

Setting

Let's Share a Picnic is set in the country of India, in the region of South Asia. Encourage students to locate India on a world map, if you have one.

The story takes place in a wetland, which can be found in many parts of India. There are many types of wetlands, including swamps, marshes, estuaries, lakes, and human-made wetlands. The wetland in this story is a river floodplain. River floodplains occur when a river or stream overflows and floods the land around it, either for long periods of time or at a particular time each year. The Sundarban forest in India is one of the largest wetlands in the world! Wetlands naturally purify water and are an important habitat for many species of plants and animals. They are also used for farming, and for recreation – as we see in this story. It is important that farming and recreation are done carefully, so that the wetlands are not damaged.



The Indian flag can be seen on **page 16**, and its colours can be seen on the boat on **page 2**.

The story features some traditional Indian food.

- *Roti* (**pages 4-5**) is a type of bread. It originated in India, and is now found in many different forms in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean. The dough is usually made from wheat and water, with no yeast, made into flat, circular pieces, and fried in a type of pan.
- *Kofta* (**pages 6-7**) is a type of meatball. It originated in Arab culture, but has also been in India for a long time. Koftas are now found in the Middle East, Central Asia, and Southern Europe. Koftas are usually made from meat and spices, but can also be made from vegetables. They are usually ball-shaped, and can be small or large (up to about the size of an orange or a tennis ball).
- The cookies (**pages 13-15**) are based on Indian *nankhatai* – which we might call “shortbread” or “butter cookies” in English. They originate from the Gujarat region of India. They are usually made from flour, sugar, and butter or ghee (butter which has been simmered or “clarified”).

If possible, you may like to bring in roti (or another type of flatbread) and shortbread for your students to try. Grapes and apricots may also be unfamiliar to your students. If possible, bring some in for them to taste and see. Always be mindful of food allergies.

In your context, “cookies” and “biscuits” may mean different things. In India, they can be used interchangeably; however, cookies tend to be softer, chewier, sweeter, and bigger than biscuits.

Characters

The animals in the story are modelled on species of owl, crow, goose, and duck found in India. Depending on where you are in the world, your students may have seen other species of these birds before. What makes the animals in the story different from those they have seen before? Consider the size of the bird, colour, markings, wings (size, shape), beak (size, shape, colour), etc.

For example:

- the Indian eagle-owl has tufted ears which point out from its head;
- the red-crested pochard's head has a distinctive shape (large, round) and colour (red/brown);
- the bar-headed goose has “bar” markings on its head.



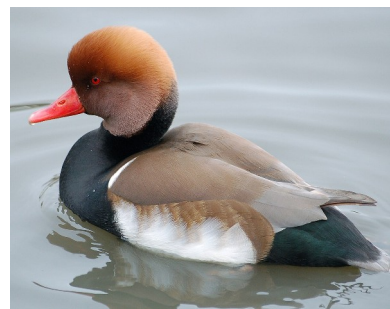
Indian eagle-owl



Bar-headed goose



House crow



Red-crested pochard

Story

Picnics are a form of shared meal found in many cultures throughout history. In India, it is likely that picnics have been happening since ancient times, and they are still very popular today! Picnics generally involve each person bringing food to share, and eating outside. On **page 3**, we see a picnic rug (here made from a leaf) and a picnic basket. They can involve a small or large number of people, and can take a short or long amount of time. It is a time of rest, fun, enjoying nature, and spending time with family and friends. Sometimes, outdoor games are played, such as cricket. Cricket is a very popular sport in India. We can see the birds carrying the cricket bat, ball, and wickets (stumps and bails) on **page 2** and **pages 14-15**, and we see them play cricket on **page 16**.

Depending on where you are in the world, your students may not be familiar with cricket. The most basic rules of the game can be described as follows:

- The minimum number of people needed to play are a “bowler” (Crow), “batter” (Owl), and “fielders” (Goose and Duck);
- The bowler throws the ball with a straight arm (“bowls” it) to the batter. If the ball hits the wickets, the batter is “out” and a new batter takes a turn;
- The batter tries to hit the ball when it is bowled to them. While the fielders are retrieving the ball, the batter can run back and forth between the wickets (there is usually one set of wickets at each end of the cricket “pitch”) to score “runs” (points);
- The fielders try to get the batter “out” by catching the ball before it touches the ground, or else by hitting the wickets with the ball while the batter is still running.



If both you and your students are very unfamiliar with the game, it might be worth looking for a video of a cricket match on the internet.

Mathematical concepts and language

Division is often perceived as the most difficult operation to understand and teach. From the beginning, we need to introduce several ideas which are directly connected, but which we cannot yet fully explain or give symbols for:

- **One whole can be *divided* into a number of equal pieces.**
We do this with roti (pages 4-5) and koftas (pages 6-7).
 - This is the sense of division which leads us to introduce *fractions*.
 - We do not need to introduce the word *fraction* yet, nor write a fraction using symbols.

- However, we need the fraction words *half* and *quarter* for discussing *time*. These are also the fraction words which differ from the ordinal numbers, so it is useful to learn them straight away.
- The plural of *half* is *halves*. This is an uncommon form in English occurring in some nouns ending in “-f” or “-fe”. Students may have encountered *leaf* and *leaves*, *calf* and *calves*, *wolf* and *wolves*, *shelf* and *shelves*, *knife* and *knives*.
- We do not have the language to talk about equal pieces having the same *area* or *volume*, but we can talk about them having the same *size*.
 - Ask your students to check that the pieces of roti and kofta in the book are the same size by looking at the illustrations.
 - We want to reinforce immediately that we are not just talking about two pieces, but two *equal* pieces.
 - You can demonstrate this with a circular piece of paper. Fold it in half, then tear or cut it into two equal pieces. Place one piece on top of the other to show they are *equal* pieces.
- **A number of objects can be *divided* into equal groups.**

We do this with grapes (pages 9-10), apricots (pages 11-12), and cookies (pages 13-14).

 - This is the sense of division which leads us to introduce division as the inverse operation to multiplication, and will allow us to use our times tables to find simple divisions.
 - We do not need to introduce the division symbol yet.
 - We do not need to describe the connection to multiplication yet.
 - Be careful with your language: we divide things *equally*, not *evenly*. Otherwise, we will create confusion with “even” numbers.
 - When we share equally, each person gets the same amount. You can link this to the idea of *fairness*.
 - On **pages 8-9**, Duck and Goose both love grapes, so will want as many of them as they can have. Owl’s suggestion that they share them equally is *fair*.
 - Owl and Crow’s decision to have the apricots instead of the grapes is fair in a sense (all the birds get some fruit) but it is also *kind*, because they are choosing to miss out on grapes for the sake of their friends.
 - Fraction words such as half and quarter can be used to describe a division we are wanting to perform, or the result of a division.
 - To find “a half of” a number, we divide it by 2 (**pages 10 and 12**).
 - To find “a quarter of” a number, we divide it by 4 (**page 14**).
 - This case highlights how the concepts of fractions and division are intimately connected. Indeed, the division symbol \div takes the form of a fraction to emphasise this. $1 \div 2 = \frac{1}{2}$

A key word for division at this level is “share”. It refers to the process of dividing a whole into pieces or a number of objects into groups. It does not necessarily mean the pieces or groups are *equal*, so we need to emphasise this when it is the case. We can also use “share” as a noun. For example, “Crow eats her share of the apricots.” On **pages 3 and 15**, the way we use “share” is not strictly mathematical: “They have brought food to share.” and “How can the birds share the toys?” In a general sense, when we “share” things with others, we both get some. In particular, the birds do not divide the toys into groups, but use them to play a game that they can all participate in. We assume they will *take turns* to bat, bowl, and field.

For students requiring extension

You can ask these students to perform different divisions using the objects in the book.

For example:

- Draw one roti.
 - Divide the roti into 2 equal pieces.
 - Describe the equal pieces using a fraction word. (halves)
- Draw two kofta.
 - Divide each kofta into halves.
 - How many halves make a whole? (2)
 - How many halves are there in total? (4)
- Look at the grapes on **page 8**.
 - Divide the 12 grapes into 3 equal groups.
 - Complete the sentence: 12 has been divided into 3 equal groups of _____. (4)
 - Divide the 12 grapes into 4 equal groups.
 - Complete the sentence: 12 has been divided into 4 equal groups of _____. (3)
 - Describe the equal groups using a fraction word. (quarters)
- Look at the apricots on **page 8**.
 - Divide the 6 apricots into 3 equal groups.
 - Complete the sentence: 6 has been divided into 3 equal groups of _____. (2)
- Look at the cookies on **page 13**.
 - Find one half of the cookies.
 - Complete the sentence: One half of _____ is _____. (8, 4)