

* * * * *

THE HALF MOON YOUNG PEOPLE'S THEATRE

* * * * *

AAREKTA JUTA

THE SECOND SHOE

* * * * *

A theatre-in-education programme
for 9 - 11 year olds
Summer Term 1990

* * * * *

The programme was devised by the Company

* * * * *

Cast List

Sophie.....Sandra Vacciana
Salima.....Cahedun Nessa
Mr Rahim.....Baharuddin Khelon
Mr Martin.....Douglas Sinclair

Directed by.....Deborah Bestwick
Designed by.....Rona Lee
Stage Manager.....Jenny Kagan
Costume Assistant.....Therese Richford
Administrator.....Hilary Metcalfe
Teachers' Pack.....Anne Doyle
Bengali Typesetting.....Kamal

* * * * *

The Half Moon Young People's Theatre is financially assisted by
G L A , L B G S , L B T H



Learning is the light
that leads
into everything lovely



WHY CHILDREN DON'T GO TO SCHOOL

Education is a priority worldwide, in the developing countries of the South with their relatively tiny budgets, no less than in the enormously wealthy techno-industrial countries of the capitalist North.

All countries provide some kind of schooling for their children and young people, whether it is entirely free - including food at boarding-schools - as in Cuba, or with a substantial private sector as in Chile, and in all countries of the world education is valued as a means of enriching both the state and the individual.

However, not all children are able to benefit fully from whatever education their country provides. The reasons for this are reflective of other tensions or problem areas in the body politic. The following is a brief summary of what factors may limit children's access to education worldwide, with specific reference to countries where such factors are particularly clearly demonstrated.

South Africa

Black children in South Africa suffer from an educational system that has been seriously underfunded as a matter of central government apartheid policy. Apartheid in itself is a major reason for black children's having only limited access to schooling:

When multiple types of education system exist, each tailored to the needs of a certain racial group as allowed by the dominant racial group, how can parity of access be said to exist?

Maree (see bibliography)

Many schools provided for black children, such as those in the townships like Soweto, are appallingly ill-equipped in comparison with white schools: one Soweto Junior High School for example has to share premises, classrooms and all facilities with a primary school. There are insufficient books and other teaching materials, and very often the lack of electricity in the evenings means that classrooms can't be used for extra-curricular activities or adult education.

The use and teaching of language in South African schools also disadvantages black children. Mother-tongue languages are largely ignored and/or devalued in education policy, with most teaching done through the medium of English. But the acquisition of English - which is after all the main world language for trade and communication - is not an unmixed blessing (leaving aside the fact that the learning of it is forced on to black children), because since the Education Acts of the 1950's it has been government policy to use non-native speakers of English in black schools, so that children have been taught not only in a foreign language but also by teachers whose own command of that language may not be adequate for the purpose. Until the mid 1970's, the government decreed that



black children should receive some subject tuition, for example Maths, in Afrikaans. This was deeply offensive as black people experience Afrikaans as the main language of oppression. The Soweto uprising of 1976 started as a school boycott of Afrikaans-taught classes. 176 people died, including children, and over 1000 were injured before the government abandoned the ruling.

It is clear from the end of the preceding paragraph that political activity directed against apartheid structures is also an obstacle to black children's educational success. Such heavy pressure on very young people - primary school children have been involved in protests - also has far-reaching psychological effects which may in themselves prevent a child either from returning to school or from getting the best out of her/his education.

Black parents value education highly and want it for their children. They hope, as do millions of disadvantaged parents all over the world, that their children will have a better opportunity to achieve their ambitions than they had themselves. But generally in South Africa only 4.1% of black children reach standard 8 - the minimum required for further education - and even fewer, only 1.6%, reach standard 10. In poorer and dislocated areas for example those into which large numbers of black people have been forced to move, even this level of attainment is unlikely. And because there are restrictions on the number of black people permitted to settle in urban areas, many black children are prevented from attending higher education establishments.

In South Africa then a combination of poverty and state policy limits the access to education of black children in all areas of the country.

Bangladesh

Access to education in Bangladesh depends mainly upon economic factors. Firstly, although primary schooling is free, textbooks and other materials have to be paid for by parents, some of whom simply cannot afford the extra expense. Secondly, children are often needed to work on the family's land, or in the home, or as wage labourers, to provide essential family income. Approximately 90% of Bangladesh's population live in rural areas, where working on the land is the main source of employment. But a large part of the land is concentrated in the hands of a few landowners - 48% of the land is owned by 8.5% of the people - which means that 50% of Bangladeshis are "functionally landless" and have to work as casual labourers. Both landless families and families who farm their own land need extra hands in the fields, whether those fields are their own or someone else's. Education is thus disrupted and there is widespread illiteracy. The following extract describes traditional Bangladeshi education and indicates some of the points at which children may lose their access to the system.



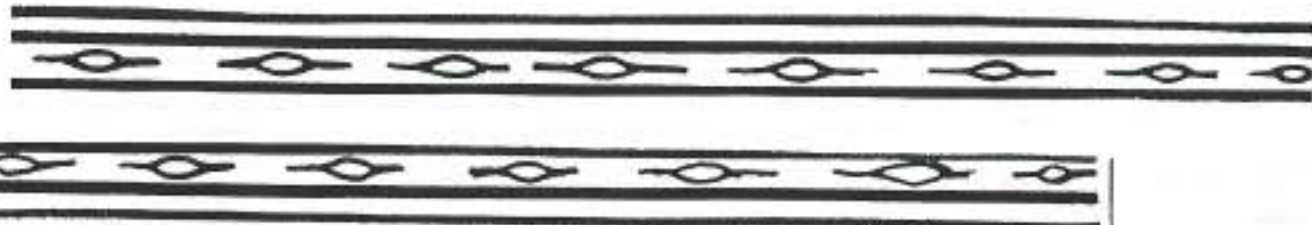
"Education is not compulsory in Bangladesh, and by no means all children go to school regularly. Many families can afford to give their children only a limited education. Although primary schooling is free, the children must provide their own textbooks, and these may cost more than the family can afford. Secondary education is not free, so parents must pay school fees as well as buying costly textbooks. Consequently, many children who start school are unable to go on to complete their education.

In addition, many children have to leave school after only a few years in order to help their parents in the homestead or on the land. As farming is the only form of work available in large areas of Bangladesh, some parents feel that children should learn how to farm the land, rather than the subjects they study in school, which will be of little use later in life. The Government of Bangladesh is aware of this problem, and is now attempting to remodel the education system to include a greater emphasis on agriculture, science and technology which will provide more suitable training for the children's future work.

There are over 41 thousand primary schools in Bangladesh so the majority of children can attend a local school. Most children, in fact, begin primary education and class one is always well attended. Frequently there are over 50 children in class one, but in later classes there may be only 10 to 15 children in a class. Only 10% of the boys and 3% of the girls who start class one continue their schooling until the last class of secondary school. Children in Bangladesh usually enter class one of the primary school between the ages of 5 and 8. There is, therefore, quite a wide range of ages in each class.

Every primary school has five classes and all schools in Bangladesh follow the same courses and use the same textbooks. These textbooks have recently been updated and rewritten, and the children can buy them all at the local market. Children in the first 2 classes of primary school write on slates which are provided by the schools. After class two, they use paper and pencils, which are also provided by the schools.

A gong rings at the school to mark the beginning of each school day - usually around 10 o'clock in the morning. In most primary schools, the first two activities of the day involve the whole school. The children and teachers gather together to sing the national anthem, and then go outside the school for physical drill exercises. These exercises are very popular with the children and schools often enter competitions or give displays of their skill. Following the drills, the children usually return to their own classes and their lessons begin. Classes one and two learn Bengali and arithmetic. From class three onwards children also learn social studies, general science, Arabic and English.





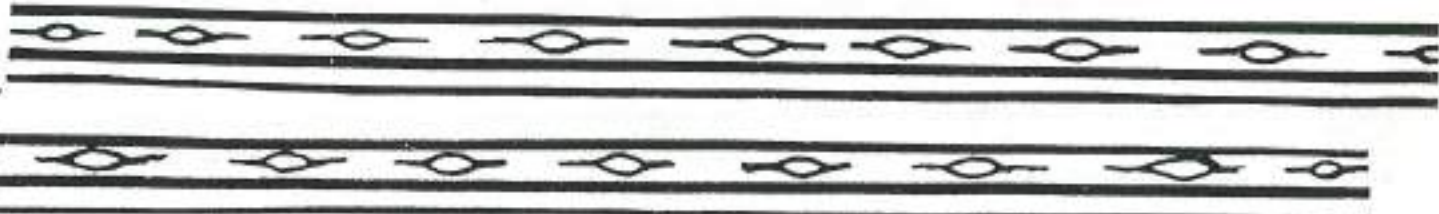
Lessons are quite formal. Almost all the work centres around the textbooks, with the teacher explaining passages on the blackboard. The children read passages from the text, copy them on to slates or paper, complete exercises, and then learn parts of the text as homework. The following morning they are tested on the work they have learned the previous day. At the end of each school year, the children have to pass an examination to go into the next class. If they fail they have to stay in the same class and repeat the year's work.

Secondary schools

After class five children may go on to secondary school where they remain until class 10. Secondary education in Bangladesh is expensive; parents have to pay school fees, and the numerous textbooks the children must have cost a lot of money. There are fewer secondary schools than primary schools in Bangladesh and usually one school serves villages in a large area. For many secondary school pupils this means walking long distances each day to the nearest school. Sometimes during the monsoon it is impossible for the children to reach the school and they have to stay at home until the storms and floods have subsided. Secondary schools are generally co-educational, apart from those in the towns. For the education of girls this poses a major problem, because in Bangladesh most girls of secondary age observe purdah. This means that they can no longer attend school with boys. It is very rare, therefore, for girls from the villages to go on to secondary school. But in the towns, such as Sylhet, where there are secondary schools for girls, the number of girls remaining at school is slowly increasing.


Secondary school facilities and buildings vary greatly from area to area. In the past it was usually prosperous local people who gave money for new school buildings; during the 1950's and 1960's many of the better built schools and colleges were financed in this way. Today the maintenance and extension of school buildings still depends largely on gifts from the more prosperous members of the community. For instance, the Bangladeshi community in England has sent money to schools in Bangladesh to equip science laboratories and to repair buildings which were badly damaged during the monsoon rains and the War of Independence.

In class eight, children at secondary schools choose the exam subjects they want to take at Secondary School Certificate (SSC), which is the equivalent of 'O' level. At most schools they can choose between humanities and science subjects. The humanities subjects are history, geography, civics and economics. Science consists of physics, chemistry, biology and additional mathematics. English, Bengali and maths must be taken by all pupils.



Some of the secondary schools in the towns can give pupils a wider choice of subjects to take at SSC level. For instance, in Sylhet Town pupils may choose commerce, cultural arts or agricultural science. In the more rural schools, with fewer teachers and less equipment, pupils are far more restricted in their choice; it is not uncommon for the humanities subjects to be the only ones offered."

Photographs from Bangladesh
see bibliography



The government is well aware of the problem with illiteracy and has gone some way towards improving both the content and the form of education. The establishment in 1976, in conjunction with overseas development agencies, of the Gono Patshala - People's School project is a step towards providing people with an education they can use in their daily life. This begins to tackle the interdependent problems of illiteracy and economic deprivation.

Nicaragua

Like children in Bangladesh, children in Nicaragua are also needed to contribute towards the family income, which limits the time available for their attendance at school. Children work seasonally from the age of 8 or 9 years in the cotton and coffee-producing areas.

A major aim of the Sandinista government since the revolution has been the eradication of illiteracy and the provision of adequate and suitable education. Schooling is free; and the Literacy Crusade mobilisation of 1979 sent literate young people to live with and teach rural people who had had little or no formal education. The aim of the Schools' Building Campaign was to solve the problem of 'too few schools in too few places'. The aim was that no child should have to travel more than 3 or 4 km to school. It is mostly primary schools that have been built, and the Campaign has had a high degree of success.

Political factors also affect Nicaraguan children's access to education. Although schooling is free for all children from 7 to 17 years of age, the war with the Contras and the economic blockades by the US have seriously weakened the infrastructure and the economy of the country, so that already-limited funds have had to be diverted to crisis areas. Such enormous political upheavals result in small human tragedies: one rural family hosting a worker-visitor from the UK was unable to send their small boy to school because he had no shoes.

Access to schooling in the UK

If there is a common factor that prevents children worldwide from having full access to education, it is probably poverty, of the individual or the state or both. In the UK, with its long-established system of compulsory education, the situation is slightly different, although it could also be argued that most children are prevented for financial reasons from benefiting from the most prestigious education available, that offered by the public schools.

The state education system provides free education for all educationally-normal children from 5 - 16 years of age. There are also a small number of places in nurseries and nursery classes for 3 - 5 year olds though nothing like enough, so at a very early age many British children miss out on education because of insufficient government funding.

The main ways in which British children's access to education is compromised, however, are underachievement and absenteeism. As both apply mainly to secondary school children, I do not propose to treat them in any detail here. It is important to note, though, that the numbers of West Indian children underachieving are disproportionately high in comparison with their Asian and white British classmates. Recent studies have shown that Asian children, whether British-born or not, improve significantly in performance according to the degree to which they are or have become fluent in British culture.

Absenteeism including such phenomena as school refusal, truancy and absent-without-parental-leave is sociologically linked to "multiple adverse home conditions, low social class, and deprivation" (Disaffection from School, see bibliography); but schools, parents and the children themselves each have a role to play creating the specific set of circumstances that leads to an individual child becoming alienated from school.

An approach to the solution

The solution lies partly in a careful and imaginative restructuring of curricula for less academically able children, so that the chances of such a student's succeeding are increased. This leads to feelings of greater self-worth, and makes a child less at risk of becoming disaffected. The cooperation of parents is essential, if the school's aims and methods are to mean anything important to the potentially disaffected child.

Disaffected children in particular need encouragement.

Multi-cultural education

Without wishing to jump to the extreme of belittling the real contributions that Europeans have made to the world, perhaps the first question to pose is: 'Why should we ever have thought that other people would want to be more like us?' (J & J: 187).

Mary Worrall's summing-up of her thoughts on multicultural education serves as a good starting-point for this brief discussion of what is being done or could be done to redress the balance in UK education in order that the diversity of cultural experience in the lives of all pupils may be more fully represented.

Recent work on the multicultural curriculum has emphasised the need to abandon any notion of a pre-determined set of objectives and themes into which 'other people's' cultures must fit, and instead to place cultural and ethnic minority groups' own experiences firmly at the centre of the process of education. This approach encourages all children, in whatever subject area they may be studying and at whatever level they may have reached, to stand outside their own cultural norms and

assumptions, even if only temporarily, and thus to begin developing a world perspective rooted in but not entirely shaped by their own cultural experiences. It is worth quoting in full Mary Worrall's suggestions for beginning this process because they demonstrate how culturally unbiased, non-ethnocentric techniques for discovering and evaluating information in any subject area may be developed by children thinking specifically about their own cultural experiences:

Rather than introducing children in Western countries to the supposed deficiencies and needs of people of whose culture they as yet know nothing, we too could start with a questioning and analyzing process near home:

- What are the effects of the cutback in country bus services?
- Why vandalism?
- Why have motorways been built so close to homes?
- Why do we need special institutions for the old?
- Why do we have so much waste stuff to dispose of?
- Should they build a rubbish crusher in South Oxford?
- What changes have happened in the neighbourhood, village, town, for the better or for the worse?
- Why are so many Europeans so fat?
- Are all our household objects necessary, beautiful, useful?

These questions, suitably adapted - for instance, rephrasing the one about Europeans being fat so that fat children in the class are not made to suffer because of their weight - could form the basis for a discussion of 'the way we live in the UK', followed by specific work on another culture, for example drawing up a list of appropriate questions about Bangladesh, after working through some basic information material.

" It is time to make use of language diversity"

I want finally to touch on the role of language, spoken and taught, in the development of a truly multicultural curriculum. The Half Moon Young People's Theatre is fundamentally committed to producing high-quality bilingual theatre for children, to support and strengthen the innovatory work in mother-tongue teaching already being done in Tower Hamlets primary schools. We believe that a child is strengthened in his/her own culture by hearing his/her mother-tongue used in performance and that this in turn helps to build stronger links between the home and school which further increase the child's chances of success at school. We want to question the culturally-biased assumption that the knowledge of one or more European languages is an advantage whilst being multilingual in Asian or African languages is a potential problem. We also believe that every language is a 'window on the world', that culture is embodied in language, and that therefore bilingualism offers a child the opportunity of standing outside her/his own culture and





developing the kind of non-ethnocentric critical perspective discussed earlier.

To sum up, respect for a child's culture, and the mother-tongue through which that culture is learned and expressed, are the main ways in which the access of underachieving and disaffected children to the UK education system may be radically improved.

Unidentified 10 year old South American boy, working as a bricklayer's mate.



Photo: Unesco

ABOUT

শিক্ষা সম্বন্ধীয় EDUCATION

1. What do you think "education" is?
2. Does education happen only in schools?
3. What are "skills"?
4. Do you learn skills in school? If so, what skills?
Where else do you learn skills?
5. What skills do Sophie and Salima have?
How did they learn them?
Could you learn these skills?
Would you have to learn them in the same way?

Our country is an industrial, high-technology society.
Find out what these words mean.

What skills do you need to live successfully and safely in this kind of society?

Where and how do you learn these skills?

If something went wrong with our high-tech society, how would we survive?

And what skills would we need?

Do you or any of your friends or family have these skills?

CHILDREN AT WORK

কর্মরত শিশু

Many children across the world have paid jobs even when they are quite young. For instance, in the crowded towns of Colombia in South America, young boys of 8 or 10 years old work as sweetsellers or car attendants. Here are two of these boys' stories:

Jesus Antonio Pinella is ten years old. He lives and works on the streets of Bogota, Colombia. He says: 'I went to live on the street because my mother is very poor. There are eight children. So I went off to get food for myself. I look after cars for about fifty or sixty pesos a day. Sometimes I stay out all night looking after cars outside the disco. It is difficult living on the street. There is nowhere to wash. I often get cold at night, and sometimes I get sick.'

Luis Tacheco is fourteen years old. He sells cigarettes on the streets of Bogota from 8 o'clock in the morning to 6 o'clock at night, usually without taking a rest. 'I usually sell about twenty packets a day. I get five pesos on each packet. All the money goes to my mother to buy clothes and food. My father tries to get work as a handyman. He only knows how to paint. I earn more than he does.'

Why do Jesus Antonio and Luis need to work?

Peso is the name of the money in Colombia. Find out how much a peso is worth in the money we use in this country. Now try and work out how much money the boys earn for their work. Do you think this is a good rate of pay?

What do you think Jesus Antonio does when he is sick? Who would look after him?

Luis' father can't get work even though he has a skill. What skill does he have? And why can't he find work?

What special skills do Jesus Antonio and Luis have that help them in their life on the streets? How do you think they might have learnt these skills?

What do you think Jesus Antonio and Luis enjoy about their lives? How could their lives be improved?

In India, Bangladesh and in African countries such as Kenya, young girls look after their younger sisters and brothers aswell as helping with the household chores like collecting water and preparing food. Mazeda Gayen is a nine-year-old girl from Bangladesh. The photographs overleaf show us quite a lot of aspects of Mazeda's life, including the jobs she has to do around the house, and the jobs done by the rest of her family in their village.

Older children, especially boys, work long hours in the fields. By the age of 10, they may be in full charge of the village's pasture animals such as sheep or goats, and at 12-years-old they work as long as an adult, for half-adult wages. In India alone, 16 million children work in the fields or at home, for very little money.

But not all children's work is farm-work. In Iran, there is a long tradition of carpet-making, and for this job children's small fingers are more nimble than those of adults. Shariar started learning to weave on his eighth birthday. Overleaf, you can read his story and see a picture of the beautiful carpets he helps to weave.

In the UK children also work, although there are laws to say how much they should be paid and how many hours they are allowed to work at certain ages. These are some of the jobs that children in the UK may do:

- paper round
- helping on a market-stall or in a family shop
- babysitting
- acting, singing or dancing on TV/radio, or in films and theatre
- modelling clothes for catalogues or magazines
- helping on the farm.

These are jobs that could be done by children still at school, as Saturday or weekend work or holiday jobs, but some older children and young people have jobs which are more like adult work, to give them a taste of what working is really like. During the rehearsals for Aarekta Juta - The Second Shoe, the actors were remembering their own experiences of working when they were teenagers. Here are their stories:



Sandra's story

My mother decided it was vital that before I went on to further education, I should 'suffer' a little and find out what it was like to do a 'real' job (i.e. manual labour) so she kindly found me one, without prior consultation, in a factory - **stuffing toy furry animals!** My mum also worked in the toy factory and we both hated it.

Work started at 8am and ended at 6pm, with a ten minute tea-break in the morning and a ten minute tea-break in the afternoon, and half-an-hour for lunch.

I told my mother that I felt affronted at the blatant exploitation of the workers. We cut, sewed, stuffed and packed cuddly toys for approximately 12p a go, **and the toys were sold at a retail price of approximately £50!!**

I vowed to get some kind of formal training so that I would never, ever have to go through such fruitless toil ever again...



Caheedun's story

My part-time job was working as an Administrative Assistant for Leeds City Council doing general office work like answering the telephones, taking messages, collating, and using the word-processor.

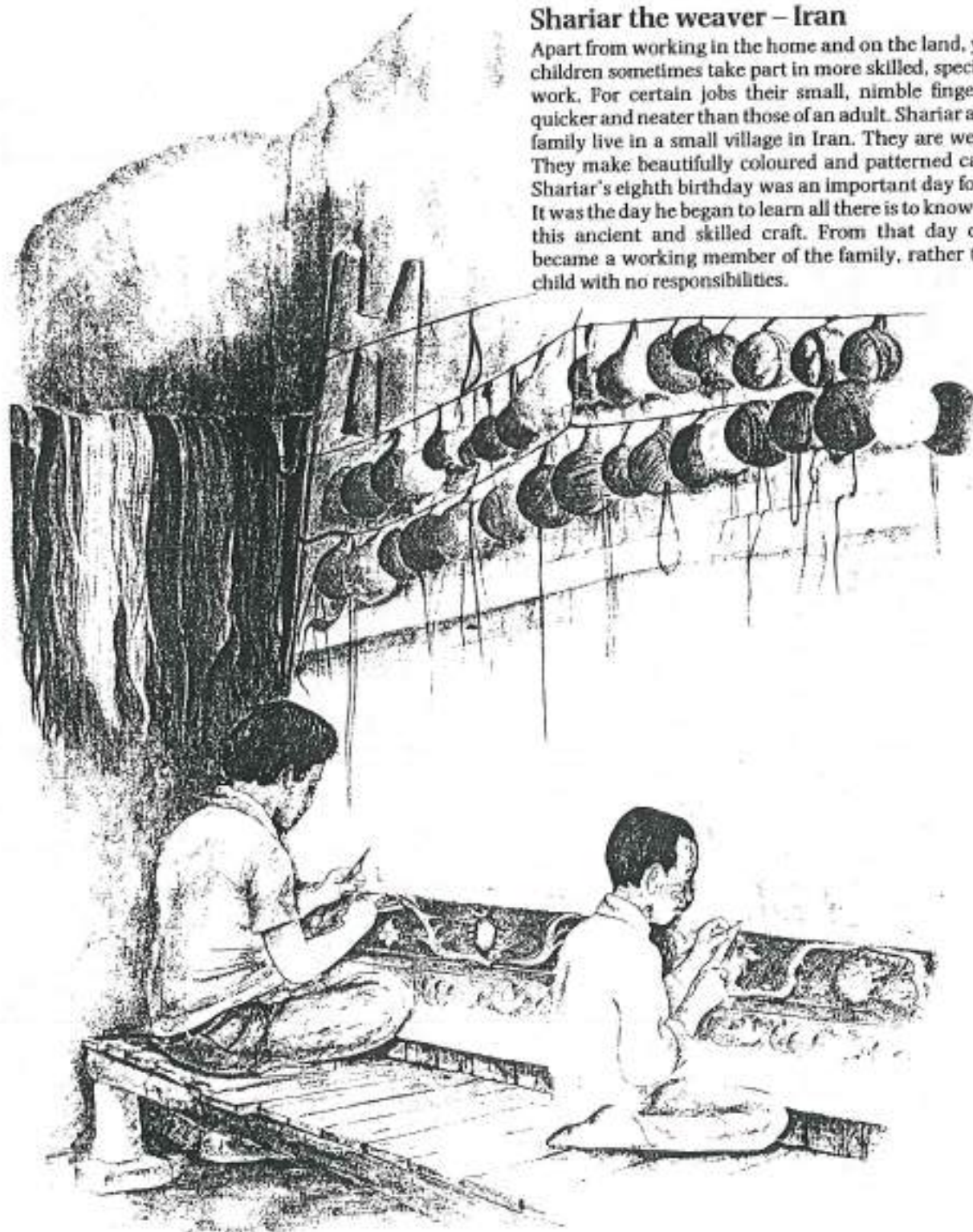
With the word-processor my employer showed me how to use it and then told me to write the instructions so that I would remember the next time.

From there I learnt that if there was anything I didn't know how to use or do, I would ask and then take notes so I wouldn't have to ask all the time. Even when you're answering the telephone you need skills, and a polite manner. **In fact, in any job you do, you need skills.**

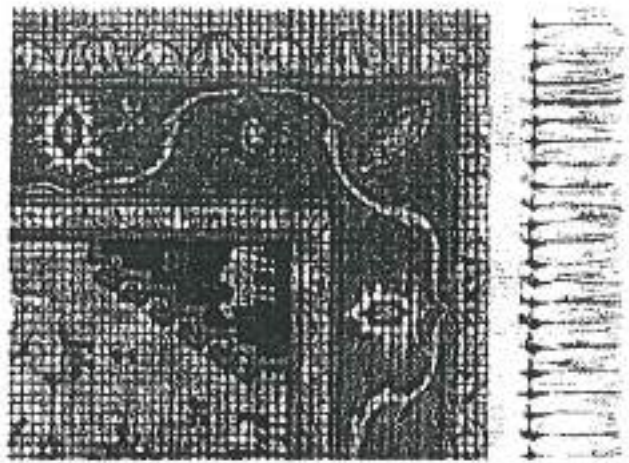


Shariar the weaver – Iran

Apart from working in the home and on the land, young children sometimes take part in more skilled, specialised work. For certain jobs their small, nimble fingers are quicker and neater than those of an adult. Shariar and his family live in a small village in Iran. They are weavers. They make beautifully coloured and patterned carpets. Shariar's eighth birthday was an important day for him. It was the day he began to learn all there is to know about this ancient and skilled craft. From that day on, he became a working member of the family, rather than a child with no responsibilities.



Shariar, with his father, learning to weave a carpet.



Part of the traditional pattern. What does it show?

‘First of all he learnt how to make a loom. This is the wooden frame on which the carpet is woven. Shariar and his father set off by mule to find some poplar trees, which grow particularly tall and straight. The logs used to make the loom must be very straight so that the pattern on the carpet is regular. Then he watched as his mother cut the wool from the family’s sheep and washed it, first in the village stream and then in a tub of hot soapy water. After the wool had dried in the hot sun, his mother spun the wool into strands.

Shariar’s next lesson was how to recognise and gather the different wild plants whose flowers and roots provide dyes. These give the carpets their rich and glowing colours. After the first strands of wool had been dyed deep reds and blues, Shariar and his father began to design the carpet. They worked out a marvellous pattern. It included pictures of camels, birds, trees and flowers, and they drew it onto the dry mud walls of their small house. Then they could look at the design as they were weaving and as the multi-coloured carpet gradually grew bigger.

Finally, Shariar learnt how to weave the strands of coloured wool backwards and forwards across the loom. It was very hard work but as the weeks wore on and the pattern developed under Shariar’s nimble fingers, his confidence and excitement grew. This first carpet took almost a year to complete. By the time Shariar was nine years old he was well on the way to becoming an expert carpet weaver and had settled down to working a long and exhausting day, every day.’



The finished carpet

Do you think you could create something so beautiful, yet needing so much patience, at only nine years old?

WISDOM AND PROVERBS

জ্ঞান

এবং প্রবাদ

15



Why speaks he proverbs? Because he would speak truth.

A **proverb** is a wise saying. Proverbs contain important and useful information in just a few words, so they are easily remembered.

Look at the list of proverbs below, and pick out any you already know.

Do you think what the proverb says is true?

Can you find any proverbs in the list that are the same in meaning? And are there any that are opposite in meaning?

Who works, who eats?	Bangladesh
People despise what they don't understand	West Africa
A roaring lion kills no game	West Africa
It is possible to have too much of a good thing	UK
Discipline is the hallmark of a mighty people	Black America
Little friends may prove to be great friends	Ancient Greece
Necessity is the mother of invention	Ancient Greece
Absence makes the heart grow fonder	UK
Youth and age will never agree	Old England
You can't have too much of a good thing	UK
The river wanders this way and breaks that way - that is the river's play	Bangladesh
To educate a man is to educate an individual. To educate a woman is to educate and liberate the nation	
Out of sight, out of mind	UK
Look before you leap	France

Proverbs are one way in which information is passed on from generation to generation.

Can you think of any proverbs or wise sayings that you've heard in your own family? Who says/said it? When do they say it? What does the proverb mean?

It is usually older people, parents or grandparents, who pass on information in wise sayings. But you don't have to be old to be wise. Can **YOU** think of any important or useful information that

- a) your best friend should know, or
- b) your mother or father should know, or
- c) your cousin who has just come to the UK should know???

Try and make up a proverb that contains this information. Remember, you need use only a few words in a proverb.

Teachers may want to collect the children's proverbs and have a 'proverb-throwing' session. This is a traditional way in some Nigerian societies of starting story-telling or another entertainment.

Start with one person, who must stand up and say a proverb. S/he then turns to the next person and says, **Losako!** (Throw us a proverb!). The next person replies with her/his proverb. The session continues with each person's proverb being introduced by **Losako!** from the previous person.



DID YOU KNOW...???

There is an old belief that if you wear shoes made from the hide of a brave or speedy animal, that you too will be as brave, strong and fast as that animal.

People in the Netherlands were able to make their shoes from wood because the land is very flat which means that smooth-soled shoes were easily able to grip the surface. But in countries with rough or mountainous land, special shoes with ridged soles were worn, rather like present-day hiking boots.

Early soldiers' boots were often dyed red. This was to disguise the bloodstains from the soldiers' toes, injured during hard marches or training.

Sameks (Lapp people who live in the north of Europe within the Arctic Circle) used to wear reindeer skin boots made from the extra-warm head or leg skin of the animal and stuffed with rush grass.

Traditional footwear worn in rural areas of **Algeria** in North Africa is broad, open-toed sandals with thick rawhide soles which give a firm grip on sand and are also a good protection against scorpions, sandflies and thorns.

Native Americans used to make and decorate their moccasins according to the special custom of their tribe. If a lost or discarded shoe was found, it was possible to tell, by the decorations on it, from which tribe the wearer had come.



SHOES AANEK JUTA জুতা

Here are some pictures of different types of footwear, ancient and modern.

What kind of terrain do you think each boot or shoe would be suitable for?

What kind of journey could you imagine going on, if you were wearing

- the South American sandals;
- the fifteenth century wooden platform shoes;
- the Doc Martens?





Village Working Song of Bangladesh

ও ধান বানাবে

O DHAN BANO RE

ঢেউকিছে লাড়ু নিয়াঁ

DHAKITAY PAR DIYA

ঢেউ নাচে জাতি নাচি

DHAKI NACHAY AMI NACHI

হালিয়াঁ দুলায়া

HALIYA DULIYA

ও ধান বানাবে

O DHAN BANO RE

TAKE THE SHELLS OFF THE RICE
WORK THE DHAKI WITH YOUR FOOT
THE DHAKI'S DANCING, I AM DANCING
AS IT SWINGS TO AND FRO
TAKE THE SHELLS OFF THE RICE





Flooding in Bangladesh brings the... danger of wading through polluted water to collect drinking water from standpumps. In the floods of 1987 and 1988, the biggest life threatener was the lack of clean water...



There are about 250,000 Amazonian Indians in Peru's 17 million population. This boy is from the Aguaruna tribe. He is using the blowpipe to hunt for birds and small animals...

2 WHO DO YOU LIVE WITH? EXERCISE

Aim

To encourage students to draw parallels between their own households and households in Bangladesh.

To encourage trust and understanding between students.

To challenge the concept that a nuclear family is 'normal' by showing that a large proportion of people do not live in them. The aim is to look at households in a wider sense. Hence the diagram looks like a real tree rather than the usual lines.

Time needed

20 minutes.

Materials

Copies of the **family trees**, paper and pens.

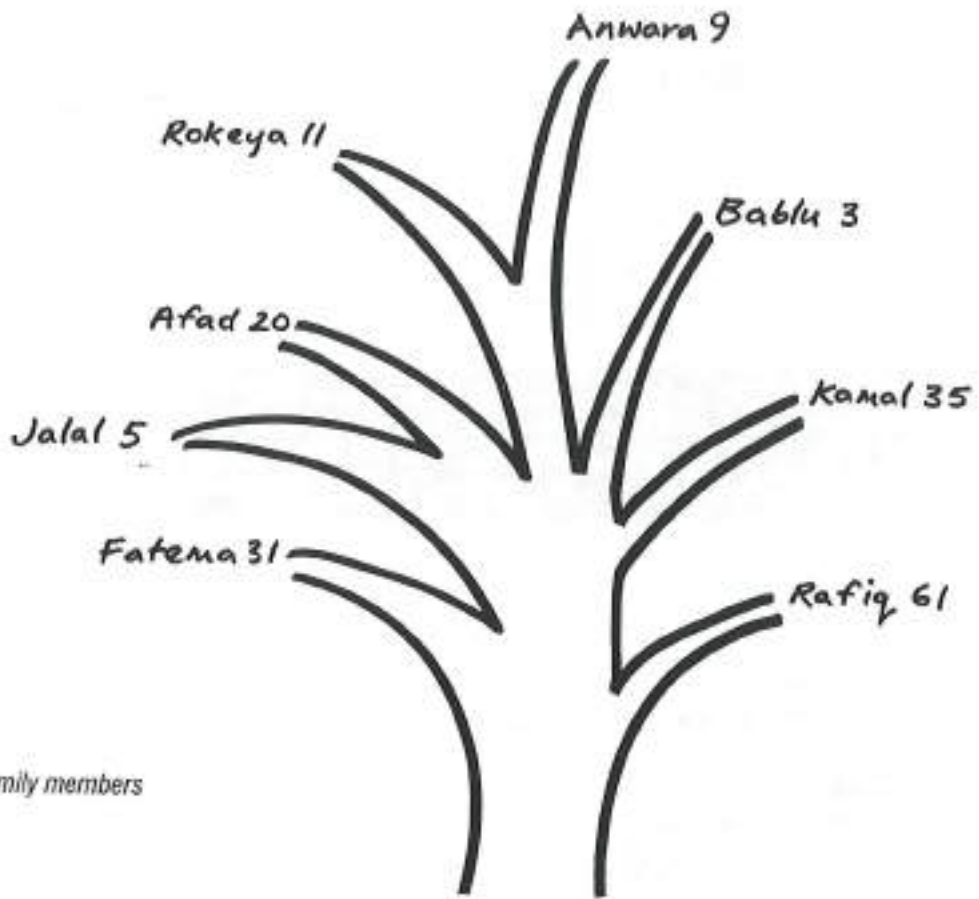
Method

- Put the students into pairs.
- Ask the students to look at the trees and then draw their own family by writing down the name and age of each person they live with on the ends of separate branches. Remind them to include themselves.
- When they have finished they exchange their tree for their partner's and discuss the similarities and differences.
- Using the background notes, the teacher can then start a discussion about how families differ in Britain and Bangladesh.

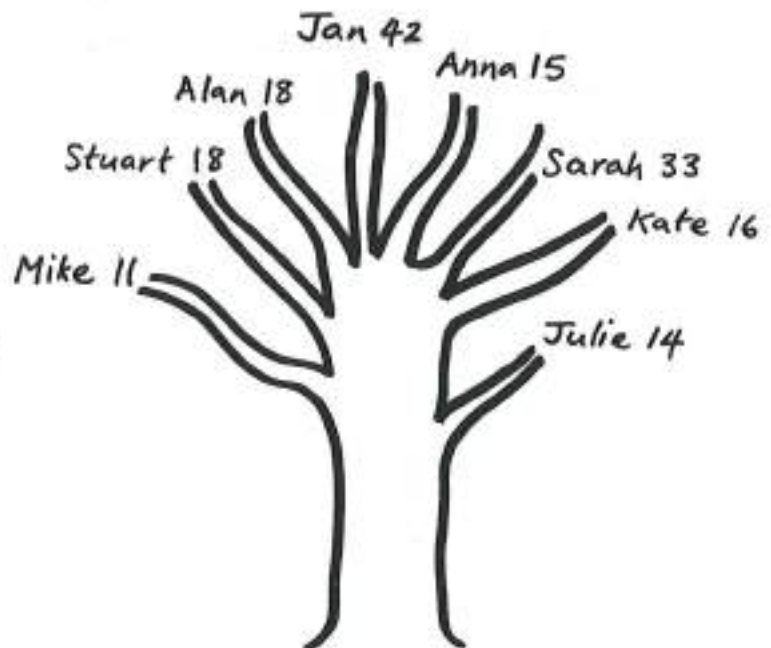
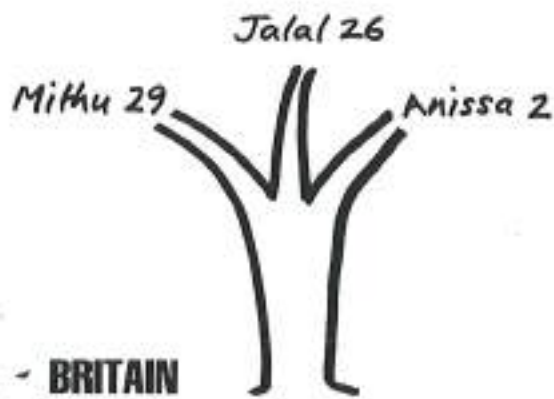
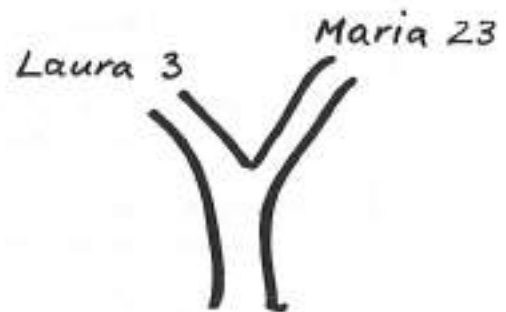
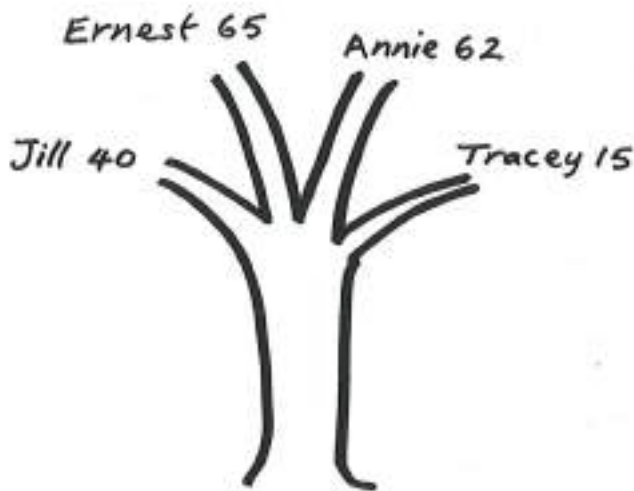
Discussion questions

- 1 How many students have older/younger people living with them?
- 2 Would you like to have more older/younger people living with you?
- 3 Would you prefer to live with your family or your friends?
- 4 What are the good and bad things about extended/nuclear/other types of family?
- 5 Why are there different types of family?

BANGLADESH



Names and ages of family members



BRITAIN

4 One of my jobs

One of my jobs is washing the clothes. In the four pictures you can see me washing one of my brother Abdul Rahman's shirts in our *pukkur*.

First, I have to wet it; then I put it on the board and soap it. Then I have to rub it up and down on the board till it's clean. Then I rinse it in the *pukkur* and hang it up to dry in our *bari*. Parvin and I have other jobs; helping to cook, sweeping the house, looking after Shahjahan, and taking Baba his lunch when he is working in the fields.

And of course we have to go to school.

Bengali words

pukkur – the pond where we store our water
bari – our courtyard

Things to do

- 1 Look at the picture and make a list of the things Mazedah has to be careful about.
- 2 Make a card like this one about one of the jobs you do at home. Put in pictures to show how you do it. Do you like it? Do you agree, or not, that it's right you should do this job? If not, who should, instead of you?
- 3 Say how long you think it would take Mazedah to do each of these things:
to wet the shirt to soap it to scrub it to rinse it
How long altogether does it take to wash the shirt?
- 4 Imagine you are Abdul Rahman's shirt. Write a poem of ten lines, saying what it's like being washed by Mazedah.



1 Wetting the shirt



2 Soaping the shirt



3 Rubbing it clean



4 Rinsing it

5 Boys' jobs

Little boys, like Shahjahan, have jobs to do in the fields, helping the men. In the first picture you can see Shahjahan helping Baba and Abdul Rahman to harvest the rice growing on the land next to our house. In the next picture is a little boy from a nearby village, digging up potatoes with a mattock, which looks like a big, heavy hoe.

Another important job for boys is looking after the cows. Baba pays a boy, Sayed Ali, to be our *rakal*. In the third picture he is feeding our cows from a round byre made of mud and concrete. In the last picture my cousin Razam is washing a cow in the *pukkur*.

Bengali words

rakal - the boy who looks after the cows

pukkur - the pond where we store our water

Things to do

- 1 Write down the jobs in the pictures in the order you like them. Put the best job at the top and the worst at the bottom. Say why you have put them in this order.
- 2 Make a list of the accidents that might happen to someone doing these jobs. Which job would be the safest and which would be the least safe?
- 3 Choose one of the jobs and write down why it is important and how it helps the rest of the family.
- 4 Find out and write down what jobs your granny or your grandad did round the house when they were little. Find out if they were ever paid, and how much.



1 Harvesting rice



2 Digging potatoes



3 Feeding the cows



4 Washing a cow

6 Mother's jobs

Ma cooks the meals, usually two a day. The main meal is at lunch time and it usually takes several hours to prepare the vegetables and the rice. The rice must be cleaned up and washed before it's boiled, and the spices for our vegetable curry have to be mixed properly and ground.

She makes one meal late in the morning, and another in the evening. Every morning she washes our clothes at the tubewell or in the *pukkur*, and tidies the house. She also has to make and mend our clothes.

One big job is de-husking rice, which we do at harvest time outside in the *bari* with our *dekhi*. In the first picture two neighbours are helping Ma. They push their end of the *dekhi* down with their feet and then let the other end fall again and again on to the rice which Ma pushes round in the hole in the ground. She has to watch her fingers! It takes all day to de-husk about 36 kgs of rice.

After that Ma has to winnow the husks away by tossing the rice up and down in the wind as you can see in the second picture.

Bengali words

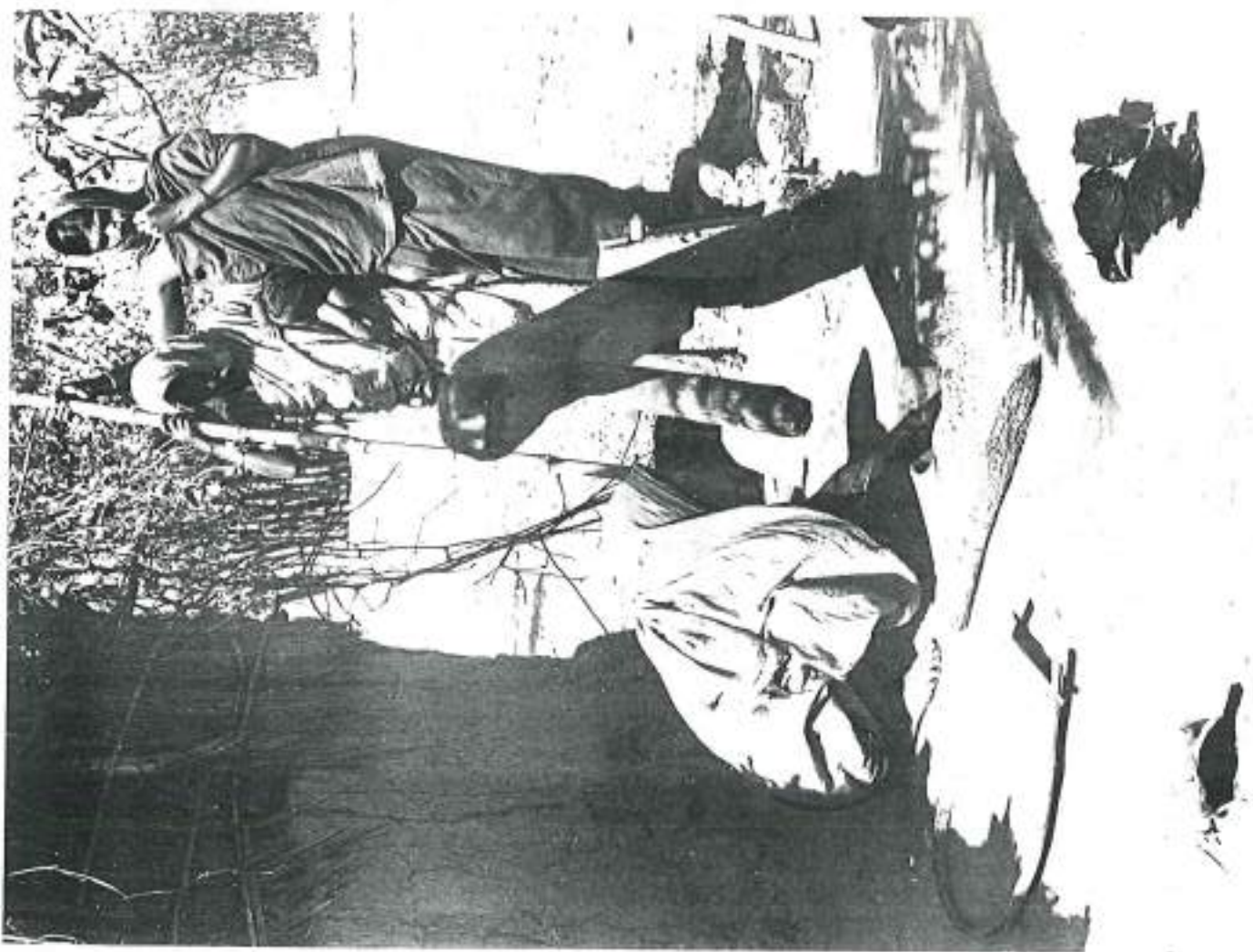
pukkur - the pond where we store our water

bari - our courtyard, and the buildings round it

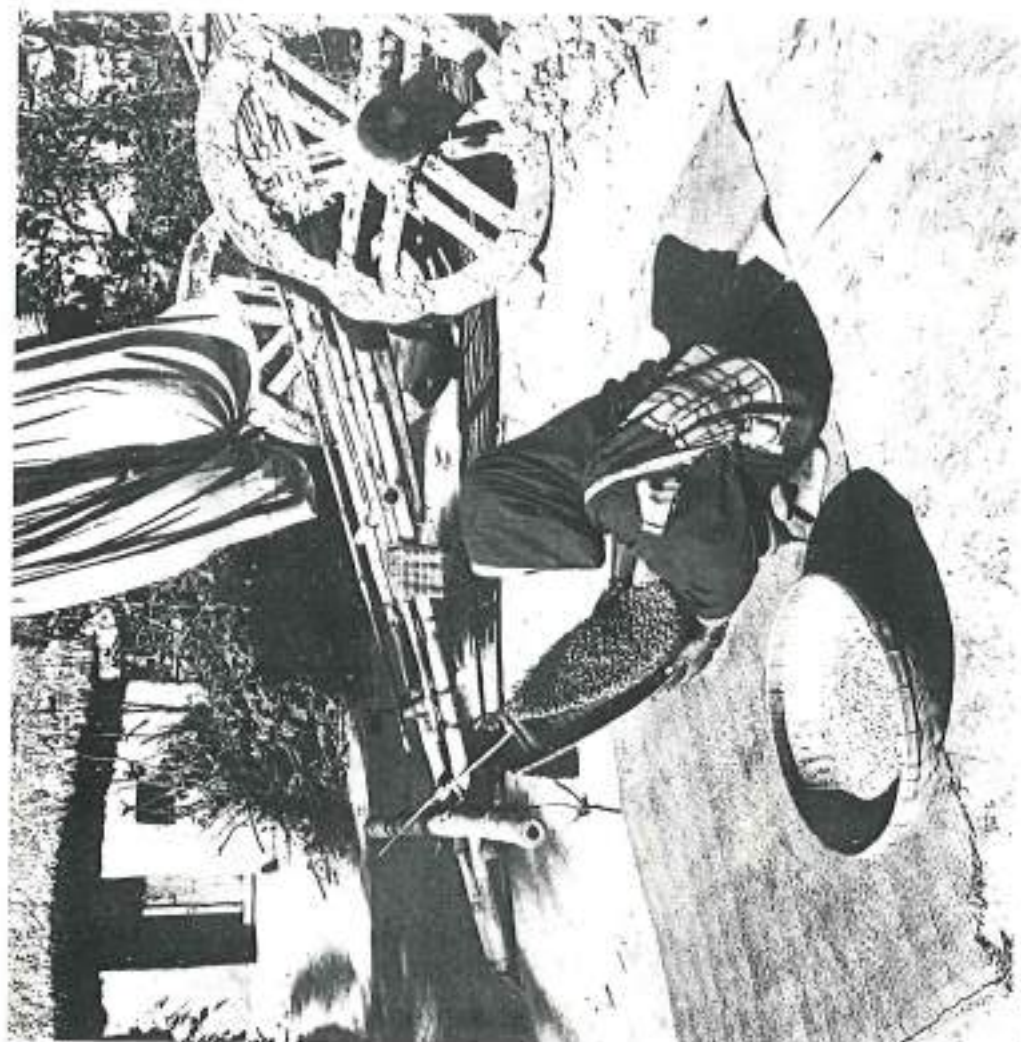
dekhi - the big wooden machine for de-husking rice

Things to do

- 1 Make a list of the jobs your mother does at home. Draw a picture, or take a photo of her doing one of these jobs, and say if it's a job she likes doing or not.
- 2 Find out what the words *de-husk* and *tubewell* mean.
- 3 Ask your mother to help you write about something she does really well, saying why she likes it and why she finds it interesting or worthwhile.
- 4 Imagine you are the *dekhi*: write a poem about the work you do.



1 De-husking



2 Winnowing

7 Men's jobs

Like most of the men in Panishail, our village, Baba spends most of his time working on the land. He gets some help from Abdul Rahman, and also from Ghujur Ali, who lives close by and earns some money by working for us. Baba says Ghujur Ali is a very good friend to him. The first picture shows Baba looking carefully at one of our calves.

Baba also looks after all our farm implements, the cart, and the house, doing repairs when they are necessary.

To plant rice you have to clear and level the land, then plough it with a bullock plough. The rice seedlings are planted out by hand in the flooded fields. Harvesting and threshing are also done by hand: so you can see there is plenty of work. The second picture shows Abdul Rahman ploughing with our bullocks.

Another important job for men is to go shopping. The third picture shows Abdul Rahman at the market in Kashimpur. We don't have a market in our village.

Things to do

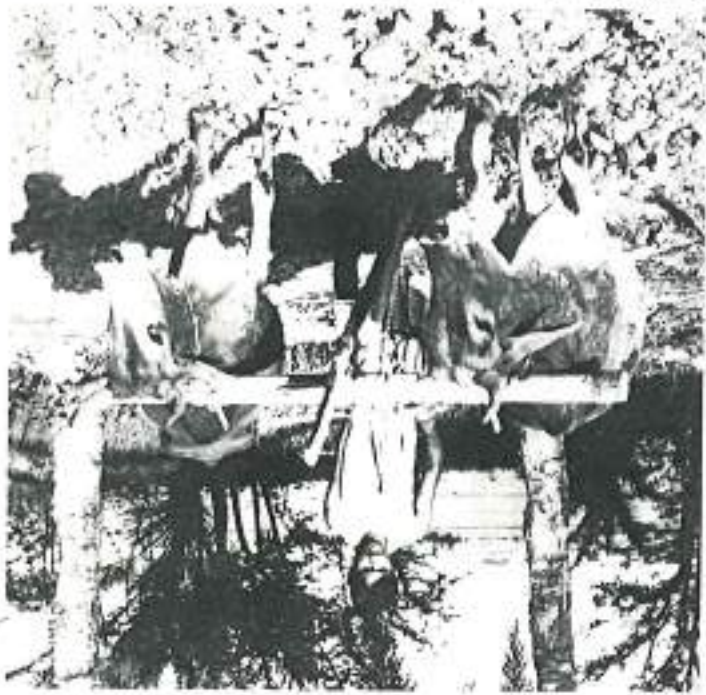
- 1 Look at the picture of Abdul Rahman shopping. In what ways is this kind of shopping different from the shopping your family does? In what ways is it the same?
- 2 Make a list of the jobs your father does at home, and the tools and equipment he uses.
- 3 Find out what the words *bullock*, *seedlings* and *threshing* mean.
- 4 Make up an argument between Mazeda's father and her brother Abdul Rahman about who should do which jobs today. What do they say to each other?



1 Baba and a calf



2 Abdul Rahman ploughing



11 Cooking

We do all our cooking over our *chula*, a cooking stove made of hardened clay with a hole in the middle where the fire burns, and a hole in the side to put the wood in. The pot, or pan – if we are cooking *chapatris* – sits on top.

In the first picture I am looking after the fire; the twigs and leaves are for burning. It gets rather smoky sometimes. We are cooking rice in the pot. Meanwhile Ma gets on with preparing the vegetables. In the second picture you can see us lading the cooked rice out of the pot while Ma cuts up pumpkin for the evening meal which we are getting ready at the same time. On the ground next to Parvin is the upturned lid of the pot with a mixture of potato, onion, and spices in it.

Some of the rice is left in the pot and Parvin puts the lid on top with the vegetables in it and takes it off to Baba and Abdul Rahman who are working in the fields.

Bengali words

chapati – a kind of pancake

Things to do

- 1 Look at the pictures and say what sorts of accidents Mazeda might have while cooking. Are these different from the sorts of accidents you might have at home?
- 2 Make a list of the cooking equipment your mother has in her kitchen. Which of the things does she use every day; what things does she use often and what things does she rarely use?
- 3 If you could only keep twelve different things in your kitchen, which twelve things would you keep?
- 4 What do you think Maharzan Begum would like about your cooker at home; and what things about it would not suit her?



Aim

To compare the jobs done in the students' own homes with those done in some Bangladeshi homes.
 To draw attention to the different workloads of women and men.
 To enable students who have similar experiences to people living in Bangladesh to have their experiences validated.
 To use photographs from Bangladesh that counter the usual negative images (e.g. of the passive victim) found in the media.
 To encourage the students to talk and learn from each other and to produce a class display.

- In the following description the exercise is run with 24 students, divided into three sets of four pairs. However, as will become clear, it can be run with any number as long as each set is divided into four. The exercise is divided into three parts: photographs, job grid and pictogram.

Time needed (photographs)

15 minutes.

Materials (photographs)

One copy of each job photo sheet for every set, paper and pens

Method (photographs)

- Divide the class into sets of eight.
- Hand out the four job photo sheets to each set.

- Initiate discussion by looking at one of the sheets and encouraging the students to answer questions such as:

What is going on in this photo?

How is this done in Britain?

Does it look hard or easy?

Is it important work? Why?

Do any of the people you live with do this job?

What surprises you about this photo?

- Ask the students to write their own questions about the photos on a separate piece of paper and see if other students or the teacher can supply the answers, using background notes.

Discussion questions

- 1 Do any of the results surprise you?
Who works the most?
Who works the least?
Why do you think this is?

2 What are the differences between the division of jobs in Bangladesh and in Britain?

What are the similarities?

Do you think that young people in Bangladesh work harder than those in Britain? Why?

3 Are there any jobs done mostly by two groups of people? If so, which groups are they and why? (e.g. girls and women, boys and girls).

4 Why do some people do jobs that others don't do?
Is this fair?

How could it be changed?

5 Are the jobs on the grid important?

Are some more important than others or more difficult than others?

6 Which jobs are thought to be harder, men's or women's? (e.g. carrying a bucket of water weighing 30 lbs or chopping wood).
Are paid jobs, such as working in an office, more important than jobs in the house?

Should people be paid for doing housework?

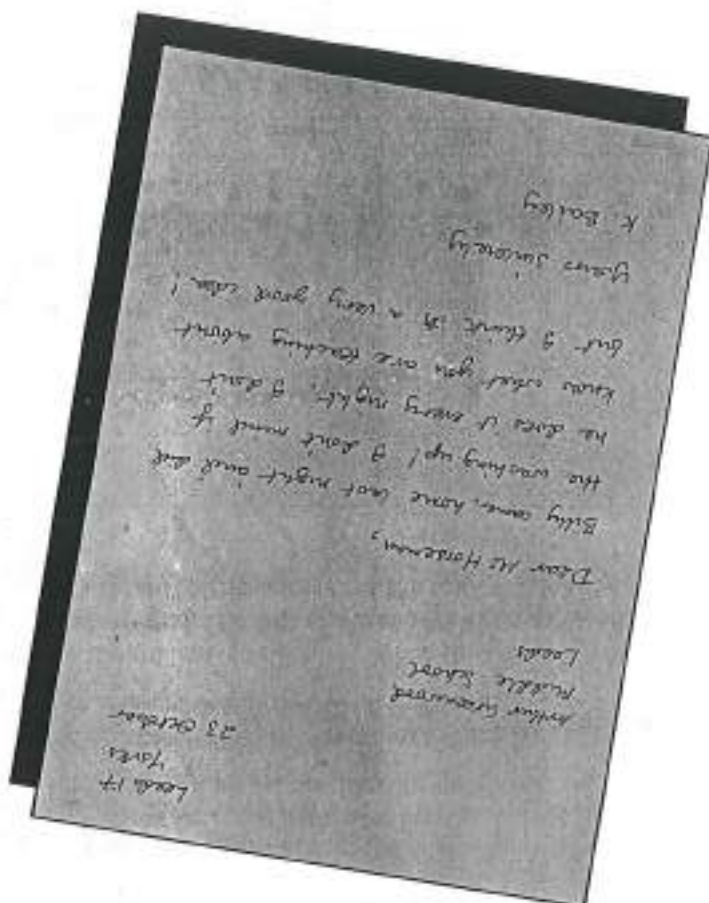
Would people be able to do paid jobs if nobody did the housework?

Can you look after children and do a paid job?

How could these inequalities be changed?

7 Do you think you do your fair share of jobs in the house?
Do you think that you will do more now?

A parent responds to the student's work on jobs.



Kylie answered
Puzzle Book
Loves

Loves it
17
23 October

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND USEFUL MATERIALS

- Dhaka to Dundee:
workpack on Bangladeshi life
- Looking After Ourselves:
Core Pack
- Working Life
- Children at Work
- The School in the Multicultural
Curriculum
- Folk Songs of Jamaica
- 'What shall we tell the blacks?'
Bantu Education in South Africa
- Folk Costumes of the World
- Historic Costumes in Pictures
- Bangladesh: A Photographic Study
- Bangladesh: land and the people
- Joi Bangla! The Children of
- War on Want Campaigns
information from
WOW Campaigns Ltd.
37/39 Guildford St
SE1 OES
- OXFAM Education 1981
- Olivia Bennett
Macmillan Education and
Save the Children Fund
1982
- Unesco publication
ed. Elias Mendelievich
no publication date
- eds. James and Jeffcoate
Harper and Row with the
Open University, 1981
- ed. and arr. Tom Murray
OUP, 1951
- Lynn Maree
Unpublished MA thesis
U London, Goldsmith's
1976
- Harrold and Legg
Blandford Press, 1978
- Braun and Schneider
1975
- Achmed and Achmed
Eastern Regal
Industries, Dacca
1976
- C.S. Rahman
Dept. of Publications
Dacca, 1973
- Laure and Laure
Farrar, Strauss &
Giroux
New York, 1974

Folk Tales of Bangladesh

ed. Jasimuddin
OUP, Dacca, 1974

Growing up in a Divided Society

eds. Burman & Reynolds
Karan Press, Johannes-
burg, South Africa
1986

Many of the above books and materials are available for loan at the Educational Resources Centre, The Commonwealth Institute, Kensington High Street, London W8, where there is a large collection of information materials - including videotapes, sample crops, posters and books - covering every member state. Visitors may also tour the fascinating exhibition showing aspects of the daily life, culture, politics, religion and trade of the countries that comprise the Commonwealth.

Thanks for the information on schooling in Nicaragua to Helen at the Nicaraguan Solidarity Campaign, 071-253-2454.

Education information from the Institute of Education Library, 11-13 Ridgmount Street, WC1.

Thanks to Ali at Bancroft Library for his help with research.