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Introducing children's books on India series: GREAT INDIAN CLASSICS.



GREAT INDIAN CLASSICS

Indian literature has a long tradition, stretching back more than 25 centuries and encompassing hundreds of languages. The earliest extant texts are in Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit and Tamil. From references in those texts, we get the impression of a complex and rich literature, encompassing many languages, styles, critiques and commentaries. This Amar Chitra Katha collection brings together a sample of the Indian literary tradition down the years. It starts with the works of Kalidasa, moving to Sanskrit romances of the Gupta Age, and ancient Tamil Sangam literature which was influenced by Jain and Buddhist thought.

As language and literature evolved, each region in the country began to develop its own special modes of writing and story-telling. By the nineteenth century, India was home to not one but a multitude of literatures, each borrowing from, referring to, and overlapping with the others. When India came under British colonisation, English ideas began to be seen in Indian writing. More importantly, major Indian thinkers started to question their subjugation by the British. A new strain of nationalistic writing arose, trying to bring together Indian people across barriers of language, region, and culture. The nationalistic Bengali novels of Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, were written during this time.

The last section contains new classics in a selection of Indian languages – Kannada, Marathi, Malayalam and Punjabi, giving the reader a flavour of modern Indian writing, in all its colour and variety.

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