

My City  
My Heritage My  
Srinagar



# Explorers' Book

Activity Book  
for Children



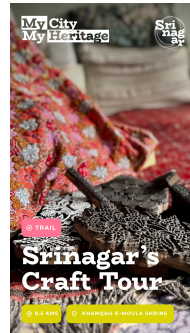
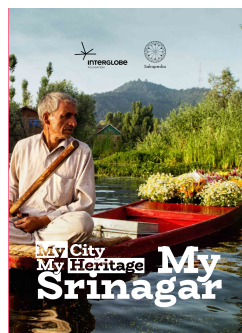
Blessed with fascinating architecture, scenic panoramas, and intricate handicraft traditions, Srinagar is the cultural epicentre of the Kashmir valley. As a crossroads between Central Asia, Ladakh, and the rest of the subcontinent, Srinagar has imbibed influences from all these regions. From weaving and embroidery to **papier-mâché** art and woodwork, the city is a cradle for diverse and peculiar craft traditions, earning it a tag from UNESCO as a Creative City for Crafts and Folk Arts.

But there's so much more to Srinagar, in its unique wooden mosques, local bakeries, and floating markets—to name just a few! This activity book will try to walk you through the landscape of the city through interesting quizzes, puzzles, and illustrations. Think of these less as a test of your knowledge, but more as a tour of the city from a distance. And whether you're a crafts enthusiast, architect, or history buff, Srinagar—and the book—has something for everyone!

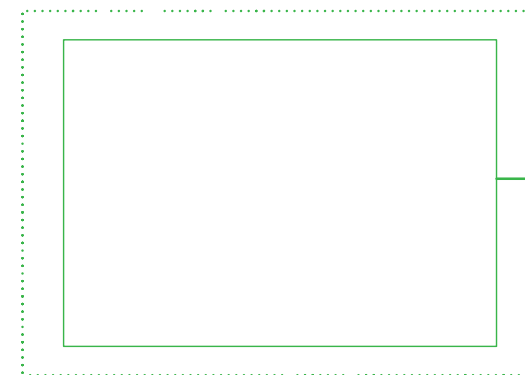


#### Discover More:

Learn about Srinagar with curated articles, numerous recommendations with the **MCMH My Srinagar Booklet** and **2 heritage trails** on [www.sahapedia.org/my-city-my-heritage/celebrating-srinagar](http://www.sahapedia.org/my-city-my-heritage/celebrating-srinagar)



\* **papier-mâché** |  
pay•puh•muh•shay  
A French term that  
literally means “chewed paper”



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# Srinagar Through Time

Srinagar's rich and vibrant past continues to colour its present. So, here is an exercise for the history buffs! Listed here are some important events in its history, but the years are all wrong. Your task is to match the event to the correct year, forming an accurate timeline. The first one gets you off to an easy start (surely there were no Prime Ministers more than two millennia ago!), but other options are trickier. Let's see if you can look beyond your years!

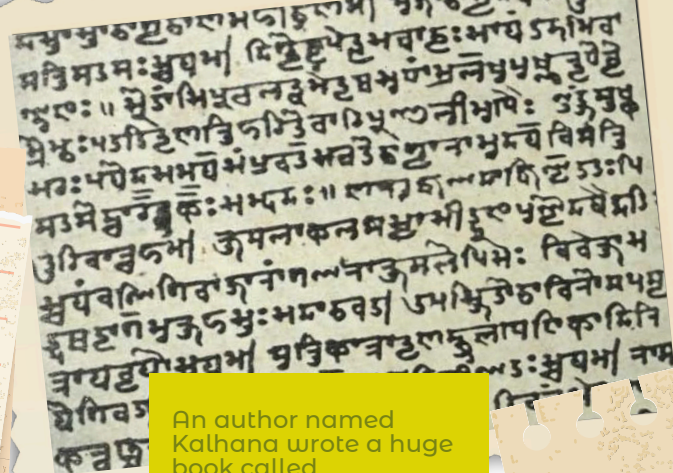






During the Dogra rule, many British visitors came to Srinagar. They couldn't buy land, so they built fancy floating homes on the lakes – these are the famous Houseboats we see today!

The Delhi Agreement is signed between Prime Minister Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah, granting autonomy to Jammu and Kashmir.



An author named Kalhana wrote a huge book called Rajatarangini (River of Kings). It tells us about all the old kings and queens of Kashmir, including Srinagar!

Mughal Emperor Akbar expanded his empire that brought Kashmir, and Srinagar, into the Mughal Empire.



The Treaty of Amritsar grants Maharaja Gulab Singh control over Jammu and Kashmir, marking the beginning of Dogra rule.

1150

1200

1300

1400

1500

1586

1600

1623

1699

1700

1753

1846

1800

1860

1900

1952

1947

2019

The moi mubarak (sacred hair) of Prophet Muhammad is enshrined at Hazratbal.

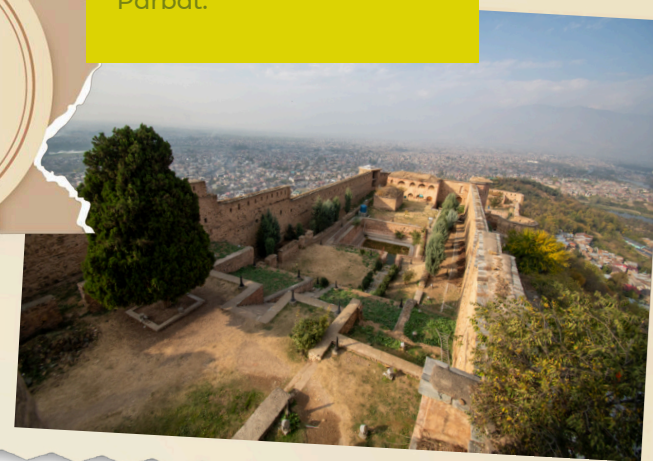


Queen Nur Jahan (Emperor Jahangir's wife) had a special mosque built entirely of stone, which is very unique in Kashmir. It's called Pathar Masjid!

The Government of India revoked Jammu and Kashmir's special status under Article 370, reorganizing it into two union territories.

Maharaja Hari Singh signs the Instrument of Accession, leading to Jammu and Kashmir becoming part of India.

From this year, Kashmir comes under the rule of Afghans for a period of about seven decades, during which they build the surviving fort atop Hari Parbat.



Match the events to the correct years.



The background is a solid light yellow. It features several large, stylized floral motifs in a darker yellow shade. These include a large flower in the upper right, a large flower in the lower right, and a large flower in the middle right. A small five-pointed star is positioned near the top right flower, and another is near the bottom right flower. A thick, dark yellow wavy line runs vertically down the left side of the page. A large, dark yellow crescent moon is located in the upper right corner.

# Srinagar Trivia

Srinagar's history, from the days of the Karkotas to the Mughals, down to more recent Sikh and British rule, has shaped its present. Pagoda-esque mosques, sophisticated handicrafts, unique foods, and everyday practices shaped by the Dal lake populate the entire city. Here's a quiz that gives you a glimpse of all that Srinagar has to offer.

The questions range from easy to somewhat tricky. But don't sweat it even if you don't get something right! The point is to showcase and imbibe as much information as you can.

# Heritage Quiz

## Easy

1. Srinagar is located in which valley?
  - a. Spiti Valley
  - b. Kashmir Valley
  - c. Kangra Valley
  - d. Kullu Valley
2. What is the name of the famous lake in Srinagar?
  - a. Wular Lake
  - b. Dal Lake
  - c. Mansar Lake
  - d. Suraj Tal
3. What kind of boats are used on Dal Lake?
  - a. Gondolas
  - b. Shikaras
  - c. Yachts
  - d. Ferries
4. What is the name of the river that flows through Srinagar?
  - a. Indus
  - b. Jhelum
  - c. Sutlej
  - d. Ravi
5. What is the name of the gardens that are famous in Srinagar?
  - a. Mughal Gardens
  - b. Rose Gardens
  - c. Tulip Gardens
  - d. Botanical Gardens
6. What is the name of the famous mosque built by Sultan Sikandar?
  - a. Pathar Mosque
  - b. Jama Masjid
  - c. Aali Masjid
  - d. Hazratbal
7. What is the term for the overhanging enclosed balconies in Kashmiri architecture?
  - a. Khatamband
  - b. Pinjrakari

- c. Zoon Daeb
- d. Dhajji Dewari

8. Which mountains surround Dal Lake?
  - a. Vindhyas
  - b. Zabarwan
  - c. Karakoram
  - d. Aravalli

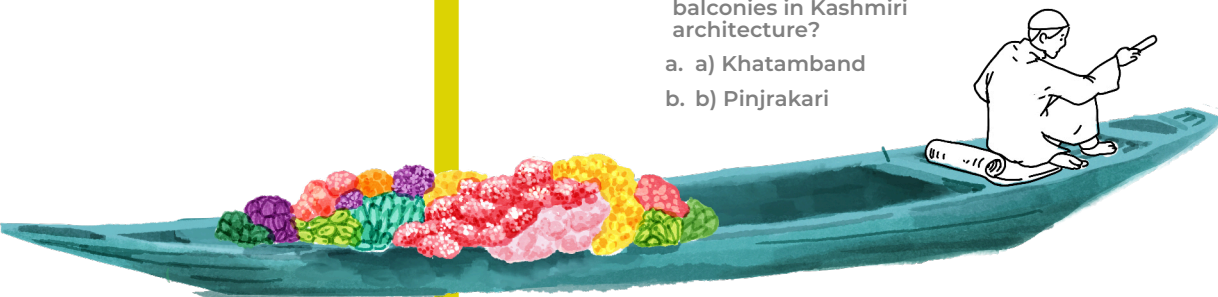
## Intermediate

9. What is the old name of Dal Lake, as mentioned in *Rajatarangini*?
  - a. Mahasarit
  - b. Vitasta
  - c. Jhelum
  - d. Pandrethan
10. Which archaeological site near Srinagar is known for **Neolithic** settlements?
  - a. Harwan
  - b. Burzahom
  - c. Parihaspora
  - d. Avantipora
11. What is the name of the fort built by an Afghan governor on Hari Parbat hill?
  - a. Shergarhi
  - b. Bahu Fort
  - c. Hari Parbat Fort
  - d. Mubarak Mandi



- a. Shergarhi
  - b. Bahu Fort
  - c. Hari Parbat Fort
  - d. Mubarak Mandi
12. What is the name of the Mughal historian who documented several gardens in *Badshahnama*?
    - a. Abul Fazl
    - b. Abdul Hamid Lahori
    - c. M.A. Stein
    - d. Francois Bernier
  13. What is 'papier-mâché'?
    - a. A type of fabric
    - b. A type of wood carving
    - c. A decorative paper craft
    - d. A style of painting
  14. Which craft was patronized by Zain-ul-Abidin?
    - a. Glass blowing
    - b. Stone cutting
    - c. Shawl and carpet weaving
    - d. Metalwork
  15. What is the name of the Sufi shrine dedicated to Hazrat Sheikh Hamza Makhdoom?
    - a. Khanqah-e-Moula
    - b. Makhdoom Sahib
    - c. Jama Masjid
    - d. Hazratbal
  16. What is the name of the fort that Akbar built around Hari Parbat?
    - a. Shergarhi
    - b. Naagar Nagar
    - c. Bahu Fort
    - d. Mubarak Mandi

✳ **Neolithic** |  
nee•yo•lith•ik  
Refers to the later  
part of the Stone Age,  
when polished stone  
tools and weapons  
prevailed





# Heritage Quiz

## Difficult

17. Which Chinese traveler mentioned two capitals of Kashmir in his writings?
  - a. a) Fa-Hien
  - b. b) Xuanzang (Hiuen Tsang)
  - c. c) Marco Polo
  - d. d) Ibn Battuta
18. What year was Kashmir annexed to the Mughal Empire?
  - a. a) 1556
  - b. b) 1586
  - c. c) 1605
  - d. d) 1658
19. Who established Parihaspora, an alternative capital of Kashmir?
  - a. a) Ashoka
  - b. b) Lalitaditya Muktapida
  - c. c) Zain-ul-Abidin
  - d. d) Pravarasena II
20. What is the name of the ancient Buddhist and brahmanical centre now known as Pandrethan?
  - a. a) Pravarapura
  - b. b) Srinagari
  - c. c) Puranadhisthana
  - d. d) Jushkapura
21. Which treaty led to the establishment of Dogra rule in Kashmir?
  - a. a) Treaty of Lahore
  - b. b) Treaty of Amritsar
  - c. c) Treaty of Rawalpindi
  - d. d) Treaty of Yandabo
22. The saffron fields near Srinagar are often located:
  - a. a) Near the lakes
  - b. b) On higher plateaus
  - c. c) In the city center
  - d. d) Near the rivers
23. What is the name of the garden on the banks of Anchar Lake sponsored by Dara or Jahanara for Mulla Shah?
  - a. a) Shalimar
  - b. b) Nishat
  - c. c) Mulla Shah Bagh
  - d. d) Chashma Shahi
24. Which museum was established in the Maharaja's summer guest house?
  - a. a) Crafts Museum
  - b. b) Kashmir Government Arts Emporium
  - c. c) Sri Pratap Singh Museum
  - d. d) Heritage Museum, Kashmir University
25. The Lal Ded Cultural Centre & Gallery is located in a restored:
  - a. a) Mosque
  - b. b) Colonial-era building
  - c. c) Palace
  - d. d) Factory

\* plateau | play•toh  
Refers to a geographic feature of elevated flatland—almost like a wide mountain with its top half removed!



# Capturing Pari Mahal

## Create Your Own Nature Postcard!

Perched above the shimmering Dal Lake, Pari Mahal, or 'The Palace of Fairies,' is a seven-terraced garden built in the Mughal era. Once a library and a place of learning, it is now a quiet and dreamy place that overlooks the whole city. Imagine wandering through its ancient arches, climbing the terrace steps, and feeling like you're standing at the edge of the sky!

### Your Task:

1. **Draw Your Scene:** On the blank side of the postcard, create a vivid illustration of your favourite view or moment at Pari Mahal. Look at the arches, the gardens, the mountains, and the lake far below — what catches your eye?
2. **Describe Your Experience:** On the lined side of the postcard, write a short message about your visit. What did you see and hear? How did it feel to stand where scholars once studied the stars?.





## Hints for Your Postcards

### The Structure and Gardens:

- Draw the Mughal arches with their delicate curves and shadows.
- Show the garden terraces with bright flowers, trimmed hedges, and steps between each level.
- Add stone walls with small windows and old charm.

### Scenery from the Top:

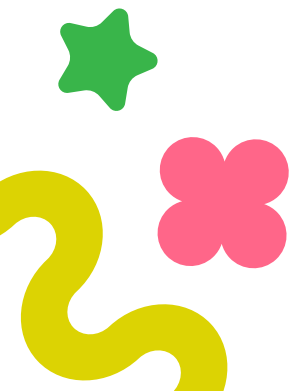
- Sketch the view of Dal Lake, with little shikaras gliding across it.
- Show the sun setting over the distant Zabarwan Hills or the snowy Himalayas.
- Include birds soaring in the sky or clouds drifting past the mountain peaks.

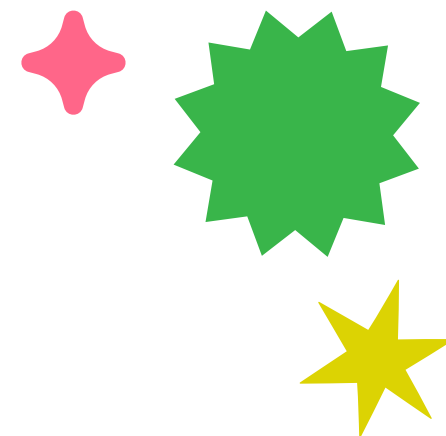
### Magical Moments:

- Imagine seeing a rainbow or spotting a bird of prey flying high.
- Think about what the place might look like in moonlight — can you draw a fairy tale version?

**Draw in the inner box and cut along the dotted line.**

The image shows two identical rectangular templates for drawing postcards. Each template consists of a large white rectangle with a solid black border. This rectangle is centered within a larger white area, which is itself enclosed by a dotted black line. This layout is intended to guide the user in drawing the postcard scene within the solid border and then cutting it out along the dotted line.





### Don't forget to include...

- Where is it? (Example: Pari Mahal, Overlooking Dal Lake, Srinagar)
- Subject of your illustration! What do you see? Describe what you see, hear and feel.
- Message (Why do you love this place? What makes it special and why would you like to share it with someone else?)

**Cut along the dotted lines and carefully paste the backs of the two sides together to create the final postcard.**

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# Srinagar Mapped

Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, has for centuries been a confluence of cultural traditions, architectural marvels, and natural beauty. From the carved wooden mosques to Mughal gardens and colonial churches, the city's landscape tells layered stories of kings, saints, artisans, and empires.

In this activity, we will use a map to trace Srinagar's key heritage sites—those that reflect the city's historic evolution and the diversity of its cultural identity.

Through this mapping activity, we will uncover the region's historical depth, exploring its built heritage and sites that have stood the test of time.

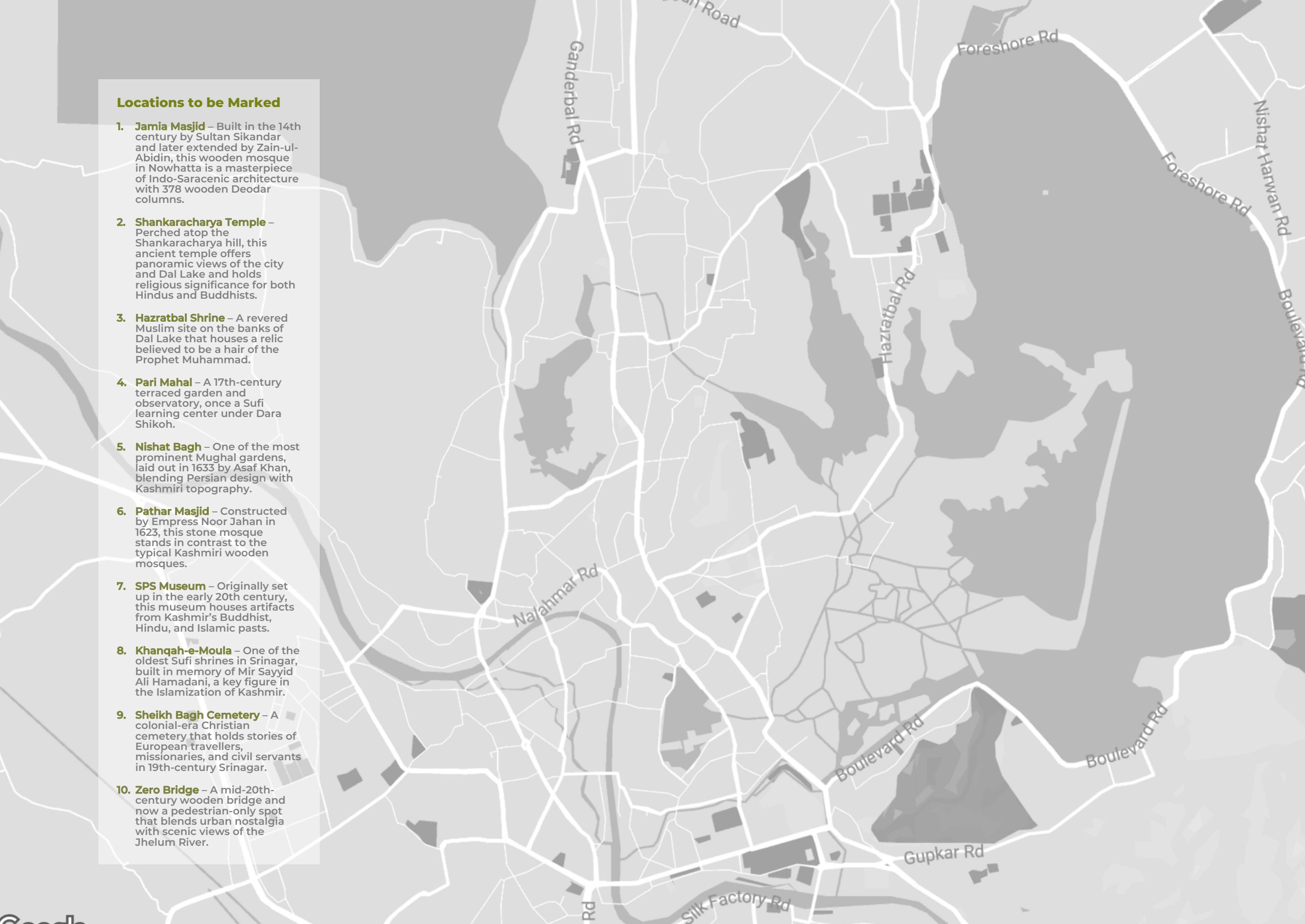
## Instructions

- Look at the list of historic locations provided.
- Match each location with its correct spot on the map.
- Draw a small icon or sketch to represent the landmark (e.g., a chinar leaf for Nishat Bagh or a minaret for Jamia Masjid).



### Locations to be Marked

1. **Jamia Masjid** – Built in the 14th century by Sultan Sikandar and later extended by Zain-ul-Abidin, this wooden mosque in Nowhatta is a masterpiece of Indo-Saracenic architecture with 378 wooden Deodar columns.
2. **Shankaracharya Temple** – Perched atop the Shankaracharya hill, this ancient temple offers panoramic views of the city and Dal Lake and holds religious significance for both Hindus and Buddhists.
3. **Hazratbal Shrine** – A revered Muslim site on the banks of Dal Lake that houses a relic believed to be a hair of the Prophet Muhammad.
4. **Pari Mahal** – A 17th-century terraced garden and observatory, once a Sufi learning center under Dara Shikoh.
5. **Nishat Bagh** – One of the most prominent Mughal gardens, laid out in 1633 by Asaf Khan, blending Persian design with Kashmiri topography.
6. **Pathar Masjid** – Constructed by Empress Noor Jahan in 1623, this stone mosque stands in contrast to the typical Kashmiri wooden mosques.
7. **SPS Museum** – Originally set up in the early 20th century, this museum houses artifacts from Kashmir's Buddhist, Hindu, and Islamic pasts.
8. **Khanqah-e-Moula** – One of the oldest Sufi shrines in Srinagar, built in memory of Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani, a key figure in the Islamization of Kashmir.
9. **Sheikh Bagh Cemetery** – A colonial-era Christian cemetery that holds stories of European travellers, missionaries, and civil servants in 19th-century Srinagar.
10. **Zero Bridge** – A mid-20th-century wooden bridge and now a pedestrian-only spot that blends urban nostalgia with scenic views of the Jhelum River.





[illegible]

# Character Sketches From The Past

Srinagar—nestled in the Kashmir Valley and framed by the Jhelum River—has been a confluence of cultures, rulers, poets, saints, and artisans. Its wooden houses, gardens, and shrines echo with the voices of those who shaped its history. Step into the past and give voice to one of these characters through your imagination.

## Your Task:

1. Choose a Character: Pick one of the figures below or create your own.
2. Describe Them: Who are they? What do they do? What era do they belong to?
3. Write in First-Person: Let them tell their own story in their own voice.
4. Draw or Imagine Their World: What do they see around them? What do they wear? What are they thinking?

✱ **chinar | chi•naar**  
A deciduous tree known for its maple-like leaves and bright autumn foliage, it is one of the elements that defines Kashmir's landscape—and art

## Character Sketch Examples

### The City's Dreamer-King (15th Century)

*"I, Zain-ul-Abidin, was called Budshah by my people. I brought back artisans from exile, encouraged Sanskrit scholars and Persian poets alike. I built bridges, dug lakes, and tried to erase the scars of war. I dreamt of a Kashmir that could hold many truths, many faiths. My soul rests by the banks of the Jhelum. Will my city still remember the king who tried to heal it?"*

### A Papier-Mâché Artisan (18th–19th Century)

*"With fingers stained in color and glue, I trace delicate vines on papier-mâché bowls. The naqashi patterns have been passed down in our family. My grandfather painted Qur'anic verses on shrine ceilings; now, I paint birds and blossoms for faraway markets. The Dal is freezing over, but I sit by the window, brush in hand, dreaming of spring flowers and old stories."*

### A Poet of the Mystic Courts (16th–17th Century)

*"I write in Persian, and I speak in Kashmiri. My ghazals are soaked in longing—for the beloved, for truth, for union with the divine. I once sat with Habba Khatoon under a chinar tree as she sang of a lost king. Even in exile, her voice remained fire. Can poetry soften the violence of kings?"*

### A Boatwoman on the Jhelum (Early 20th Century)

*"They call my boat a 'doonga.' I call it home. I ferry vegetables and gossip, sometimes even lovers across the Jhelum. The British memsahibs sketch my children and say we live like gypsies. But I know every bend of this river, every whisper in the mist. My feet never touched dry land for a week last monsoon. But this river—it carries my story."*

### A Wood Carver from Safa Kadal (19th Century)

*"Give me a walnut log, and I'll give you paradise. My chisel dances over wood, carving gardens of Eden into ceilings and khatamband panels. A merchant from Amritsar once said our ceilings look like they float. The work is slow, but the soul rests in each curve. My only fear? That no one may care for the craft when my hands still."*



## Your Turn!

If you could step into the past, who would you be? Would you be a warrior? An artist? A ruler? A traveler?

Name:

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Time Period:

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Description:

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Story:

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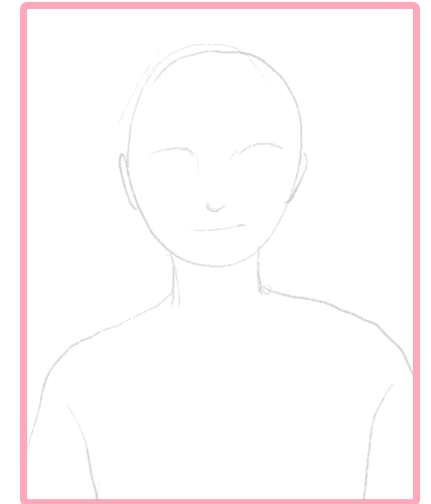
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## Draw their Portrait

What does your character look like? Use this base sketch to give your character the features, attire, and expression you visualise.



**Draw their world:**



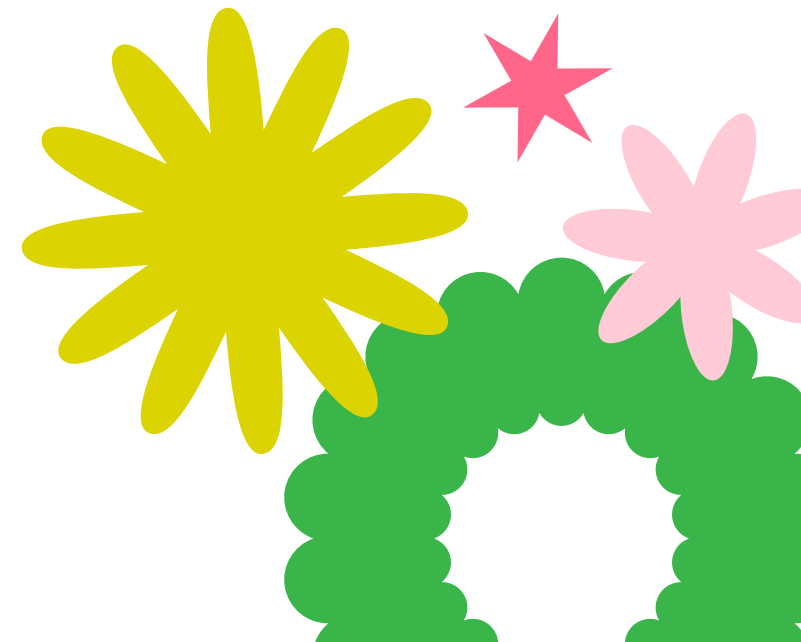
# Answers

## A. SRINAGAR THROUGH TIME

1. 1150 – An author named Kalhana wrote a huge book called Rajatarangini (River of Kings). It tells us about all the old kings and queens of Kashmir, including Srinagar!
2. 1586 – Mughal Emperor Akbar annexed Kashmir, incorporating Srinagar into the Mughal Empire.
3. 1623 – Queen Nur Jahan (Emperor Jahangir's wife) had a special mosque built entirely of stone, which is very unique in Kashmir. It's called Pathar Masjid!
4. 1699 – The moi mubarak (sacred hair) of Prophet Muhammad is enshrined at Hazratbal.
5. 1753 – From this year, Kashmir comes under the rule of Afghans for a period of about seven decades, during which they build the surviving fort atop Hari Parbat.
6. 1846 – The Treaty of Amritsar grants Maharaja Gulab Singh control over Jammu and Kashmir, marking the beginning of Dogra rule.
7. 1860 – During the Dogra rule, many British visitors came to Srinagar. They couldn't buy land, so they built fancy floating homes on the lakes – these are the famous Houseboats we see today!
8. 1947 – Maharaja Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession, leading to Jammu and Kashmir becoming part of India.
9. 1952 – The Delhi Agreement was signed between Prime Minister Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah, granting autonomy to Jammu and Kashmir.
10. 2019 – The Government of India revoked Jammu and Kashmir's special status under Article 370, reorganizing it into two union territories.

## B. HERITAGE QUIZ

1. b) Kashmir Valley
2. b) Dal Lake
3. b) Shikaras
4. b) Jhelum
5. a) Mughal Gardens
6. b) Jama Masjid
7. c) Zoon Daeb
8. b) Zabbarwan
9. a) Mahasarit
10. b) Burzahom
11. c) Hari Parbat Fort
12. b) Abdul Hamid Lahori
13. c) A decorative paper craft
14. c) Shawl and carpet weaving
15. b) Makhdoom Sahib
16. b) Naagar Nagar
17. b) Xuanzang (Hiuen Tsang)
18. b) 1586
19. b) Lalitaditya Muktapida
20. c) Puranadhisthana
21. b) Treaty of Amritsar
22. b) On higher plateaus
23. c) Mulla Shah Bagh
24. c) Sri Pratap Singh Museum
25. b) Colonial-era building



# stickers

