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Investigate

Lesson 5

Student worksheet

Timor's traditional culture

Years **7** to **8**



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WithOnePlanet

Climate change education
An xpend Foundation initiative

Looking at Timor's traditional culture

Lesson 5: Student worksheet

Introduction

We now know that culture is something that is all around us, and that our culture influences the way we view the world and our environment. Some places, like Timor Leste, also have a very strong traditional culture which includes ceremonial costumes, traditional weapons, musical instruments and songs as well as other rituals and practices. In this lesson we are going to look at some of the traditional aspects of Timorese culture.

Activity 1: Traditional items worn for ceremonies

Have a look at the following six pictures of some traditional items of dress that are used in ceremonies in Timor-Leste.



1. Mane-fulun or kabora:
Head-dress made of feathers
or horse's mane hair.



2. Kae bauk
Head-dress/Crown.
Made of silver or gold, kae bauk
represents the moon.



3. Belak
Traditional men's chest ornament,
flat, metal and circular.
Made of silver or gold, belak
represents the sun.



4. Tais Feto

Traditional dress for women. Often a tubular piece of material, which a women pulls onto her body. It may be worn above the breast or around the waist.



5. Babadok

Drum carried and played by women. It is made of wood or bamboo and goat's hair. The drum is often used to accompany tebedai (traditional dancing).



6. Surik/Katana

Sword, or machete or large knife. It is always carried unsheathed to show that the bearer is vigilant and ready to defend himself and his family.



Watch the YouTube video: *Tebe Dai (Viqueque)*, < <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pY1BqEKkFWY> >
The dance is from Viqueque, Timor-Leste and answer the following questions on the next page.



Sources:

Griffith University, Australia in collaboration with Secretaria de Estado da Cultura, Timor Leste – research project Tatoli Ba Kultura ('Passing on Culture'), Tebe Dai (Viqueque), [Online Video] 4 May 2011, viewed 3 March 2016, < <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pY1BqEKkFWY> >

Answer the following questions:

Q1: Which of the traditional items listed above can you identify in the video?

Q2: Are the roles of the men and women in the dance the same or different? Explain.

Q3: How do the men and the women wear the traditional cloth (tais) differently?

Activity 2: Leo Guterres on culture and tradition in Timor-Leste



Watch the video of Leo Guterres talking about her culture and traditions and answer the questions that follow. *Leo on culture and traditions* <https://vimeo.com/72886464>



Q1: What are some of the ceremonies from Baguia, Timor-Leste?

Q2: What do families in Timor-Leste do for one year after a person dies? What happens after the year is up?

Sources:

WithOneSeed, 2013, WithOneSeed Stories #4 – Leo Guterres on culture, tradition and life as a widow in Timor Leste, [Online Video], viewed 3 March 2017. <https://vimeo.com/72886464>

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Q3: What is a festa?

Q4: What is a barlaki ceremony?

Q5: What are some of the things that can be given in a barlaki ceremony?

Q6: Who wears a tais feto? Who wears a tais mane?

Q7: What are the tais used for in a wedding ceremony? What other ceremonies are they used for?

Q8: What is a morteen?

Activity 3: Tais traditional weaving

The East Timor Women's Association (ETWA) is an organisation that supports women's weaving groups in Timor-Leste, with a focus on economic empowerment and fair pricing for the products that the women produce. You can learn more about the great work of ETWA at <http://www.etwa.org.au>.



Watch ETWA's YouTube video, *Heru Ini lafu – Weaving life*, < <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mvn4S98uNdk> > and answer the following questions:



Q1: Are tais important for people in Timor-Leste?

Q2: What are some of the things that tais can be used for?

Q3: How much raw cotton does a traditional weaver need to spin to make a single tais?

Q4: How are the threads traditionally dyed for the tais?

Q5: What do many people believe in Timor-Leste with regard to cultural ceremonies and relatives who have died?

Sources:

ETWA (East Timorese Women Australia) Supporting women in Timor Leste, 2016, [Website], viewed 3 March 2017, <<http://www.etwa.org.au/>>
ETWA, 2010, Heru Ini Lafu: Weaving Life, [Online Video], 2010, viewed 3 March 2016, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mvn4S98uNdk>>