

Ten Things to Talk About from the “Voices From Around the World” Program

1. India is a country on the continent of Asia. India is also the 7th largest and the 2nd most populous country in the world.
2. Women in India typically wear a *Sari*, which is a long strip of cloth wrapped and draped around the body. Women also wear a *Bindi*, which is a small dot in the center of the eyebrows. This dot can be drawn on, or it can be a piece of jewelry that is stuck on.
3. Namaste (pronounced Na-ma-stay) is a typical greeting in India. To make the greeting, touch the fingers from your left hand to the fingers of your right, bend the wrists slightly while placing your hands near your heart and speak the word Namaste. There are many variations on the definition of Namaste, but basically it means the light within me honors the light within you. We are one.
4. Brazil is a country in South America. It is the 5th largest and 5th most populous country in the world.
5. Bongos are an open ended drum played in Brazil which has origins in Africa and in Cuba. They are very similar to the tabla drums from India.



6. The Cuica drum (pronounced Kwee- kah) is another type of instrument played in Brazil. The sound is made when the player rubs the top of the drum while applying pressure from the underneath. The rubbing motion makes the squeaking sound.
7. Japan is an island nation in Asia. It is made up of over 3,000 islands, with its four largest islands making up 97% of its land area. Japan has the 10th largest population in the world. In Japan they call their country Nippon or Nihon, which literally means “The Sun's Origin”.
8. Japan has many festivals each year. One important springtime festival is the Obon or Bon

(盆) Festival. This festival is celebrated in order to honor the departed (deceased) spirits of one's ancestors. This Buddhist custom has evolved into a family reunion holiday during which people return to their home towns to visit family (especially grandparents) and visit and clean their ancestors' graves. At this time the spirits of ancestors are supposed to revisit the household altars. Also called the *Feast of Lanterns*, it has been celebrated in Japan for more than 500 years and traditionally includes a dance known as Bon-Odori.

9. Africa is the 2nd largest and 2nd most populous continent in the world. It contains 53 countries, several island chains and has over 1,000 indigenous languages spoken there.
10. Djembe drums (pronounced Jem-bay) are a traditional African goblet shaped drum that is played with the hands like a bongo drum. In the Mali language of Bamanakan, “Dje” is the verb for “gather” and “be” is the word for “everyone”. So in Mali, Djembe means “everyone gathers together”.

