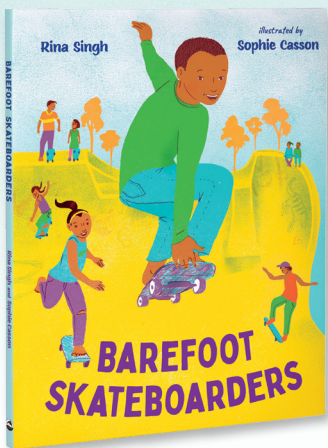


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BAREFOOT SKATEBOARDERS

Teacher Guide

Author: Rina Singh

Illustrated by Sophie Casson

Grade Levels: 2–5

Subjects: Social Studies, Literacy, Physical Education, Art, Life Skills

OVERVIEW

Barefoot Skateboarders is an inspiring true story about how a skatepark transformed the remote village of Janwaar, India, by breaking down barriers of caste, gender and opportunity. Through skateboarding, children from different backgrounds united, girls found their voices and education became a priority. This book sparks conversations about social justice, inclusion, resilience and the power of sports and community.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rina Singh is award-winning children's author who is drawn to real-life stories about the environment and social justice. Her critically acclaimed and award-winning books include *Grandmother School*, winner of the 2021 Christie Harris Illustrated Children's Literature Prize; *Diwali: A Festival of Lights*, nominated for the Red Cedar Award; and *Once, a Bird*. Rina has an MFA in creative writing from Concordia University and a teaching degree from McGill University. She lives in Toronto.



ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Sophie Casson has illustrated more than twenty-five books, including *The Artist and Me* by Shane Peacock, a finalist for the Marilyn Baillie Picture Book Award, and *Helen's Birds* by Sara Cassidy, selected as part of IBBY Canada's Silent Book collection. Her highly acclaimed illustrations are inspired by etchings, silkscreen works and Japanese woodblock prints. Sophie's award-winning work has also appeared in the *Globe and Mail*, the *New York Times*, the *Financial Times*, the *Los Angeles Times* and *Nature*, as well as in the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. Sophie lives in Montreal, Quebec.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS & ACTIVITIES

SOCIAL STUDIES – Sports as a Force for Change

- How can sports promote fairness and equality?
- Activity: Research a sport or game from a different culture and present it to the class.

LITERACY – Voices of Change

- Activity: Write a letter to Ramkesh, Asha or Arun to share your thoughts on their journey.



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PHYSICAL EDUCATION – Strength & Resilience

- Activity: Watch a beginner skateboarding video and discuss the importance of perseverance.
- Activity: Practice balance and coordination through simple exercises (on soft surfaces, if possible).

ART – Skateboards with a Story

- Activity: Design a skateboard deck that reflects community spirit.

LIFE SKILLS – Call to Action

- Activity: Create classroom rules inspired by “Girls First” and “No School, No Skateboarding.”

KEY THEMES & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Social Justice – How did the skatepark promote fairness and inclusion?
2. Gender Equality – How did “Girls First” change opportunities for girls in Janwaar?
3. Education – Why was the “No School, No Skateboarding” rule important?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Watch [videos](#) about Janwaar Castle and discuss what lessons can be learned.

Encourage students to dream big, break barriers and roll forward with courage—just like the barefoot skateboarders of Janwaar!



ACTIVITY

Design a skateboard deck that reflects community spirit.

