



**THE NATIONAL TRUST  
OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**



# THE INDIAN CONTRIBUTION TO TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

**Free Printable Worksheets | for ages 7 to 11**

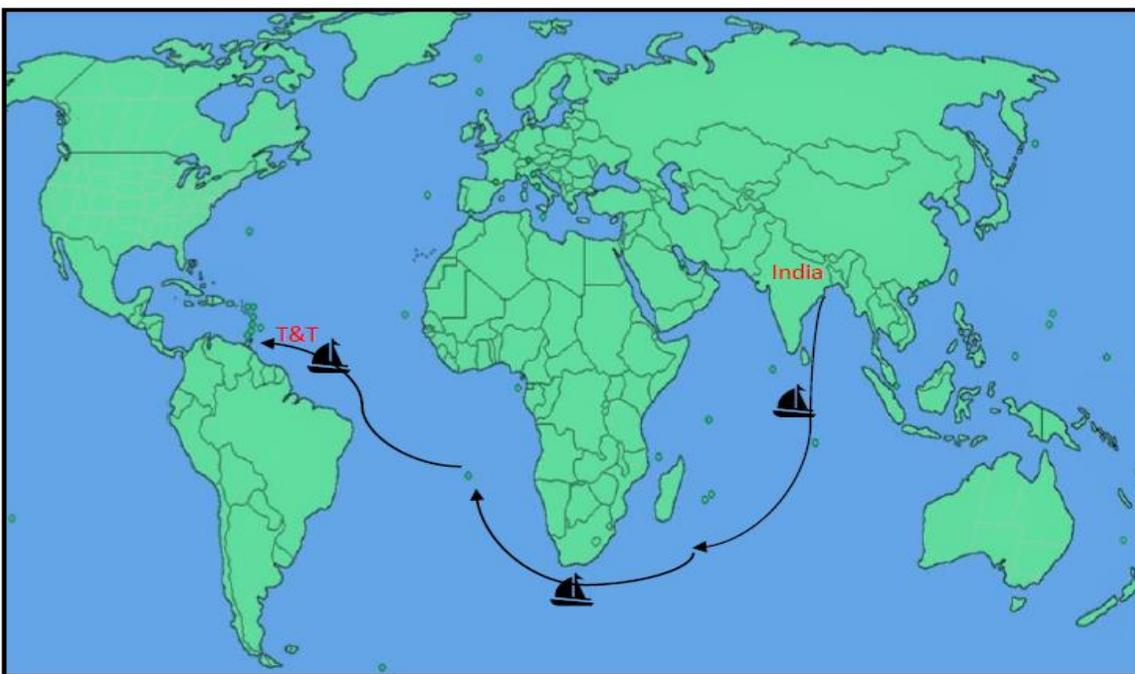




## Information Sheets

### What was Indian Indentureship?

Indian Indentureship involved bringing Indians to work on the estates in Trinidad and other Caribbean countries in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Indians were brought to Trinidad as indentured labourers beginning in 1845. After African enslavement ended in 1838, the British Colonial Government decided to bring Indians to work in the agricultural industry in Trinidad. While most of the Indians were sent to work on the sugar estates, some went to cocoa and coconut estates. Indians were brought to Trinidad on ships, and voyages took about three to four months. Take a look at the map below showing the route:



Map showing the route of the Indian Indentured Labourers



The first Indian immigrants who came to Trinidad arrived via the ship, the *Fath al Razack*, on Friday May 30<sup>th</sup>, 1845. After this, many ships brought Indians until 1917. The last ship to arrive was called the *S.S. Ganges*. The indentureship system came to an end in 1920. Approximately 147,600 Indians were brought to work in Trinidad. They worked under a contract, or an agreement, called the indentureship contract. The contract changed over time. The Indians were paid for their work and were given basic supplies of food and clothes on the estates. There were many rules which the Indians had to follow, for example Indians assigned to an estate had to work there for five years. They were not free to leave the plantation and needed special permission from their bosses to do so. Anyone found breaking the rules could be sent to jail or sentenced to work extra without payment. They were allowed to practise their religions at night or on their only rest day, Sunday, since this did not affect the work week which was Monday to Saturday.

At the end of the five years, the Indians could return to India or could stay in Trinidad. Many of them stayed and contributed to Trinidad and Tobago in several ways. The Indians brought with them their rich culture including their religions, foods and clothing. They even brought new plants to Trinidad. In this set of Printable Worksheets we will look at some aspects of the Indian contribution to Trinidad and Tobago:

1. The Indian Indentureship Records at the National Archives
2. The Nelson Island Immigration Depot
3. The Jinnah Memorial Mosque
4. The Exchange Village Shiv Mandir
5. The Susamachar Presbyterian Church
6. The Port of Spain Temple

The word 'immigrant' means a person who is coming to another country to live permanently.



## 1. The Indian Indentureship Records

**Location: National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent Street,  
Port of Spain.**

Hey there! Have you ever wondered where the records of the Fath al Razack are kept? Well, this and so much more are stored safely in the National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago. The Indian Indentureship Records Collection, is made up of Registers, which is a full record of Indian immigrants who came to Trinidad from 1845 to 1917. There are 17 Registers at the National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago. The collection includes:

- **Ship Registers** - The information includes an important document called the Emigration Pass. Every person leaving India had to have an Emigration pass.
- **General Registers of Immigrants** which contain information such as the name of the ship, the ship number, registration number of the immigrant, personal details such as their name, village in India, unique registration number, father's name, age, and sex, and estate assigned in Trinidad.
- **Estate Registers** which list the immigrants assigned to the various estates in Trinidad.

This collection is extremely valuable, and it has been recognized by an international organization called UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It is part of the Memory of the World Register which documents heritage that is significant and valuable to the whole world.

A Register is an official list or record of information.



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*"Futtlle Rozack."*  
30<sup>th</sup> May - 1845

No.	Name.	Father's Name.	Sex.	Age	Remarks.
106	Jaunklee	Aununde.	Male	24	Arabia.
107	Bheeharry	Monsha.		30	Eliza.
108	Ruchparr	Lewloll.		40	Eliza Street.
109	Ramsurron	Ruchparr.		21	"
110	Ramdhun	Looman.		18	Eliza
111	Rughosbongas	Monoga.		31	
112	Dookhoo	Kangalee.		30 50	
113	Chumroo	Loriff.		28 50	
114	Beeharry	Kahurry.		25 50	Dead - 31/12/44.
115	Jutta	Kawal.		32	Eliza
116	Phola	Bodhee.		30	

General Register A showing the Fath al Razack's record of arrivals.

General Register of Indian Immigrants introduced into the Colony by the

1808-1816.

Ship's Number.	No.	NAME.	Father's Name.	Sex.	Age.	Height.		Caste.	Bodily Marks.	Name of Native Place.	Date of Indenture.	Plantation to which allotted.
						Ft.	In.					
352	147372	Autar	Gangadin	M	27	5	1	Koiv	Scar on back of left <sup>upper arm</sup>	Basti	22-4-1817	Brooklin
128	147373	Samujh	Basant	"	23	5	5 1/2	Ahir	Scar on forehead	Basti	"	"
451	147374	Shewraj	Abtali	"	24	5	3	Koiv	Burnt on left of back	Fatehabad	"	"
343	147375	Sala	Adhin	"	20	5	5	Ahir	Scar on back	Fatehpur	"	"
449	147376	Bhuniyaon Bin	Bhairon	"	22	5	4	Bhamar	Scar back of left thigh	Fatehpur	"	"
447	147377	Bhagwandin	Bankathi	"	20	5	4	Baderia	Scar on the chest	Fatehpur	"	"
290	147378	Jaykarrh	Nageswar	"	27	5	3	Bhali	Scars on the elbow	Bangoffpur	"	"
497	147379	Bangwa	Boophi	"	19	5	2	Baderia	Scar on left thigh	Fatehpur	"	"
7	147380	Autar	Rhanau	"	20	5	2 1/2	Pasi	Scar on left shin	Kai Bareli	"	"
1	147381	Somai	Bulgar	"	22	5	1	Shawal	Burnt mark on left <sup>chest</sup>	Fatehabad	"	"
390	147382	Biswa	Sonia	"	21	5	3	Pasi	Scar on side of chest	Fatehpur	"	"
494	147383	Nambkishun	Namta	"	25	5	4	Ahir	Scar on the shin	Fatehpur	"	"
278	147384	Khushi	Sukhari	"	24	5	2	Shallah	Scar on side of back	Basti	"	"
353	147385	Bangadci	Bughawan	F	20	4	11	Koiv	Scar on right knee	Basti	"	"
126	147386	Subbhatia	Bunial	"	20	4	10	Shallah	Scar on back	Basti	"	"

Register R - a closer look at the left-hand side of the page showing personal details of arrivals from the ship, Ganges

Image Sources: National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago

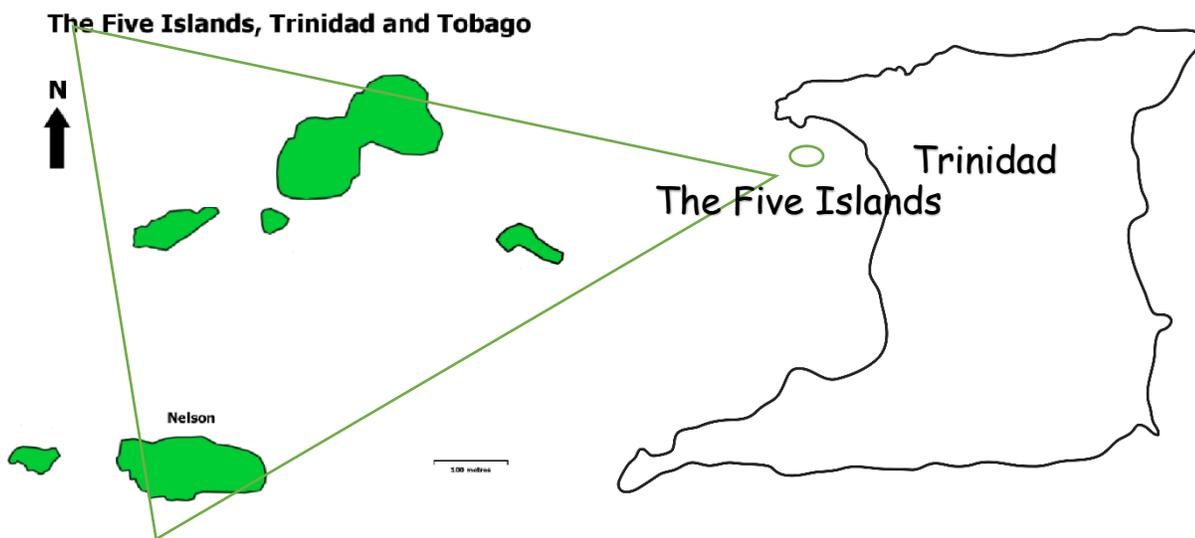
<https://natt.gov.tt/sites/default/files/images/General-Registers-of-Indian-Indentured-Labourers.pdf>



## 2. Nelson Island Immigration Depot

**Location: Five Islands, Trinidad and Tobago**

Nelson Island is one of the islands off North Western the coast of Trinidad. Take a look at the map below:

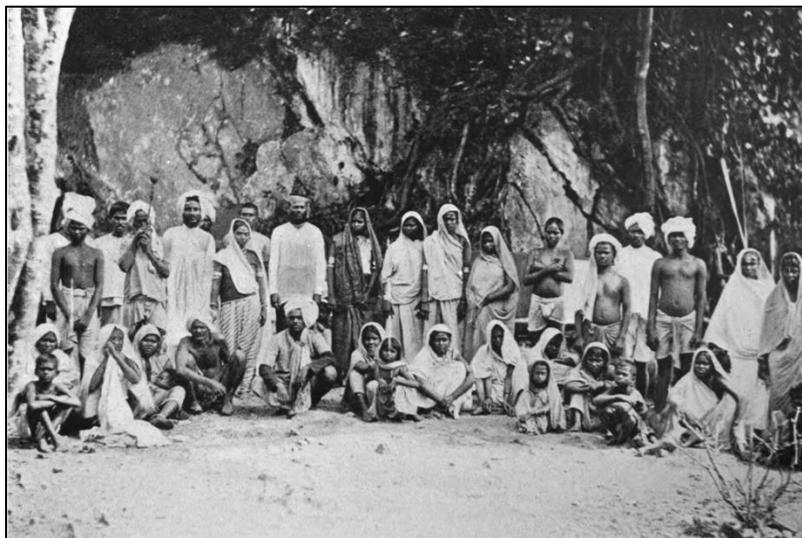


Map of Trinidad showing the Five Islands

From 1845 to 1866 Indians who were brought to Trinidad were initially kept in an area around the St. Vincent Jetty Lighthouse. There were several problems with this and an Immigration Depot(a place to process and keep the Indians) was set up on Nelson Island. During a stay of about ten days the immigrants were registered, their health assessed, and they were read the Immigration Ordinance, all before being sorted and sent to their respective plantations in Trinidad. Indians who were sick were treated and also quarantined at Marion Hospital on Nelson Island. From 1845 to 1917, 114,000 Indian immigrants passed through the island. It also had another purpose. Indians who decided to return to India, departed from Nelson



Island. After indentureship ended, Nelson Island was used for several purposes. Nelson Island is a listed heritage site. This means that the National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago legally protects this site. It has significant value to Trinidad and Tobago. You can visit our website to find out more about Nelson Island: <https://nationaltrust.tt/heritage-sites/nelson-island/nelson-island-information/>.



Indian Immigrants on Nelson Island

Source: The West Indiana Collection, The Alma Jordan Library UWI

A Listed Heritage site is a Listed Property of Interest which means that the site is protected under the National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago Act of 1991, Chap 40:53. Look out for our future publications, we will be explaining more about this!



Picture of one of the buildings on Nelson Island



On Nelson Island the National Trust has an Indian Arrival Exhibition



Students on a tour of Nelson Island

Under normal circumstances the National Trust conducts school tours as well as adult tours to Nelson Island.

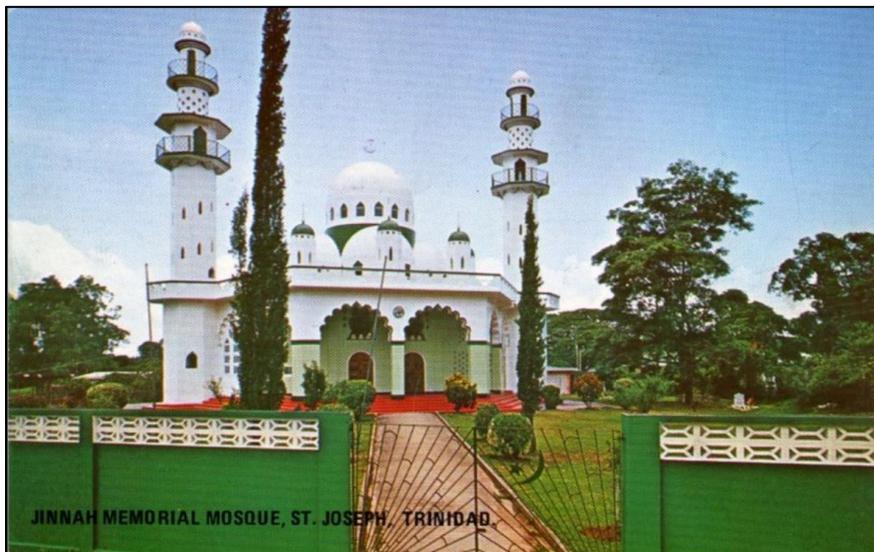


### **3. The Jinnah Memorial Mosque**

**Location: Eastern Main Road, St. Joseph**

Islam had already been introduced to Trinidad and Tobago before the indentured Indians came. It was brought by enslaved Africans, free Africans and African Americans. Then when the Indians came, some of them were also Muslim.

The Jinnah Memorial Mosque is a place where all Muslims can pray. It was opened in 1954. The group responsible for the mosque is the Trinidad Muslim League (TML), which was granted a parcel of land by the colonial government the same year that it was formed in 1947. Construction of the mosque began in 1952 and when it was finished it was named the Jinnah Memorial Mosque after the then Pakistani ambassador to the United States, His Excellency Mohammed Jinnah. It was designed by British architects and engineers. The mosque received financial assistance from supporters of the TML and its founder Moulvi Ameer Ali, who was also the spiritual leader.



Picture of the Jinnah Memorial Mosque, unknown date.

Source: The Michael Goldberg Collection, The Alma Jordan Library, UWI.



**Pictures of the Jinnah Memorial Mosque by Karishma Nanhu**

**You can view the virtual tour of the Mosque here:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J6us4j7XzHQ>

A Mosque or Masjid is a place where Muslims pray.



#### **4. The Exchange Village Shiv Mandir (Mud Temple)**

**Location: Exchange Village, Couva**

The majority of Indian immigrants were Hindus. The Exchange Village Mud Mandir is located in Couva and it is one of the oldest standing temples in T&T. Made largely of mud, it is also the longest-occupied temple in the country. This temple was built of mud and cow dung at the hands of indentured labourers who lived in the barracks on the Exchange estate.

The Exchange Shiv Mandir has many religious symbols hidden within the design and build of the mud structure. For example here are four doors in the temple representing the four cardinal points. In keeping with Hindu sacred architecture, devotees must enter the temple through the eastern door and leave through the western exit.

The walls of this structure are termite resistant and feature large sculptures on the interior walls portraying several deities, making it unique to Caribbean building designs. The only change to the outside of the original structure was the addition of an aluminium roof. This Mandir is now a protected monument and is a listed heritage site.



Front wall of the Exchange Village Mud Mandir



Interior wall of the Mud Temple with raised-relief sculptures (3D images on the wall made by hand).

Photographer: Kara Roopsingh

A Mandir or temple is a place where Hindus pray.

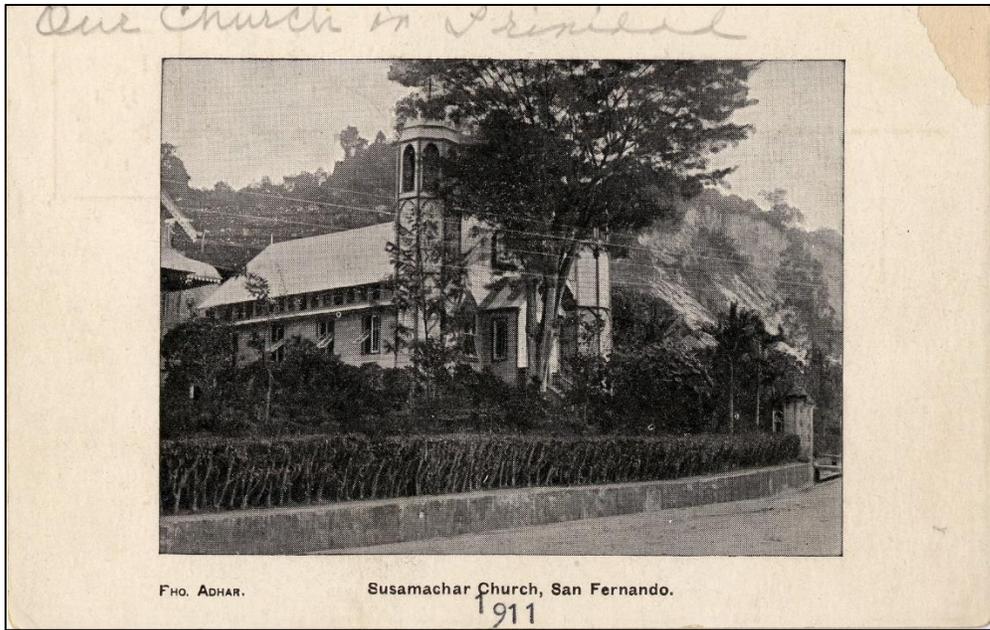


## **5. Susamachar Presbyterian Church**

**Location: Carib Street, San Fernando**

The Presbyterian Church was established in Trinidad in the 1830s. However, it was John Morton, a reverend of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, Canada, who decided to set up a Mission to focus specifically on the indentured Indian population in Trinidad in 1864. After this Presbyterian Churches and schools were gradually set up for the Indians in Trinidad. The Presbyterian missionaries were able to attract the Indians because the missionaries spoke to them in Hindi, one of the languages that the Indians spoke.

In 1871 Dr Kenneth Grant started to use the Old Theatre on Coffee Street, San Fernando as a school and for religious service. In 1872, the services were moved to a new church building on Coffee Street named Susamachar Church, meaning a Church of Good Tidings in Hindi. The Church was built using the collection money given by the congregation. Reverend Grant was the first Minister and served for 37 years. The congregation grew as time passed and in 1926 funds were raised for a bigger church. A new church was built on Carib Street and dedicated in May 1932 by Reverend Scrimgeour. Following this, a more recent Church Hall was built in the same place, and again it was financed by the donations from the congregation. It was dedicated in June, 1953 by Rt. Reverend Cyril Beharry.



Picture of Susamachar Church, Coffee Street, San Fernando

Source: Oakville Public Library

<https://images.oakville.halinet.on.ca/details.asp?ID=63432>



Picture of the Susamachar Church

Source: National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago



## 6. The Port of Spain Hindu Mandir

**Location: 2B Ethel Street, St. James, Port of Spain**



The Port of Spain Hindu Mandir is also known as Paschim Kaashi (meaning Benares of the West). It was built in 1963 for Hindu community worship in Port of Spain. The mandir is located on Ethel Street in St. James, a former sugarcane estate where many members of the Indian community

had established their roots after Indentureship ended. Initially, the mandir was a shed with one main spire (which is a long and slender tower) and two smaller ones on either side. The building has been expanded to include a roof with 16 domes supported by 16 cylindrical columns on the outside, 12 columns on the inside, and a beautiful teak ceiling. On the compound are several altars dedicated to several Hindu deities and a cultural centre at the back of the mandir where dance, music, craft, and Hindi are taught. The main persons behind the building of Paschim Kaashi were businessman Jang Bahadoorsingh and Attorney at Law Simbhoonath Capildeo.

Pictures of the Port of Spain Hindu Mandir

Source: National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago





**Activity # 1 WORD SCRAMBLE**

In Trinidad, the influence of the Indian culture can be seen in food, clothing, language, events, religion and even names of places. There are villages, streets and towns in Trinidad which have names that are similar to place names in India. Unscramble the words below to find out these names.

acpbrakrone	
azydafb	
paatn	
mybboa	
gaar	
lnabgahsde	
mtaaru	
alamrab	
anghdi	
caactult	
smrada	



**Activity # 2 WORD SEARCH**

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

Find the Following words:

Fath Al Razack  
Calcutta  
Gulf of Paria

Bengal  
Oudh  
Bihar

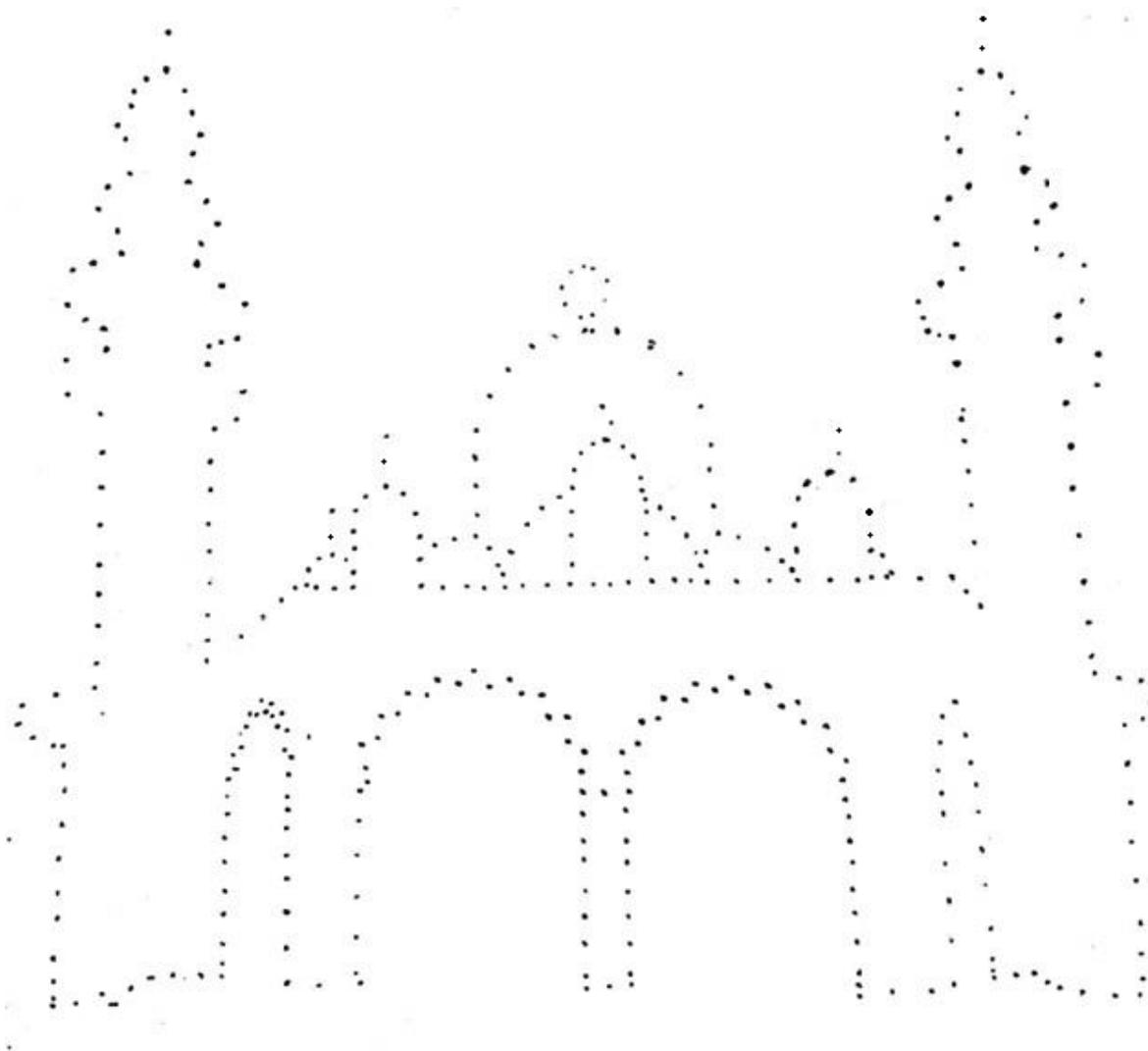
Atlantic Ocean  
Madras  
St.Helena

Nelson Island  
Five Islands  
Marion Hospital



**Activity # 3 Dot to Dot**

This activity was inspired by the Jinnah Memorial Mosque. Take a look at the previous picture of the Jinnah Memorial Mosque. Connect the Dots!



## Selected Sources/ Further Reading

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Image of Jinnah Memorial Mosque, St. Joseph. Michael Goldberg Collection, The Alma Jordan Library, UWI. <https://uwispace.sta.uwi.edu/dspace/handle/2139/5870?show=full>

National Trust Dossier, Exchange Village Mud Mandir.

Paschim Kaashi Facebook page

Paschim Kaashi: The Benares of the West. <https://anjanlaxhan.wixsite.com/paschimkaashi>

Port of Spain Hindu Mandir.

<https://www.trinoutdoors.com/pages/religious%20sites.htm#gsc.tab=0>

Port of Spain's West Kaashi Hindu Mandir

<https://www.dinamalar.com/nri/details.asp?id=354&lang=en>

The National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago. General Register of Indian Indentured Labourers. <https://natt.gov.tt/sites/default/files/images/General-Registers-of-Indian-Indentured-Labourers.pdf>

The National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago. Nelson Island and Indian Indentureship in Trinidad.

[https://natt.gov.tt/sites/default/files/pdfs/Nelson-Island-and-Indian-Indentureship-in-Trinidad\\_02.pdf](https://natt.gov.tt/sites/default/files/pdfs/Nelson-Island-and-Indian-Indentureship-in-Trinidad_02.pdf)

<https://www.worldatlas.com/maps/trinidad-and-tobago>

<https://www.wordunscrambler.net/word-scrambler.aspx>



Answers to Activity # 1

acpbrakrore	Barrackpore
azydafb	Fyzabad
paatn	Patna Village
mybboa	Bombay Street
gaar	Agra Street
lnabgahsde	Bangladesh
mtaaru	Matura
alamrab	Malabar
anghdi	Gandhi Village
caactult	Calcutta Street (Arima)
smrada	Madras Settlement (Cunupia)