

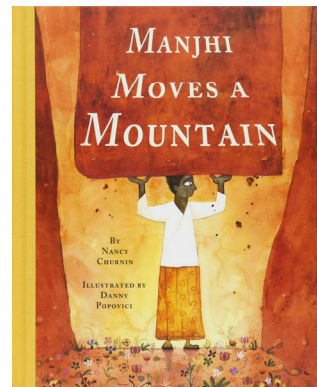
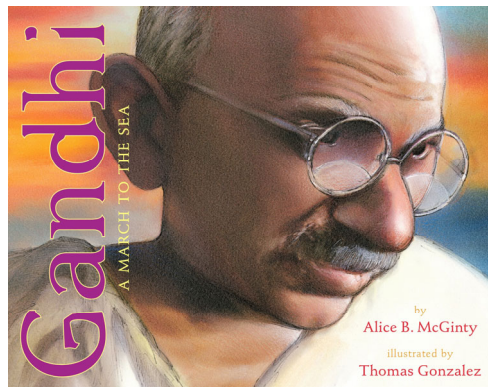
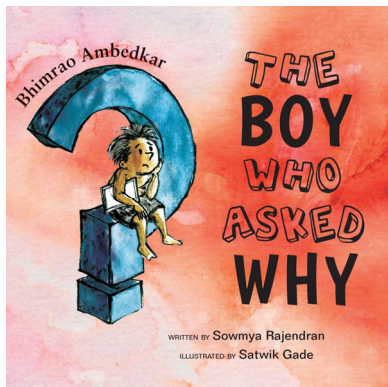


SOUTH ASIA BOOK AWARD
for Children's and Young Adult Literature

**Teaching resources and lesson/activity ideas for
Explaining the Influence of the Setting on the Plot**

Titles:

- *Bhimrao Ambedkar: The Boy Who Asked Why* by Sowmya Rajendran
- *Gandhi: A March To The Sea* by Alice B. McGinty
- *Manjhi Moves A Mountain* by Nancy Churnin



Subject: ELA: Students can analyze the influence of a story's setting, including historical and cultural settings. The three books mentioned above all take place in India, and all three are based on real people. Have your students learn about India while analyzing the settings in the book.

Grades: 3rd-5th

TEKS: 3.8.D, 4.8.D, and 5.8.D

Estimated time: 15 to 20 minutes per book to read and discuss how the setting influences the main character's actions and how culture and history are part of the setting, too. You will read one book per day. 10 to 15 minutes for students to write in graphic organizer.

Content Objective: We will read books based on true events and people who lived in India, and we will analyze how the setting influenced the lives and actions of the main characters.

Language Objective: Students can listen to the stories, participate in discussions of the story, and write responses on how the setting influenced the main character and his actions.

Materials: A map of India, Reader's Notebooks, or paper and pencils, chart paper for an anchor chart.

Pre-requisite knowledge: The books about Dashrath Manjhi and Bhimrao Ambedkar give some biographical information. Read this to your students before reading the main story so they get some understanding about the caste system. The book on Bhimrao has a short glossary in the back. Before reading the book on Gandhi, explain to the students that Gandhi was a lawyer before he became a peace activist and the primary leader of the Indian independence movement against British rule. The march to the sea took 24 days because it was a 240 mile trek! Students should know where India is located on a map. Most students should already know what "setting" means in a story, a location, but let students know culture and history can be included in the setting, too.

Motivation: How many of you know what "setting" means in a story?

Relevant Questions: How does the cultural setting affect the characters (for example, the caste system used to be a widely accepted part of Indian culture, but when Bhimrao traveled to the U.S., the setting changed, and how he was treated changed also). How was Gandhi influenced by the historical setting (Great Britain had colonized India and taken away many rights from Indians)? What type of setting influences Manjhi's actions (location, or geography, because the mountain is in his way. However, Manjhi was a Shudra, a low caste. The cultural setting also influenced how he lived)?

Activities and procedures: Before reading, ask students if they know what "setting" means in a story. Choose a few students to answer, then show them the map of India and explain that over the next few days you will be reading picture books set in India. Go over the content and language objective. Next, explain that culture and history can be part of the setting, too, and that settings can influence the main characters' actions and feelings. For each book, you also want to give an introduction as suggested above in the pre-requisite knowledge. Once you start reading a book, pause at appropriate passages to ask the relevant questions.

Assessment: Have the students fill out the graphic organizer. You may want to do a whole class guided practice with the first book. You can make a big copy of the graphic organizer on chart paper, or you can project a copy. Students can help you fill it out. Before asking them for their ideas, have them turn and talk to a classmate—What kind of setting can be found in the book? How do you know? What text evidence do you have? Does the book have more than one setting?

Connections to other subject areas: Social Studies: All three books are based on real people. Students can do inquiry projects to do research on their favorite historical figure. I also suggest you read the book *Grandfather Gandhi* by Arun Gandhi and Bethany Hegedus for more information on Gandhi, and students can do text to text connections and character analysis.

Math: It took Gandhi and his followers 24 days to march from Ahmedabad to Dandi, and the route was about 240 miles long. How many miles per day do you think Gandhi walked? What math questions or problems can students create using figures in Author's Note for the book about Dashrath Manjhi?

Follow-up and Enrichment activities: Students can take the Move Your Own Mountain challenge (information taken from *Manjhi* book). The www.nancychurnin.com website has great ideas posted by real students in the U.S., and there is also a link for a Teacher's Guide with more questions and ideas. Likewise, the book about Bhimrao lists websites where teachers and/or students can get more information. If you go to the www.kitaabworld.com site, you can download a teacher's guide for more information and ideas.

Name: _____

Date: _____

How Does the Setting Influence the Main Character?

Title of book: _____

Main character: _____

Author: _____

We usually think of the setting as the location where the story takes place. However, culture and history can also be a part of the setting. Location, culture, and history can influence, or affect, how a character behaves, thinks, or feels. Using text evidence, fill in the following graphic organizer.

| | |
|--|--|
| What is the geographical setting, and how does it affect the main character? | |
| Is the culture the main character lives in affecting his/her life? Explain how, and use text evidence. | |
| Is the historical context of the setting affecting the main character? Explain how, and use text evidence. | |

