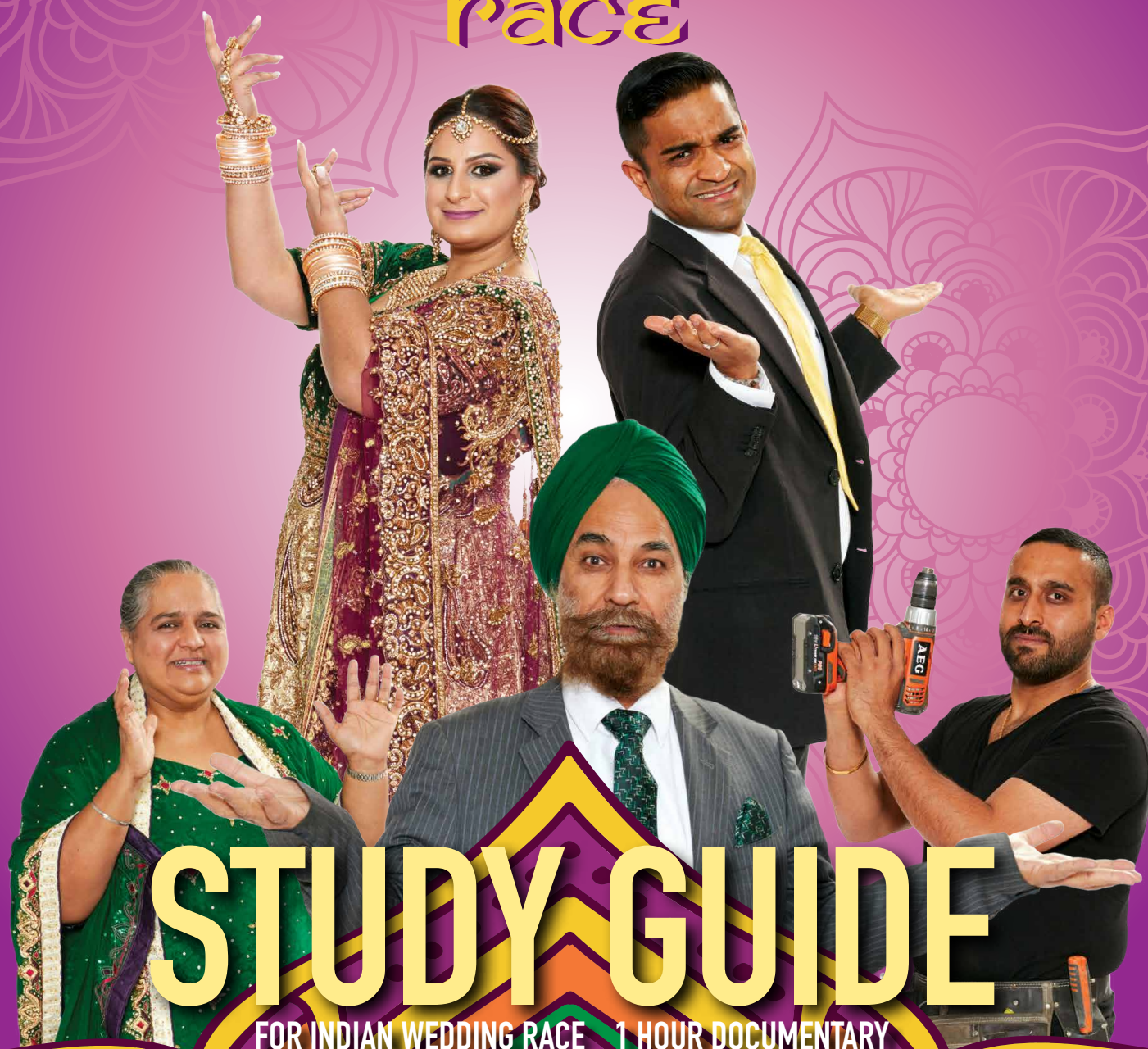


Two Indian Aussies navigate the remarkable world of online dating, astrologers, matchmakers and their traditional parents in a race to be married by 30.

# indian WEDDING race



## STUDY GUIDE

FOR INDIAN WEDDING RACE 1 HOUR DOCUMENTARY

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# Indian WEDDING RACE



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# STUDY GUIDE INDIAN WEDDING RACE

## CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Synopsis
3. Credits
4. The participants
5. Summary of educational suitability
6. Discussion starters
  - a) Before viewing
  - b) Viewing questions
  - c) Responding to the film
7. Classroom Activities
8. Online Resources



## 1. INTRODUCTION

29-year-old Dalvinder and Tarun are each looking for love. Both must balance the wishes of their traditional Indian parents with their own desire for a love-marriage but if they don't get married by 30 they fear they will be seen as damaged goods and bring shame to their families. So each embarks on a frantic journey that takes them through the popular online dating world, to astrologers, matchmakers as well as down the path of arranged marriage. **INDIAN WEDDING RACE** offers unique access to the world of Australia's Indian community as it explores with pathos and humour the pressures young people face as they race to make it to the temple on time.

## 2. SYNOPSIS

Melbourne has by far the largest community of young Indians in Australia. In a decade more than one hundred thousand have arrived to study, find work and, hopefully, start a new life.

But not all are new arrivals. 29-year-old **Dalvinder** grew up in Australia with traditional Sikh parents. She's now under pressure to get married before she turns 30.

*"In the Indian community, when you reach your late 20s, everyone's like 'Oh, when are you getting married? When's your daughter getting married? When's your sister getting married' ... it's like chicken going off."*

In order to please her dad she opens an account with the world's largest matrimonial website, Shaadi.com. After a month of dating suitors that fail to impress, she takes matters into her own hands and looks for a partner on Tinder, the much-maligned phone app with a reputation for fostering one-night-stands. There she meets 29-year-old tradesman **Shamsher** – who is not the sort of man she was looking for at all. In fact he's a traditional Sikh and rather like her own father.

**Tarun** is also 29 and grew up in a middle class Hindu family in India. He's been in Melbourne for 10 years now, and has a good job in finance. But something's missing: He's lonely, and his parents back home are urging him to marry, or he will bring shame on the family.

*"I have to get married. If I do not get married by 30, I will be considered as damaged goods."*

So Tarun embarks on a rollercoaster journey of speed dating, online searches, and even a trip to India in the hope of finding his perfect match. But as his 30th birthday looms, he realises he can't do it alone – he must turn to his dad for help.

For Dalvinder and Tarun, the search for love is fraught with difficulty as they try to balance the expectations and beliefs of their Indian-born parents, who are increasingly at odds with the values of Australia, with their own hopes and dreams. Surprisingly, arranged marriage remains the preference for many young Indians who are now returning to the tried-and-true methods of the past, despite living in a culture obsessed with romantic love. But add the stress of class and caste barriers – and the inevitable fluttering heart – and it's clear the path to 'love and marriage' is not without twists and turns.

**Indian Wedding Race** follows the trials and tribulations of these two young Indians in their search for love. There's sure to be broken hearts and high-drama as each navigates their own path to their dream 'big, fat Indian wedding'.





*Producer Sally Ingleton and Director Sean Cousins filming at Holi Festival*

### 3. CREDITS

#### Producer - Sally Ingleton

Sally Ingleton's company, 360 Degree Films, works across many genres, including wildlife, environment, science, history, arts and people-based stories. Sally has produced more than 40 hours of award winning documentary programming for broadcasters all over the world including the BBC, National Geographic Television, PBS in the US and ABC in Australia. Some of her credits include: THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN FLY, ACID OCEAN, DEVIL ISLAND, PENGUIN ISLAND, SEED HUNTER, TWO MUMS AND A DAD, TIBET: MURDER IN THE SNOW.

#### Director - Sean Cousins

SEAN COUSINS has worked in factual TV and documentary production for 20 years in a wide variety of roles. He has been a series producer, post producer, director, writer and development producer for several production companies and has produced high quality and award winning content for broadcasters such as the ABC, SBS, National Geographic, Animal Planet, Fox 8, Network Ten and others. Sean's recent credits include series producing the ASTRA award winning TONY ROBINSON TIME WALKS and TONY ROBINSON DOWN UNDER for the History Channel.

#### Editor - Tony Stevens

Tony Stevens is one of Australia's most sought-after editors with more than 30 years experience cutting music clips, short films, TV drama, documentary and features.

#### 4. PARTICIPANTS

##### Dalvinder, 29 years old

Dressed in her best sari at the temple, Dalvinder looks as if she has only just arrived from the Punjab. In fact, she grew up in the middle class suburb of Balwyn with her Sikh parents. Like many children of immigrants, she juggles being identified both as an Aussie but also as an Indian. She's dated Aussie blokes and always imagined she'd marry one. But her dad has other ideas. He is urging her to follow tradition and marry a Sikh. Now 29 years old, Dalvinder knows that if she is not married by 30, people will think something is wrong with her. So with the help of her dad she embarks on a modern day journey to find a husband.



##### Tarun, 29 years old

Unlike Dalvinder, Tarun left his family in India and came to Australia alone. He's been living in the outer suburbs of Melbourne for ten years and has a good job at the Commonwealth Bank. But something is missing. He's lonely and feels his life would be complete if he was married. He is succumbing to family pressure and also believes he must be married by 30; otherwise he will be 'damaged goods'. He craves independence, but also his father's approval. He wants to marry for love, but if that fails he's willing to accept an arranged marriage. But who will accept him? A wealthy heiress from India? A woman from a speed dating night? A match from an online date site? Finding 'the one' is not so easy for Tarun. Soon after filming was completed Tarun's Dad found his son a wife. Tarun and Manisha will marry in India, April 2016.



##### Shamsher, 29 years old

Shamsher has lived in Australia for 8 years. His parents are traditional Sikhs and also live in the Punjab. Shamsher works as a tradesman and like many Indian Aussies lives in the new suburbs of Melbourne's West. Also 29 he knows it's time to get married and settle down. He tries the dating apps to see if he can find the girl of his dreams.



## 5. SUMMARY OF EDUCATIONAL SUITABILITY

Level: Most suitable for middle and upper secondary students (Years 10-12) for a cross curriculum study. Could also be adapted for use in Senior Secondary English, Social Studies, and Multicultural studies.

### National Curriculum Learning Areas and Strands:

English: Language/Literature/Literacy

Arts: Media Arts

Humanities and Social Science

Cross-curriculum links: Multiculturalism

## 6. DISCUSSION STARTERS

### 6a. BEFORE VIEWING

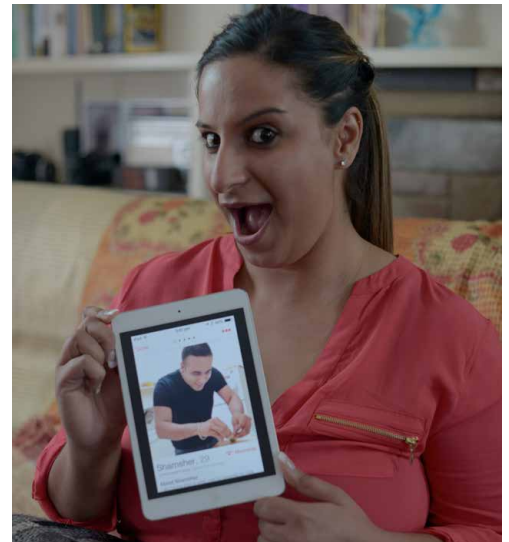
- As a class discuss what you know about Australia's Indian community
- Visit an Indian Temple or Mosque
- Research the subject of traditional Hindu, Sikh and Muslim weddings in India
- Research the subject of arranged marriage in India
- Visit a suburb where there are Indian shops and talk to the shopkeepers about the subject of weddings and marriage





## 6b. VIEWING QUESTIONS

1. What is the topic on everyone's lips?
2. Where did Dalvinder grow up?
3. Where are Dalvinder's parents from and what religion do they follow?
4. How long has Tarun been living in Australia?
5. Where does he live and what type of job does he do?
6. What qualities is Tarun looking for in a wife?
7. What type of man is Dalvinder determined not to marry?
8. What does Dalvinder's dad suggest she does to find a husband?
9. What is shaadi.com?
10. What does a turban symbolise for Sikh people?
11. What type of son-in-law does Dalvinder's dad want?
12. Where does Tarun first look to find a partner?
13. When Dalvinder's 30 days is up on shaadi.com what does she do next?
14. What is the major hurdle for Tarun with the profiles on shaadi.com?
15. What is Shamsheer's occupation?
16. What is the best thing Dalvinder's Mum sees in Shamsheer?
17. What does Dalvinder's Dad think of Shamsheer?
18. When Tarun has no luck on the dating sites whom does he go and see?
19. Who does Tarun ask for help in finding a wife?
20. Where does Shamsheer propose to Dalvinder?
21. How long does Dalvinder have to plan her wedding?
22. Why do Dalvinder and Tarun go to India?
23. What is wrong with the wedding stationary?
24. What does Tarun's dad offer him to stay in India?
25. Why does Pooja reject Tarun?
26. Name 3 things that happen at Punjabi weddings.
27. What is the symbolism of the Jaago night?
28. Why is Dalvinder's dad upset at her wedding?
29. Why is Dalvinder upset at her own wedding?
30. What does Tarun decide at the end of the film?





## 6c. RESPONDING TO THE FILM

### Individual

1. Dalvinder says: *In the Indian community, when you reach your late 20s, everyone's sort of like 'Oh, when are you getting married? When's your daughter getting married? When's your sister getting married?' you know, it's like ... chicken going off.*

Describe your own family's attitude to marriage.

2. *Most Indian kids will tell you this, parents just can't contain themselves. Like they just want to play cupid.* DALVINDER

*I have to get married. If I do not get married by 30, I will be considered as damaged goods.* TARUN

What about your own parents. Ask them what type of boy or girl they would like you to meet and marry? Does it matter to them if you get married? Ask them for a list of qualities they would like to see in your future husband or wife.

3. After Dalvinder's argument with the Indian shopkeeper she says:

*I grew up in Australia and people will ask me 'where are you from' and I'll say 'I'm from Australia' and they'll be like, 'No, like, your background, like where are you from?' So I'm like, 'I'm Indian', and then I come to India and everybody asks me the exact same thing like, 'where are you from?' And I think that's the most hurtful for me is that I kind of don't belong there, but then I don't belong here.*

Write about our own background. Where were your parents and grandparents born? Do you identify with another culture or do you see yourself as Australian? What does it mean to you to be an Australian?

4. *She has to be honest. She has to be beautiful. She has to be progressive and she has to love me back!* TARUN

Write a list of the attributes you would ideally value in a partner.

*it's like ...  
chicken  
going off  
they just  
want to  
play cupid  
I kind of  
don't belong  
there, but  
then I don't  
belong  
here If I  
do not get  
married by  
30, I will be  
considered  
as damaged  
goods She  
has to be  
beautiful*

## 7. CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Divide the class into teams and explore the subject of Indian Marriage in both India and Australia.

Here are some topics:

1. Investigate what online dating sites are popular with Indian Australians. Describe some of the profiles.
2. Find 3 people who are getting an arranged marriage and write a story about their experience.
3. Where do Indians get married in Australia? Who organises them? What rituals happen?
4. Find the local Indian community newspaper (e.g. Indo Times) and interview the editor about their matrimonial advertising. Select 5 ads and contact the people who have placed the ads and write up their stories.
5. Visit Punjabi community Radio Haanji or similar community radio stations, which have Indian programs and conduct a talkback on Indian Marriage.
6. Write an essay on Melbourne's young Indian community and their choices when it comes to finding love and marriage.
7. Explore the subject of love and marriage in other cultures with each team taking a different culture e.g. Iranian, Somali, Vietnamese, Chinese. How do these different cultures compare when it comes to beliefs around love and marriage?

## 8. ONLINE RESOURCES

### Web Links

[www.shaadi.com](http://www.shaadi.com)-Indian dating website

[www.indotimes.com.au](http://www.indotimes.com.au)-First Punjabi newspaper in Australia. Has matrimonial ads.

[www.haanji.com.au](http://www.haanji.com.au) -Radio Haanji. Hindi-Punjabi community Radio Station Melbourne 1674AM.