

# Interdisciplinary Challenge

## Tour the Ganges River

**Y**ou are a guide leading a group tour of the Ganges River in India and Bangladesh. Since ancient times, this great river has been central to Indian life and culture. The Ganges rises in an ice cave in the Himalayas and flows southeast across a wide plain into the Bay of Bengal. As it nears the coast, the river splits into many channels—the “Mouths of the Ganges”—which have built up a huge delta. You want your tour group to understand the river’s importance over the centuries.

**COOPERATIVE LEARNING** On these pages are challenges you will encounter as you plan your tour of the Ganges. Working in a small group, choose one of these challenges. Divide the work among group members. Look in the Data File for helpful information. Keep in mind that you will present your solution to the class.

### HISTORY CHALLENGE

#### “So much has happened in the Ganges region . . .”

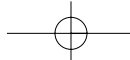
To start your tour, give your group an overview of the Ganges and its place in history. So much has happened in the Ganges region; for centuries, cities and villages along the Ganges have been centers of trade, industry, and religion. How can you give your group a sense of place? What should the group learn from this trip? Choose one of these options. Use the Data File for help.

#### ACTIVITIES

1. Choose one city or region along the Ganges. Make a time line of major events that took place there, starting with its early history.
2. Design a travel brochure for a city in the Ganges Basin. Include a list of historical monuments and other attractions.







## DATA FILE

### THE GANGES

- **Length:** 1,557 mi.
- **Headwaters in Himalayas:** Alaknanda and Bhagirathi are main streams; other tributaries enter along river's course.
- **Ganges Basin** is one of the most densely populated areas in the world.

### Major Tributaries

- **Yamuna:** flows from Himalayas past Delhi and Agra.
- **Brahmaputra** (also called Jamuna): joins Ganges in Bangladesh to form delta.

### Important Sites in the Ganges Basin

- **Patna:** center of Asoka's empire (third century B.C.).
- **Agra:** on Yamuna River, site of **Taj Mahal**; once capital of Mogul Empire.
- **Allahabad:** at junction of Yamuna and Ganges rivers; a holy place to Hindus.
- **Varanasi (Benares):** Hindu holy city; pilgrims come to bathe in the river.
- **Delhi/New Delhi:** on Yamuna River, India's capital city; once a Mogul capital.
- **Kolkata (Calcutta):** on Hugli River, major channel of the Ganges; was capital of British India, now capital of West Bengal.
- **Dhaka:** capital of Bangladesh.

### INDIA

**Population:** 1.01 billion; population density: 799/sq. mi.; 28 percent urban.

**Area:** about 1.3 million sq. mi.

### BANGLADESH

**Population:** 129.2 million; population density: 2,324/sq. mi.; 24 percent urban.

**Area:** 55,600 sq. mi.

To learn more about the Ganges River, go to



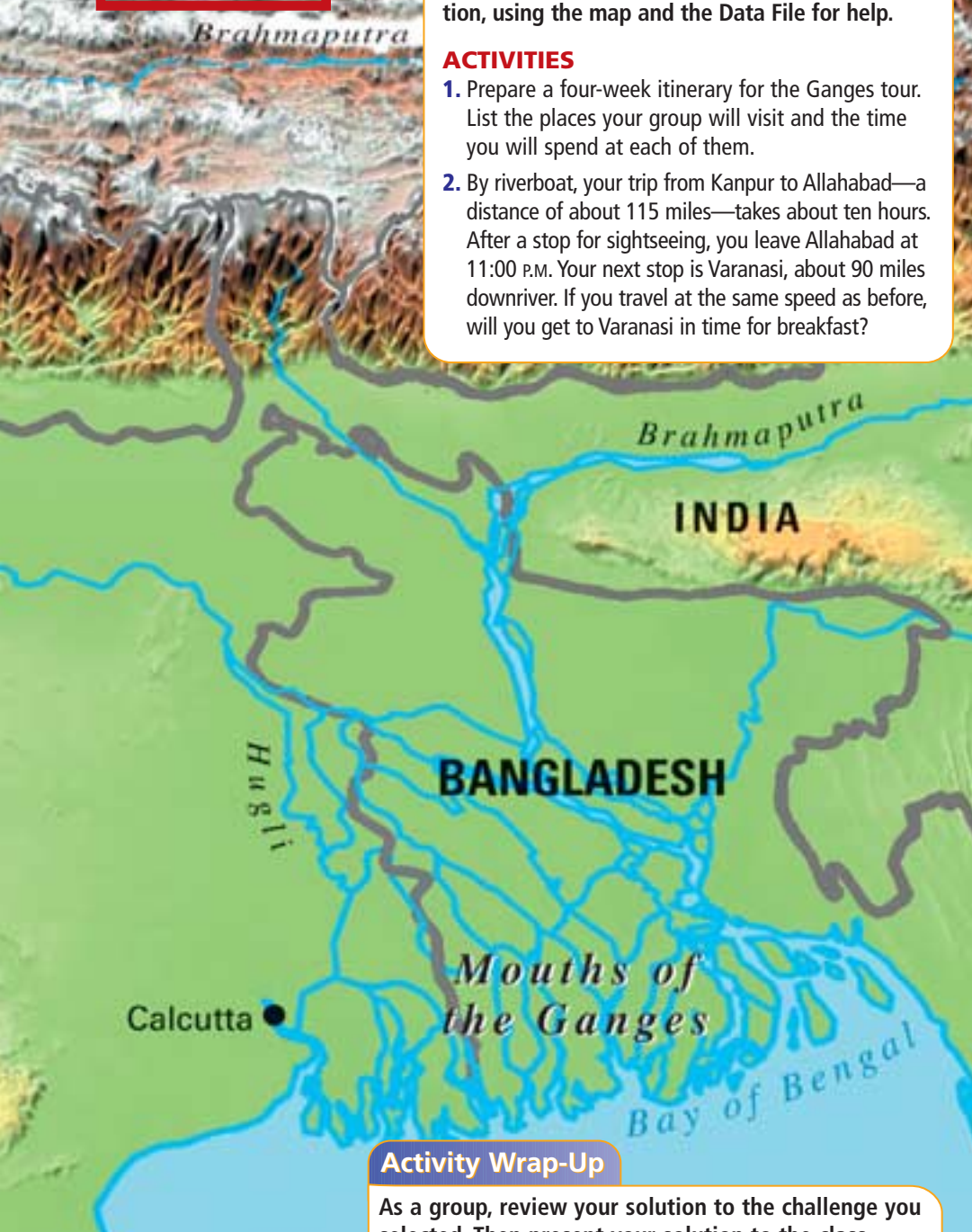
### MATH CHALLENGE

**“... plan a travel schedule ... and keep to it.”**

Along the course of the Ganges are many historic cities and other attractions. One important part of a tour guide's job is to plan a travel schedule, or itinerary, and keep to it. Your trip is scheduled to take about four weeks. How will you plan your river journey? How will you divide your time? Choose one of these options to present information, using the map and the Data File for help.

### ACTIVITIES

1. Prepare a four-week itinerary for the Ganges tour. List the places your group will visit and the time you will spend at each of them.
2. By riverboat, your trip from Kanpur to Allahabad—a distance of about 115 miles—takes about ten hours. After a stop for sightseeing, you leave Allahabad at 11:00 P.M. Your next stop is Varanasi, about 90 miles downriver. If you travel at the same speed as before, will you get to Varanasi in time for breakfast?



### Activity Wrap-Up

As a group, review your solution to the challenge you selected. Then present your solution to the class.