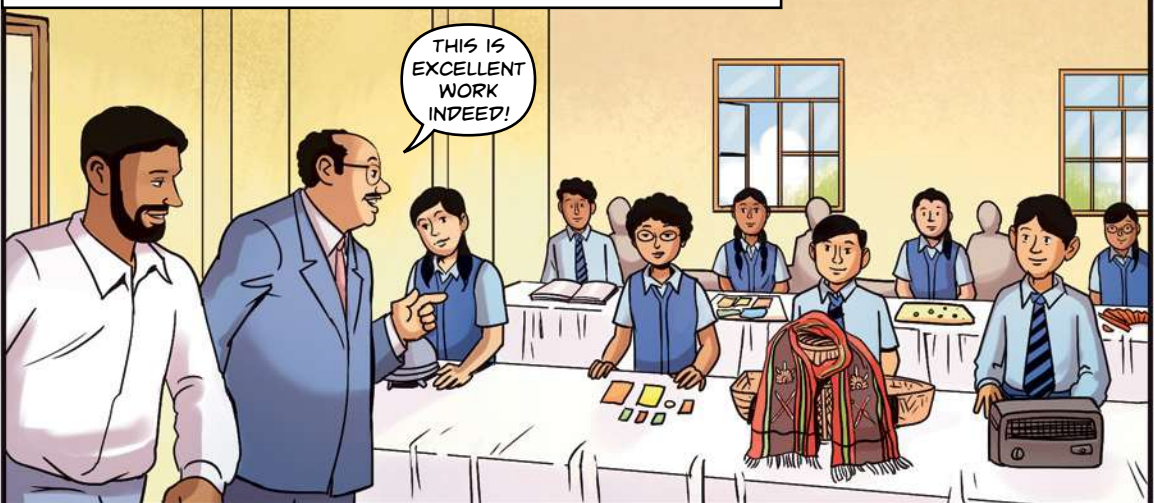


THEY GOT TO WORK IN THE KITCHEN WITH A DUSTER AND BROOM. LOOKING AT THE CANE BASKETS AND BOXES IN SO MANY SHAPES, LEN HAD A SUDDEN BRAINWAVE.



LEN WAS DELIGHTED TO HAVE FOUND SUCH A PERFECT SOLUTION.

ON MONDAY, CLASS VI DISPLAYED THEIR COLLECTIONS WITH GREAT PRIDE.



BEAD COLLECTION
by Monika



COLLECTION of BIRD STAMPS
from around the world
by Deepak

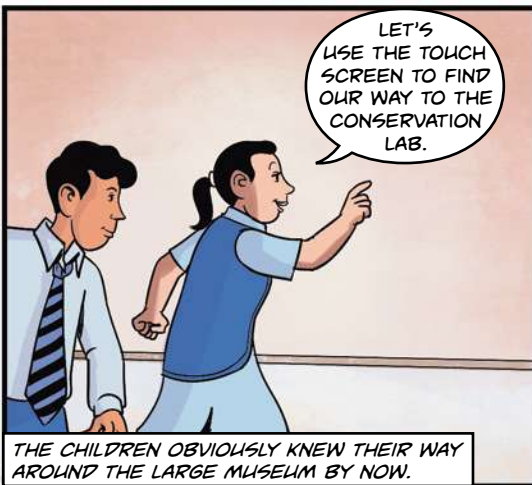
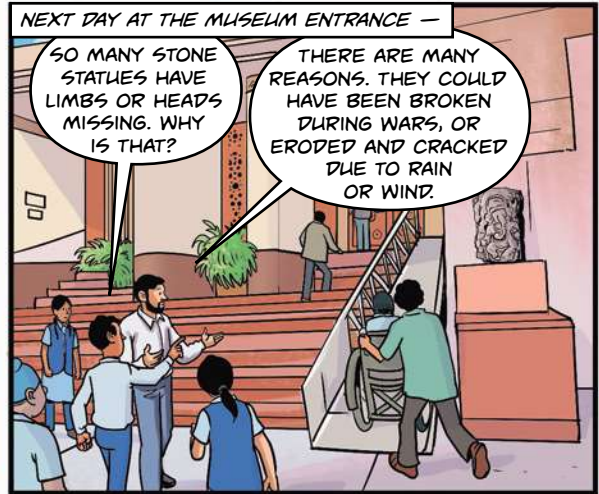
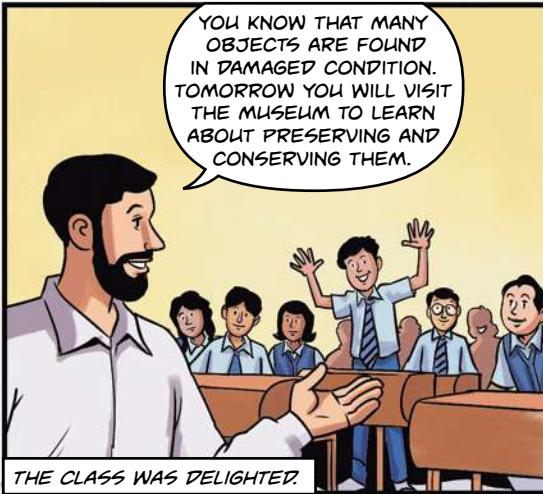


COLLECTION of INDIAN TEXTILES
by Hania



GURTEJ'S COLLECTION REQUIRED SOME PLANNING. A SMALL BOOTH WAS SET UP, AND THE OLD PHOTOS WERE PROJECTED ON ITS WALLS. HEADPHONES PROVIDED THE STORY.





DR PATEL EXPLAINED THAT EVERYTHING ON EARTH IS MADE UP OF ORGANIC AND INORGANIC MATERIAL.

ORGANIC MATERIAL — PAPER, CLOTH AND WOOD — MAY BE TORN OR DISCOLOURED BY HUMIDITY, SPILLAGE, WEAR AND TEAR, OR BY TERMITES, ANTS AND RODENTS. TOO MUCH EXPOSURE TO STRONG LIGHT ALSO MAKES PAINTINGS AND FABRICS LOSE COLOUR.

MY MOTHER ALWAYS TELLS ME TO DRY COLOURED CLOTHES IN THE SHADE.

YES, BECAUSE TOO MUCH SUN WILL CAUSE THE COLOURS TO FADE.

UNDERSTANDING MATERIAL



Old manuscript



Stone statue of Vishnu



Terracotta monkey from Harappa



A silver comb with wooden teeth



Woollen Naga shawl



Gold coin from Akbar's era

Organic

(obtained from living organisms)

Natural textiles – cotton, silk or linen
Paper

Inorganic

(obtained from non-living sources like rocks, clay, sand)

Stone – granite, basalt, sandstone
Metal – gold, silver, bronze, copper and alloys

Composite

(combination of living and non-living materials)

What happens over time? Objects deteriorate

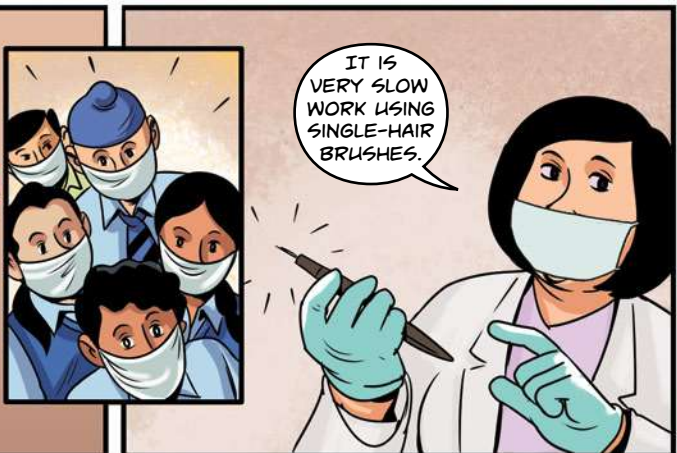
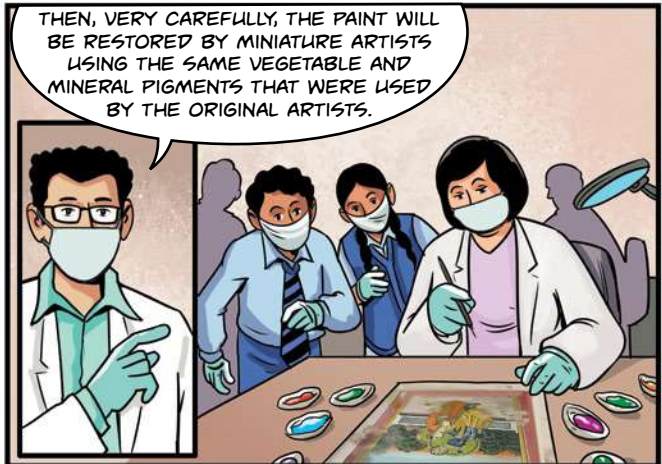
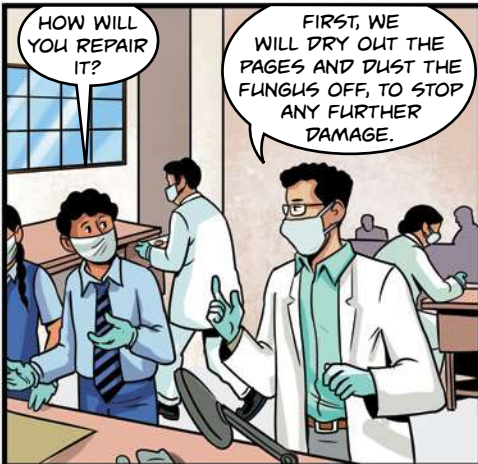
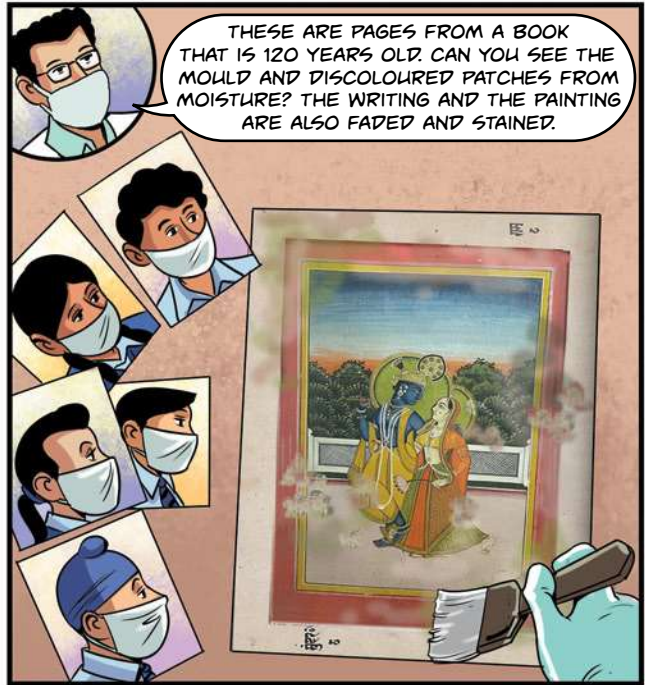
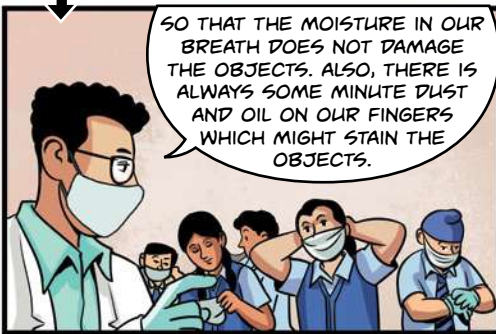
Physical: Cracks, tears, breakages

Chemical: Corrosion (rusting), stains, salt efflorescence

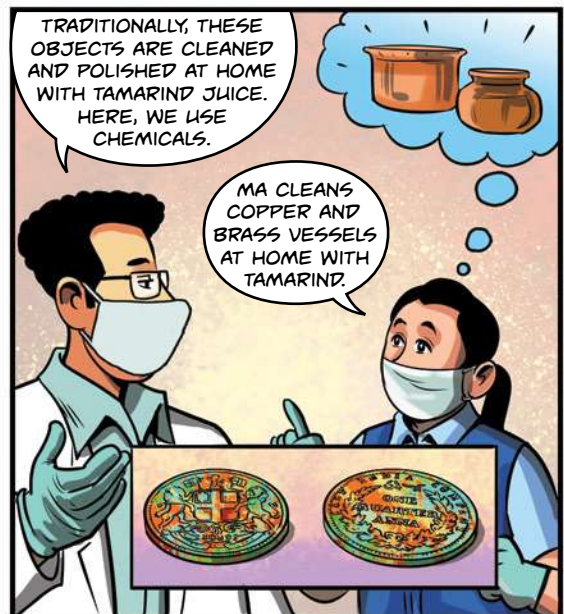
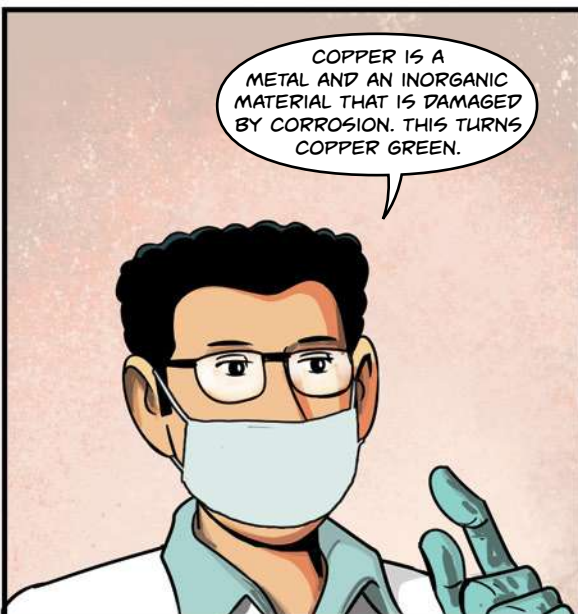
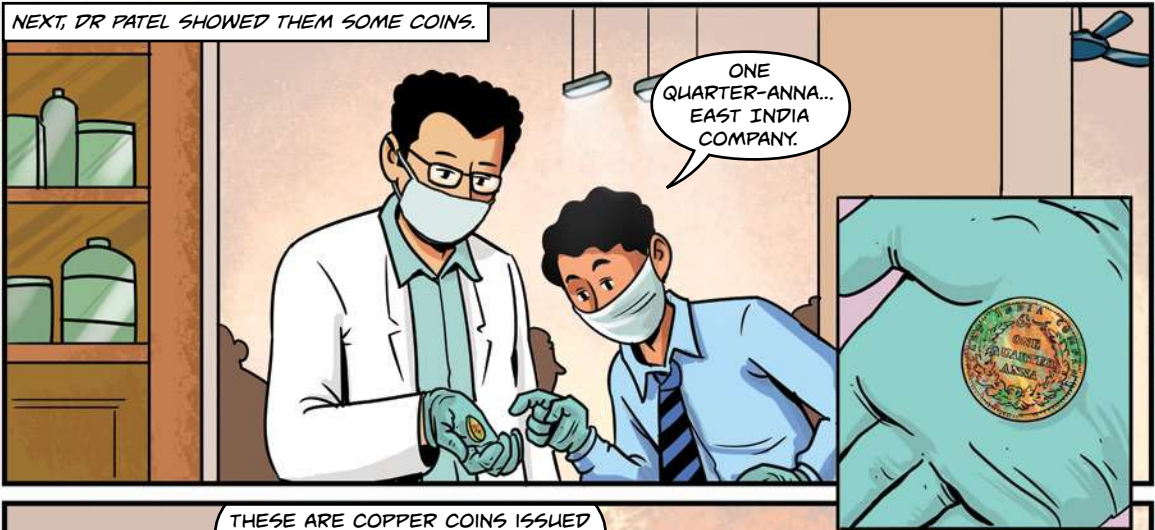
Biological: Termites, rats, fungal growth

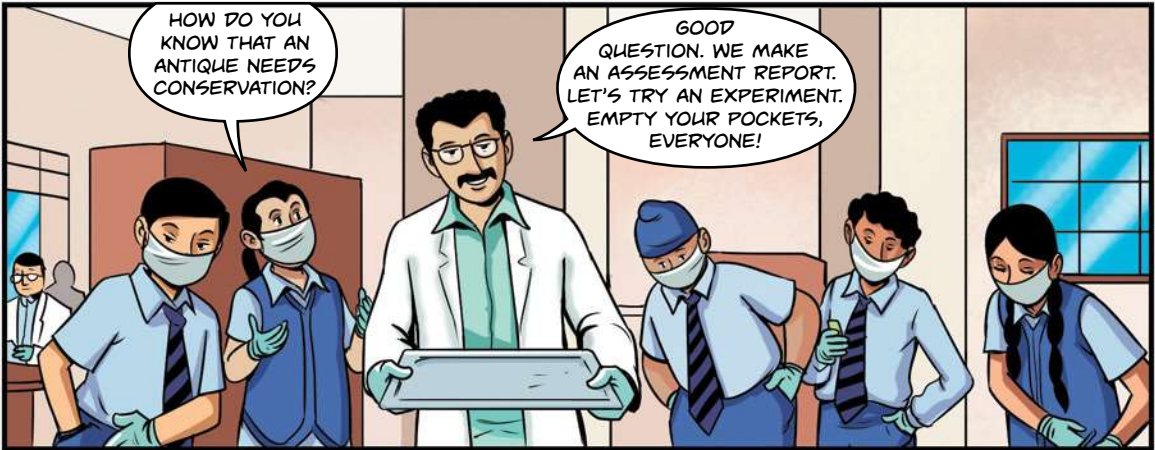
Exposure to bright light, heat and humidity also causes deterioration

Can you guess why this happens?



NEXT, DR PATEL SHOWED THEM SOME COINS.





AN ASSORTMENT OF ITEMS WAS PRODUCED FROM THE CHILDREN'S POCKETS.



THE CHILDREN WERE DIVIDED INTO GROUPS OF FIVE AND EACH GROUP CHOSE AN ITEM TO ASSESS FOR CONSERVATION. DEEPAK, MONIKA, HANIA, LEN AND GURTEJ CHOSE MONIKA'S CLOTH PENCIL CASE. HERE IS THEIR REPORT:



Assessment for Conservation
OBJECT: PENCIL CASE

Description (size, colour, material):
cloth, with plastic zipper and plastic
beads on embroidery

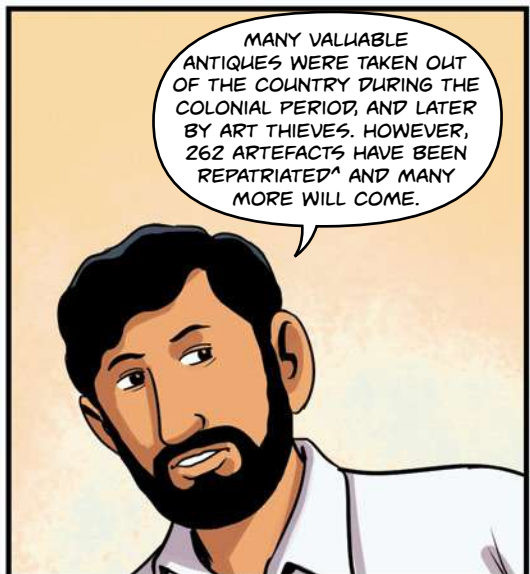
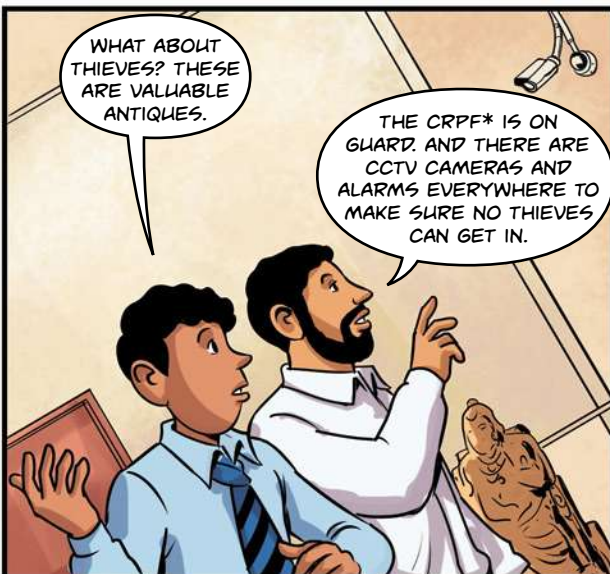
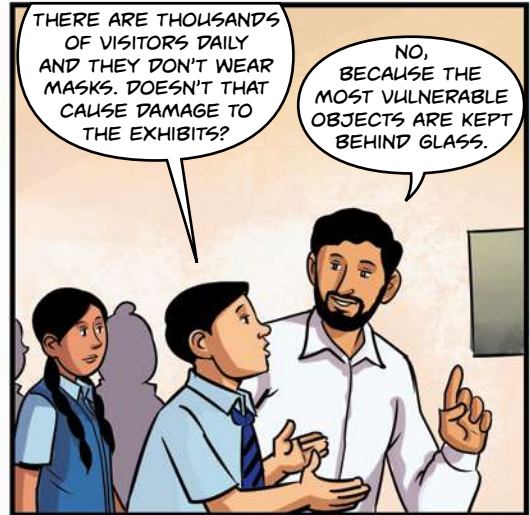
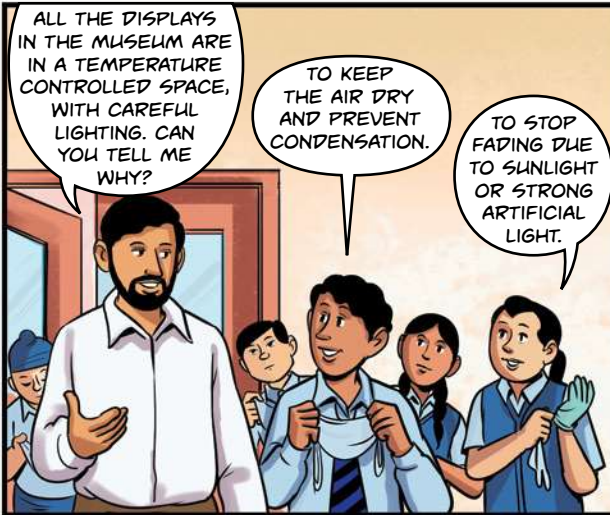
Condition: stained, torn, and frayed
at the edges

Outside: dirt and grease stains

Inside: ink and crayon stains

Size: 15cm by 4cm by 4cm

Date: possibly two years old



*CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE

*THE PROCESS OF RETURNING AN OBJECT OR A PERSON TO THEIR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN OR CITIZENSHIP

IT WAS TIME FOR A SNACK BREAK. WHILE SIPPING JUICE, THE CHILDREN SAW A GROUP OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED VISITORS TOUCHING OBJECTS.



WHY ARE THOSE VISITORS BEING ALLOWED TO TOUCH THE SCULPTURES?

THIS IS THE SENTIENT GALLERY CALLED 'ANUBHAV' WHERE ALL THE OBJECTS ARE PLASTER IMITATIONS OF THE ORIGINALS AND THE SIGNS ARE IN BRAILLE. THIS GALLERY IS ESPECIALLY CREATED FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED VISITORS SO THAT THEY CAN TOUCH THE OBJECT AND READ THE INFORMATION IN BRAILLE.



THE CHILDREN TRIED IT OUT.



I CAN FEEL A NOSE AND LIPS AND REALLY BIG TEETH.



I CAN FEEL THE FACE AND CURLY HAIR BUT I CAN'T READ BRAILLE.

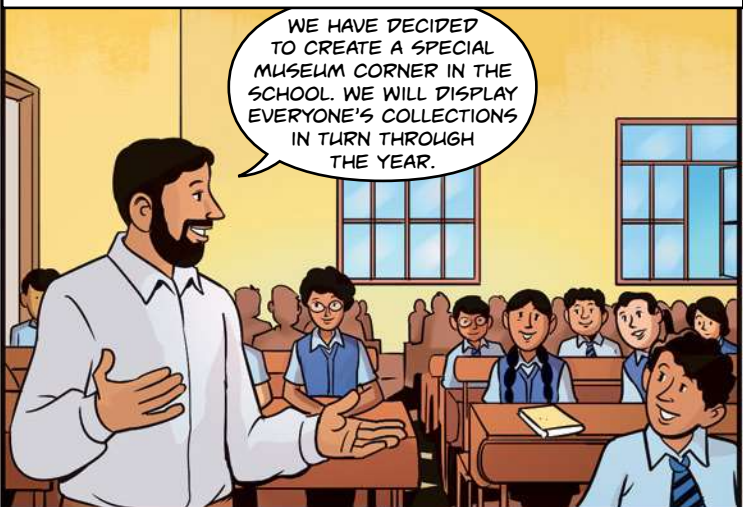


THERE IS ALSO THE AUDIO GUIDE THAT GIVES INFORMATION ABOUT THE MAIN PIECES IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES.

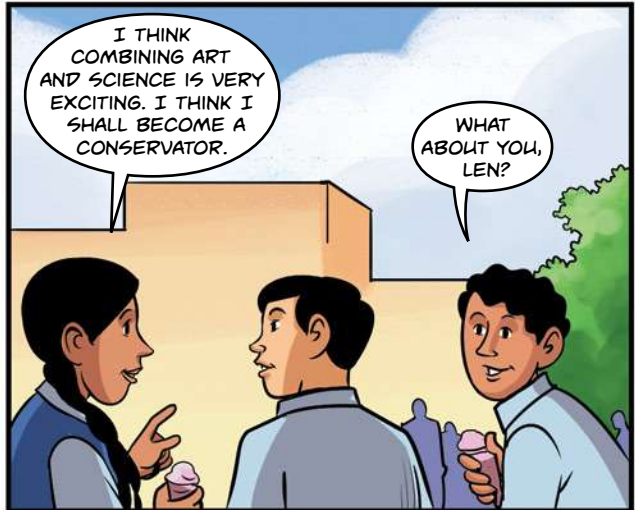
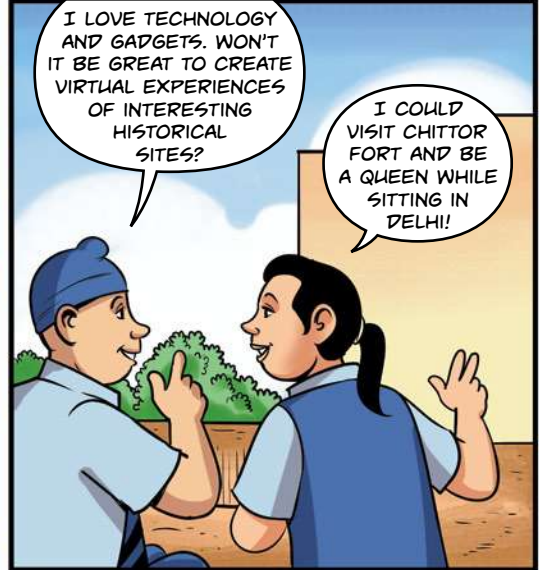


AT SCHOOL THE NEXT DAY, THERE WAS AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT.

WE HAVE DECIDED TO CREATE A SPECIAL MUSEUM CORNER IN THE SCHOOL. WE WILL DISPLAY EVERYONE'S COLLECTIONS IN TURN THROUGH THE YEAR.



DURING THE Tiffin Break —



Study programs for Museology, Conservation and Archaeology

1	University of Calcutta	M.A. Museology M.Sc. Museology	West Bengal	State Government
2	The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda	M.A. Museology	Gujarat	Central Government
3	National Museum Institute of History of Art, Conservation and Museology	M.A. Museology, History of Arts and Conservation	New Delhi and Noida	Ministry of Culture
4	Banaras Hindu University	M.A. Museology	Uttar Pradesh	Central Government
5	Aligarh Muslim University	M.Sc. Museology	Uttar Pradesh	Central Government
6	Jiwaji University, Gwalior	M.A. Museology	Madhya Pradesh	State Government
7	Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya	Diploma in Museology	Madhya Pradesh	Central Government
8	Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Amarkantak	M.A. Museology	Madhya Pradesh	Central Government
9	Delhi Institute of Heritage Research and Management	M.A. Heritage Management and Conservation	Delhi	State Government
10	University of Rajasthan	M.A. Museology and Conservation	Rajasthan	Central Government
11	Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Institute of Archaeology, Greater Noida	Post Graduate Diploma in Archaeology	Uttar Pradesh	Ministry of Culture

Look out for the next volumes on Archaeology and Anthropology for more exciting information on our history and culture. You can also find out more about museums by going online at www.nationalmuseum.gov.in.





Ministry of Culture
Government of India



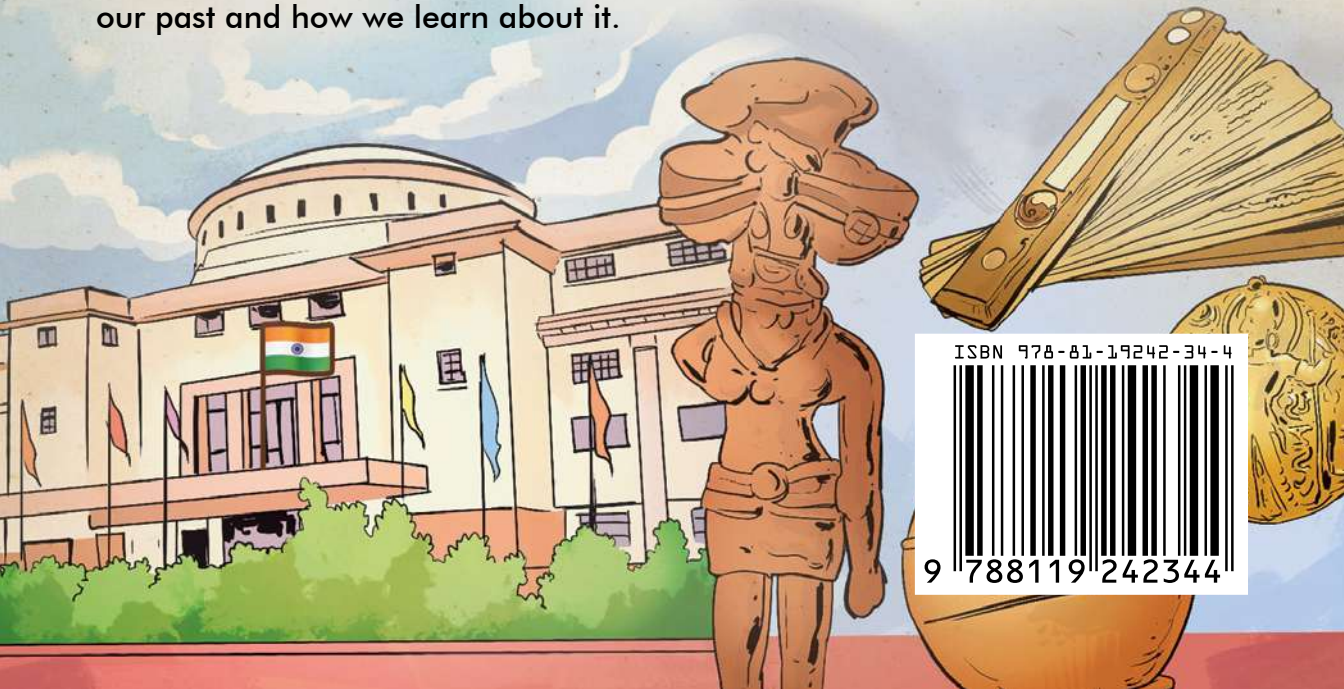
A DAY AT THE MUSEUM

A museum is a storehouse of valuable objects from our past that help us understand our history and culture, how we lived, what we wore and ate, what we thought and did hundreds and thousands of years ago.

The students of Class VI of Sarvodaya Vidyalaya, New Delhi, were on a trip to the National Museum. As they walked through the halls of the museum, many questions arose in their minds. Who finds these artefacts? How does one find information about them? Why do we collect and maintain these objects? Who takes care of the museum? Their guide, the museum's curator Ira, had answers for all the questions.

The students also learnt about the fascinating careers in a museum — as a curator, a conservator, an archaeologist or a multi-media expert. And even as a volunteer, helping out with the many interesting museum programs.

Amar Chitra Katha presents A Day at the Museum, a book about museums, how they function and how important they are to our society. This fascinating and informative read is sure to leave the reader with a sense of wonder about our past and how we learn about it.



ISBN 978-81-19242-34-4



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