



RICK RIORDAN PRESENTS

Aru Shah

AND THE END OF TIME

This guide is aligned with the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards (CCR) for Literature, Writing, Language, and Speaking and Listening. The broad CCR standards are the foundation for the grade level–specific Common Core State Standards.

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

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PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

As the pantheon of Hindu mythology and lore may not be as familiar to students as Greek, Roman, Norse, or Egyptian mythology, consider building background information using the following activity.

FOR STUDENTS: To build a foundation for understanding *Aru Shah and the End of Time*, work independently or with a small group to create a “Who’s Who in Hindu Mythology” exhibit. Using the Internet and library resources, create a “biography” of the mythological figures that includes the following:

- Physical description.
- Relationship to other important Hindu characters.
- Explanation of any significant connections to other mythological figures.
- Any other important information (such as special abilities or powers).

You or your team should prepare a digital exhibit with a poster or slide show designed to inform others about the Hindu mythological figures as a means of creating background knowledge for reading of *Aru Shah and the End of Time*.

POST READING ACTIVITIES

1. In *Aru Shah and the End of Time*, the only way to stop the Sleeper is to find the reincarnations of the five legendary Pandava brothers, protagonists of the Hindu epic poem the *Mahabharata*. Using library resources, databases, and the Internet, learn more about the epic poem the *Mahabharata* and the role each of the five brothers play in the story. Use a digital presentation tool of choice to share what is learned.
2. The *Ramayana*, written by the sage of learning, Valmiki, is the other celebrated ancient Indian poem well known throughout the world. Using a variety of research tools, dig deeply to discover more about this epic story. Afterward, gather with classmates to critically discuss what you discovered, being sure to focus on what you learned, what you found most interesting, what surprised you, etc.

3. In the novel *Aru Shah and the End of Time*, the Museum of Ancient Indian Art and Culture is the setting for much of the action, but currently, no such museum exists in Atlanta; rather, one of the largest collections of Ancient Indian and Hindu art is held in the collection at the city’s Metropolitan Museum of Art. Research the collection at the Met to discover the following:

- When was the Indian and Hindu collection established?
- What types of pieces are housed there?
- In your opinion, what did you find most interesting about the collection holdings?
- What were your particular favorite pieces?

Select a favorite piece and become an “expert” on this particular artifact, being able to share specific information about it with others and explain why you personally find it interesting.

4. While dealing with Shukra while crossing the Bridge of Forgetting, Aru considers the idea of karma, the idea that “what goes around comes around.” Consider this concept—do you agree with it? Why or why not? Research this concept to discover more, and draft a journal entry reflecting on whether your ideas have changed based upon further thought and investigation.
5. Many of the fearsome and fascinating mythical creatures that color Hindu mythology appear in *Aru Shah and the End of Time*. Using library and Internet resources, select a specific creature that intrigued you while reading and conduct additional research to share with peers.
6. In *Aru Shah and the End of Time*, readers witness Aru and Mini mature and grow throughout the course of the novel, and even Boo changes due to his relationship with the duo. Based on your observations, which character do you believe demonstrates the greatest growth? Compose a short persuasive essay explaining your position. While considering your selected character’s experiences, use textual evidence from the novel to provide specific examples to support your case.

7. As Aru and Mini return to the palace, they discover that it has been hurt by their absence. Have you ever moved or left a favorite place behind? While that transition might have been difficult for you, have you ever imagined that the place you left might have missed you back? Write a letter to yourself detailing those memories from the point of view of your left-behind place (this could be a previous home or school, or just a location your younger self loved to frequent).
8. Though the stories of the major players in *Aru Shah and the End of Time* have been passed down to us from Hindu mythology, if these characters lived in our time, they would likely use the same social media that is popular in our world today. Working in a small group, select a Hindu god or goddess of your choice and create a faux Instagram account or Facebook page for that character, being sure to complete all the pertinent information, like education, relationships, groups to follow, pages to like, as well as 2–3 status updates with #hashtags.

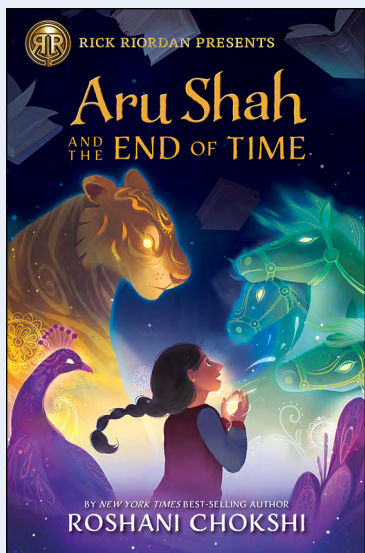
Key Ideas and Details R.L.6.2.; Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration S.L.6.1., 6.2., 6.3. Key Ideas and Details and Common Core Standard Writing: Research to Build and Present Knowledge W.6.4 and Writing: Research to Build and Present Knowledge W.7.4.

Q & A WITH ROSHANI CHOKSHI

- Q: *Aru Shah and the End of Time* is the first installment of Rick Riordan Presents. What has your experience been like getting to work with a mythology expert and reader favorite like Rick Riordan?
- A: It's been awesome! But also . . . terrifying! When I first got his notes back on *Aru*, I wanted to dieeeeeee. Rick left, I kid you not, like a thousand comments. As it turned out, many of them were “lol,” which was great. And the rest of them were exactly the kind of guidance you expect from a teacher, one that lets you find your own path through the thicket.

- Q: You've shared in other interviews that *Aru Shah and the End of Time* is a story of sisterhood; can you explain that vision and why you find that particularly important?
- A: I'm very close to my siblings, my brother and sister, and I wanted to celebrate sibling relationships as well as female friendships. I've kept my best friends since childhood, and I always used to write stories where we were the protagonists of bizarre adventures to fairyland. With *Aru*, I wanted young girls to see that they are just as deserving of magic.
- Q: For readers discovering Aru and Mini, can you share a bit about how these characters are similar to you?
- A: Oh boy. Well, Aru is a lot like me in middle school. I was a notorious liar, with an active imagination and no outlet for that. Mini is every bit of my anxious/neurotic self, ha-ha. But I think the most important trait that both girls have from me is desperately wanting a sense of connection. I was very lucky to find that with my friends and family, and I wanted them to find that, too.
- Q: What's been the most exciting part of being able to bring *Aru Shah and the End of Time* to young people? Have there been any unique challenges to this endeavor? What are you most looking forward to as you further develop the Pandava world for readers?
- A: The most exciting part is hearing their reactions! I don't think my inbox has ever been so full of girls (and boys!—I don't believe in girl books vs. boy books) telling me how much they relate to Aru and Mini. For me, the challenge has been balancing how I retell certain myths, which have a lot of nuances and inconsistencies depending on the region of India in which they're told. I'm most looking forward to introducing readers to more of the characters and the larger story underpinning the series.





ARU SHAH AND THE END OF TIME

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Photo credit: Aman Sharma

ABOUT THE BOOK

Best-selling author Rick Riordan introduces this adventure by Roshani Chokshi about twelve-year-old Aru Shah, who has a tendency to stretch the truth in order to fit in at school. While her classmates are jetting off to family vacations in exotic locales, she'll be spending her autumn break at home, in the Museum of Ancient Indian Art and Culture, waiting for her mom to return from her latest archeological trip. Is it any wonder that Aru makes up stories about being royalty, traveling to Paris, and having a chauffeur?

One day, three schoolmates show up at Aru's doorstep to catch her in a lie. They don't believe her claim that the museum's Lamp of Bharata is cursed, and they dare Aru to prove it. *Just a quick light*, Aru thinks. Then she can get herself out of this mess and *never ever* fib again.

But lighting the lamp has dire consequences. She unwittingly frees the Sleeper, an ancient demon whose duty it is to awaken the Lord of Destruction. Her classmates and beloved mother are frozen in time, and it's up to Aru to save them.

The only way to stop the demon is to find the reincarnations of the five legendary Pandava brothers, protagonists of the Hindu epic poem the *Mahabharata*, and journey through the Kingdom of Death. But how is one girl in Spider-Man pajamas supposed to do all *that*?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Roshani Chokshi (www.roshanichokshi.com) is the author of the instant *New York Times* best-selling novel *The Star-Touched Queen* and its companion, *A Crown of Wishes*. She studied fairy tales in college, and she has a pet luck dragon that looks suspiciously like a Great Pyrenees dog. *Aru Shah and the End of Time*, her middle grade debut, was inspired by the stories her grandmother told her, as well as Roshani's all-consuming love for *Sailor Moon*. She lives in Georgia and says *y'all*, but she doesn't really have a Southern accent. Her Twitter handle is @roshani_chokshi.

This guide was created by Dr. Rose Brock, an assistant professor at Sam Houston State University. Dr. Brock holds a PhD in Library Science, specializing in children's and young adult literature.

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