

Out of India?

1 The Koh-i-Noor



This is the Koh-i-Noor diamond. The name means “Mountain of Light”. It is not the only precious stone¹ that has a name. All through history people have given names to very large or very beautiful stones. Usually the owners of these stones were kings or queens, princes or princesses. The stones were made into beautiful jewels² in gold, with other stones or with pearls³. Some became part of a crown. This is what happened to the Koh-i-Noor. The stone comes from India. Up until 1730, when people discovered diamonds in Brazil, all diamonds came from India.

In the 14th century the ruler⁴ in Delhi sent his army to fight a ruler in the south of India. The army won, and sent gold, diamonds and pearls back to Delhi on horses and elephants. One of the diamonds was the Koh-i-Noor. After that there were more wars and the Koh-i-Noor and other precious stones, gold, and jewellery changed hands again. Sometimes this diamond was given by one king to another, or a king gave it to a successful leader as thanks for help in wars, or as a sign of friendship⁵. It left India and came back again. In the 19th century the British took it from an Indian prince and sent it to Britain. It has been in three crowns since then. You can see it as part of the Crown Jewels in the Tower of London.



¹precious stone [ˈpreʃəs stəʊn] – Edelstein • ²jewel [ˈdʒuːəl] – Juwel • ³pearl [pɜːl] – Perle • ⁴ruler [ˈruːlə] – Herrscher/-in • ⁵friendship [ˈfrendʃɪp] – Freundschaft

- a) Diamonds are usually clear, but can also be pink or yellow. Think of the words in German for some stones that we use in jewellery. Many of the words are very like their English names. Make a grid like this and find the German words.

English word	usual colour	German word
diamond [ˈdaɪəmənd]	clear	<i>Diamant</i>
ruby [ˈruːbi]	red	
emerald [ˈemrɪd]	green	
sapphire [ˈsæfəɪə]	blue	
topaz [ˈtɒpæz]	yellow	
amethyst [ˈæməθɪst]	purple	
turquoise [ˈtɜːkwaːz]	blue-green	
opal [ˈɒpəl]	blue-green with other colours	
garnet [ˈgɑːnɪt]	dark red	

- b) Find out more about the Koh-i-Noor and other famous stones in the Crown Jewels.

2 Wedding traditions

India's main exports are agricultural¹ products, clothes, gems² and jewellery, so it is no surprise that jewellery is very popular in India, too. Many people wear gold rings, bracelets, bangles and necklaces.

a) Look at the pictures and read the text. Then answer the questions.



In many parts of India there is special traditional jewellery that a bride wears at her wedding. The wedding itself may go on for days with many ceremonies. India is a very big country and wedding traditions are different all over the country and in different religious beliefs. In the main part of a Hindu wedding a special fire is at the centre of the ceremony and the bride³ and groom⁴ put rice, oil and other things into it. Then scarves are put around the couple and the scarves are tied together as a symbol of their marriage. They walk around the fire together four times and then they take seven steps together as symbols of ideas like respect for each other, sharing joy and sadness, friendship and love. There are many flowers and there is food for the guests. The bride and groom wear beautiful clothes with lots of gold decoration and the bride also has special wedding jewellery.

¹agricultural [ˌægrɪˈkʌltʃrəl] – landwirtschaftlich • ²gem [dʒem] – Edelstein • ³bride [braɪd] – Braut • ⁴groom [gru:m] – Bräutigam

1. Are weddings the same all around India?
2. In a Hindu ceremony, how do they show that the couple is united?
3. What do Hindu and Western weddings have in common?

b) Imagine that an Indian person asks about a European wedding. Describe how a wedding is celebrated in Germany or in another country you know well. Here are some words you will need (you can probably guess what they are in German):

bride • bridegroom • bridesmaid • best man • priest / minister • church • registry office • meal • dance • wedding presents • flowers

Lösungen

Lösungsvorschläge Seite 1

1

- a) *Rubin* (ruby); *Smaragd* (emerald); *Saphir* (sapphire); *Topas* (topaz); *Amethyst* (amethyst); *Türkis* (turquoise); *Opal* (opal); *Granat* (garnet)
- b) The Koh-i-Noor is in a crown that was made for Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother (the mother of Elizabeth II). It was re-cut. By tradition only a queen wears this diamond. People say it brings bad luck to a man who wears it. In another part of the Crown Jewels is the "First Star of Africa", the biggest cut diamond in the world. It forms the head of the sceptre. In the Imperial State Crown is the "Second Star of Africa". Both stones were cut from the Cullinan diamond, which was found in South Africa. It was the biggest diamond in the world. The Imperial Crown of India has 6,000 diamonds, rubies and emeralds, too.

Lösungsvorschläge Seite 2

2

- a)
1. No, there are different traditions depending on the region and the religion.
 2. They put scarves around the couple and tie them together.
 3. They have flowers, food for the guests and beautiful clothes for the couple.
- b) In Germany a traditional wedding starts with the *Polterabend*. It's a party before the wedding for all the friends and neighbours. To bring the bride and bridegroom good luck, they throw old plates and cups, etc. on the ground. Then the couple have to clean up the pieces together. On the wedding day, or the day before, the bride and groom go to the Registry Office for the civil, legal part of the wedding. Then they can go to a church and marry there. The bride usually wears a white dress and she often has three or four bridesmaids in dresses in a different colour. If she has small sisters or cousins, they may be flower girls. The groom wears a nice suit and has a good friend with him as his best man. The best man carries the rings that the priest will give to the bride and groom as part of the ceremony. They make their promises to each other and as they leave the church people throw rice or small flowers over them. Then there is a meal or a party.