

TOP 5 ACTIVITIES

INDIAN SNAKES AND LADDERS

IN THE
CLASSROOM

ACTIVITY 1

Recommended For

- KS2 and KS3 (History, Geography, Art)

Learning Objectives

- Understand the role of Queen Victoria as Empress of India.
- Demonstrate understanding of the Durbar Room as a reflection of Indian culture.

Time to Complete

- 1–2 lessons



Pupils' Snake and Ladders game question cards.

Summary

The game of Snakes and Ladders originated as 'Moksha Patam' in India in the 2nd century BC. It was designed to teach children about morality according to Hindu philosophy. Snakes represented desires or vices such as lust, anger, murder and theft. Ladders represented virtues such as generosity, faith and humility. Players who landed at the base of a ladder quickened their rise to Moksha – spiritual liberation.

The British colonial community in India adopted the game and it was introduced in Victorian England in 1892 as 'Snakes and Ladders'. The Victorians adapted it to reflect Victorian ideas of morality.

After visiting the Durbar Wing at Osborne House, pupils could demonstrate their understanding about Queen Victoria and her links with India through creating a 'Durbar Room' version of the snakes and ladders game. They could change some design elements, using symbols that they find in the Durbar Room such as elephants, lizards or peacocks.

Pupils could include landing spaces on the board that require them to pick up a 'quiz card'. These could be fact cards, or true or false questions.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Once your class have completed their game, have a competition in the classroom with small groups playing each other's games. Find out at the end who has learnt the most information about Osborne House, Queen Victoria and the Durbar Room.