

EXPLORE **New beginnings**

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DIFFÉRENCIATION

WAY 1

## The birth of two nations

*The narrator is a young girl who lives in Lahore (now Pakistan).*

There is much disturbing talk. India is going to be broken. Can one break a country? And what happens if they break it where our house is? Or crack it further up on Warris Road? How will I ever get to Godmother's then?

I ask Cousin.

5 "Rubbish<sup>1</sup>," he says, "no one's going to break India. It's not made of glass!"

I ask Ayah.

"They'll dig<sup>2</sup> a canal...," she ventures. "This side for Hindustan and this side for Pakistan. If they want two 10 countries, that's what they'll have to do—crack India with a long, long canal."

Gandhi, Jinnah, Nehru, Iqbal, Tara Singh, Mountbatten are names I hear.

And I become aware of religious differences.

15 It is sudden. One day everybody is themselves—and the next day they are Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian. People shrink<sup>3</sup>, dwindling into symbols.

Bapsi SIDHWA, *Cracking India*, 1988

1. nonsense 2. creuser 3. become smaller

1. Read the title and the source. **Guess** what the document might be about. **Tick** and **justify** your choice(s). (several possible answers)

- This text might be:  a magazine article  an extract from a novel
- The text might deal with:  a family story  a country's separation

It tells a story with characters and it deals with breaking India into two countries.....

2. Read the document and **pick out** the transparent words. **Sum up** the general idea in two sentences maximum.

A young girl hears that India will be divided. She is confused and worried about what will happen.....

3. Focus on key words and **write** them **down** in the following chart.

The girl's questions	The answers she gets	Extra information
.. Can you break a country?.....	.. Rubbish! It's not made of glass.....	.. Cousin tries to reassure her.....
.. What will happen to our house?.....	.. They'll dig a canal to divide the countries.....	.. Ayah imagines a physical separation.....

4. **Pick out** the adjectives that best describe the girl's feelings. **Justify** your answer.

worried    calm    confused    amused    scared    indifferent

worried: The girl is worried because she asks many questions about the future of her country and her home.

confused: She is confused by what is happening and what it means for her daily life.

scared: The girl seems scared about the uncertain future and the division of the country.

5. **Recap** the main ideas of the document. You can use the following words.

question • break • country • separation • religion.

The girl asks questions about the break of her country. India is going to be separated because of

religion. This separation will change people's lives.

## WAY 2

1. **Look at** the title and the source. **Pay attention** to the narrator and **say** what the text might be about.

The text is about the Partition of India and the creation of two countries, India and Pakistan. The

narrator is a young girl from Lahore who wonders about the effects of this separation on her home and

community.

2. **Read** the document carefully. **Pay attention** to the names and **places** mentioned and **identify** the main topic.

The document deals with the political and social division of India based on religion, involving important

leaders, and the impact on ordinary people.

3. **Read** the text and **take notes** on the division of India.

Aspect	Description from the text
How the division might happen?	"They'll dig a canal.... This side for Hindustan and this side for Pakistan."
Places mentioned (Locations)	Lahore, Warris Road
Important people mentioned (Names)	Gandhi, Jinnah, Nehru, Iqbal, Tara Singh, Mountbatten
Religious groups involved	Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian

4. **Focus on** the sentence: "People shrink, dwindling into symbols." **Explain** what the narrator means by this and how it relates to the changes happening around her.

The narrator means that people stop being seen as individuals and instead are reduced to labels based

on religion or identity. This shows how the Partition causes division, making personal identities smaller

and emphasising religious differences. It reflects the social changes happening around her.

5. **Sum up** what you understood focusing on the idea that the Partition creates fear and confusion.

The Partition creates fear and confusion because people do not know what will happen to their homes

and families. The narrator, a young girl, hears disturbing talk about India being broken into two

countries. She feels uncertain and scared about how this division will change her life and the people

around her. Religious differences suddenly become very important, making people feel divided and

worried about the future.