Asian and South Asian Heritage Month celebrates people from more than 30 countries worldwide.
The history of South Asian Heritage Month in Canada and Asian Heritage Month in Ontario is a recent one.

South Asian Heritage Month was proclaimed by the Government of Canada with the passage of the South Asian Heritage Act, 2001. May 5 was designated as South Asian Arrival Day, commemorating the first arrivals from the Indian subcontinent to the Americas on May 5, 1838. On May 18, 2016 Prime Justin Trudeau will offer an apology, 102 years after the Komogata Maru incident whereby the government of the day turned away more than 300 South Asians seeking a better life in Canada.

On September 22, 1988, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney announced a redress and apologized to Japanese Canadians for injustices committed against this community during the Second World War. In 2002, the Government of Canada and the City of Toronto both declared May as Asian Heritage Month. In June 2005, the Government of Ontario passed the Asian Heritage Act, 2005 proclaiming the month of May as Asian Heritage Month and further recognizing and paying tribute to the role of Asian Canadians in the development of the province. On June 22, 2006, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced a redress and apologized to the Chinese Canadian community for the Chinese Head Tax and continual discriminatory practices that severely restricted immigration from China to Canada between 1923 and 1947.

Citizens of the Asian and South Asian diaspora include generations of newcomers and Canadian-born citizens who have contributed to Canada and the world in the arts, athletics, education, law and order, politics, science and technology and more.

Teachers may begin to introduce the concept of Asian and South Asian Heritage Month by discussing the geography of the diverse nations involved from all around the world. By delving deeper into the nuances of each country’s geopolitical history, students may better understand the massive migration by families and individuals from these countries seeking opportunities and a better life. By embedding the history of Asian and South Asian Canadian ancestry into the curriculum, teachers can make a connection to this group’s current role and ongoing contributions to the development of Canada.

On the following pages educators will find curriculum connections, websites and resources as well as a list of Asian and South Asian publications to support classroom practice.
Around the World provides information on Asian and South Asian countries, with links to “A day in the life”, historical timelines, sightseeing guides and much more

http://www.timeforkids.com/destination/indonesia
http://www.timeforkids.com/destination/thailand
http://www.timeforkids.com/destination/vietnam

Critical Thinking Consortium provides guided lesson plans under the Pivotal Voices section for Ukrainian, Chinese and South Asian Canadians

https://tc2.ca/pv.php
https://tc2.ca/uploads/PDFs/Thinking%20about%20history/Reference_guide_thinking_historically.pdf

Government of Canada provides teacher resources for Asian and South Asian Heritage Month

http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/multiculturalism/komagatamaru/

Komagata Maru Continuing Journey provides lesson plans for intermediate and senior students on the history of Sikh Canadians

http://komagatamarujourney.ca/lesson_plans
http://komagatamaru100.com/

National Geographic provides historical, cultural and geographical information on several Asian and South Asian countries

http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/places/find/laos/
http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/places/find/philippines/
http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/places/find/thailand/
http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/places/find/vietnam/

South Asian Music and Culture in Canada provides lesson plans for primary, junior and intermediate students

http://swar.tapor.ualberta.ca/SAMC/learn.html#
Asians in Canada provides a historical timeline of the Asian diaspora and information on the historical and current realities of Asian/South Asian Canadians

http://asia-canada.ca/changing-perspectives-0
http://asia-canada.ca/timeline/1900-2000

Canadian Council for Refugees provides information on 100 years of immigration to Canada from 1900 to 1999


History of Metropolitan Vancouver provides in-depth resources on the history of Sikh Canadians in British Columbia

http://www.vancouverhistory.ca/archives_komagatamaru.htm

Manitoba Education, under the theme of “Diversity Education Asian Heritage” provides an extensive list of links and resources from Canada and the United States


National Film Board, under the theme of “Canada: A welcoming land?” provides short films about the lives of Asian and South Asian Canadians


Scattering of Seeds: The Creation of Canada provides a historical context for the immigration of South Asian Canadians to Canada

http://www.whitepinepictures.com/seeds/i/10/sidebar.html

Sikh Heritage Museum provides a historical context for the contributions of Sikh Canadians

www.shmc.ca

(USA) Anti-Defamation League provides a list of excellent books on bias, diversity and social justice for classroom use

Asian Canadian Publications provides a list of books by Asian authors under several headings (fiction, non-fiction, poetry, anthologies/periodicals)

http://www.asian.ca/books/booklist.htm

Bharat Babies provides a resource for children’s books about Indian culture

https://bharatbabies.com/collections/childrens-books

Canadian Children’s Book Centre provides an extensive list of books by Asian and South Asian authors

https://bookcentre.ca/newsletter_may2014/

International Children’s Library provides dual language books from around the world

http://en.childrenslibrary.org/

Library and Archives Canada provides a list of diverse Canadian children’s authors

http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/read-up-on-it/015020-033000-e.html

Masala Mommas provides a selection of South Asian children’s books

http://masalamommas.com/2015/12/22/15-south-asian-kids-books-we-love/

For more information contact Kalpana Makan, at the ETFO provincial office, kmakan@etfo.org or 416-962-3836 extension 2245.