

LESSON 5

West Coast Malay
Peninsula:
The case of the
Kingdom of Melaka

Subject	History/Social Studies
Topic	West Coast Malay Peninsula (Melaka, fifteenth to sixteenth centuries)
Level	Lower secondary
Key idea	Across time, people respond to the varied natural environment of a region in multiple ways which shapes their worldviews and way of life.
Key concepts	Environment, highlands, lowlands, coastlands People, worldviews, way of life Commonalities and diversities
No. of periods/lessons	1 period (1 period is approximately 50 minutes)
Facilities needed	Sources and handouts for distribution
Prerequisite knowledge	No prerequisite knowledge required

Learning objectives

By the end of the lesson, the students will be able to:

KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS	ATTITUDES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define what coastlands are and identify key attributes of coastlands. 2. Explain the rationale for the location of early port cities developing along the coasts. 3. Describe the way location in coastlands has shaped agricultural activities in these areas. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyse images to draw out attributes of a place and communities. 2. Examine artefacts to recognize the interaction that came to these port cities via trade. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate awareness that people respond in multiple ways to the environment, which can influence their way of life. 2. Cooperate in groups to complete task assigned.

Section	Lesson Development	Resources	Rationale
Introduction [5 minutes]	<p>The teacher adopted a deductive approach to the development of an understanding of the concepts of highlands and lowlands. This lesson focuses on developing the concept of coastlands.</p> <p>Note: If Lesson 1 and/or Lesson 3 from Unit 1 have already been taught, then this introduction can be shortened.</p> <p>1. Introduction to topic</p> <p>1.1 Provide a definition of coastlands (any expanse of land near the sea).</p> <p>1.2 Show pictures of coastlands to convey the concept of sharedness; teachers can show pictures of coastlands in different countries in Southeast Asia (Source 2).</p> <p>1.3 Through questioning, elicit from the students that there are similarities among coastlands in different parts of Southeast Asia.</p> <p>1.4 During the process, ask students what they see to identify attributes of coastlands.</p> <p>1.5 Next, show a mixture of pictures of highlands, lowlands and coastlands (Source 1); ask the students to identify coastlands and point out the attributes that led them to classify the image as showing a coastland.</p> <p>1.6 Show students images of communities in coastlands in different countries. Through questioning, elicit from students the commonalities and diversities among these communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source 1: Images of lowlands, highlands and coastlands • Source 2: Images of communities in coastlands 	The hook engages students in the lesson and acts as a link to the previous lesson.
Development [40 minutes]	<p>2. Source (map) analysis</p> <p>2.1 Show a map of the region with Melaka and coastal kingdoms clearly marked (Source 3).</p> <p>2.2 Ask the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you see on the map? • Why did these types of coastal kingdoms come about? • Why do you think people settled along the coasts? • What did they do for a living? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source 3: Map showing ancient trade routes through the Straits of Melaka and major trading centres between the sixth and sixteenth centuries 	

Section	Lesson Development	Resources	Rationale
	<p>3. Teacher talk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The class is going to focus on the development of one of these types of coastal settlements that would become a major port city in the region, Melaka (Source 4). Melaka was a kingdom founded sometime in the early fifteenth century and was one of the major trading centres of the ancient world. It was called an entrepôt: a port city that grows into a center of political, economic and cultural life. Products from within the region and from places as far as the Middle East, India and China were exchanged. Some entrepôts controlled other islands or port-cities, forming a type of sea-borne kingdom. Other entrepôt cities were located at the mouth of a river and controlled what went up into the kingdom and what came out. These cities were considered 'global'. People from many different places, with different religions, languages and cultures met there. They exchanged their goods, their skills (shipbuilders, porters, moneylenders) and also ideas. <p>Note: The case study of Melaka can be substituted with local examples. It is important to point out the similarities between local examples so as to bring across the concept of sharedness.</p> <p>4. Group work: Source (image/artefact) study</p> <p>4.1 Divide students into small groups</p> <p>4.2 Give each group a source: A picture of an artefact that was found in Melaka (Source 6 or other items).</p> <p>4.3 Students guess where their artefact came from and what it tells us about Melaka and its place in Asian Trade. (Response from students should focus on Melaka's connections to the Middle East, India and China).</p> <p>4.4 Point out that the artefacts reveal that goods and people came to Melaka from all parts of the world via these global trade networks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source 4: Image of eighteenth century Melaka Source 5: The entrepôt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source 6: Images of artefacts from Melaka Museum <p><i>More images of artefacts are available on the Melaka Museum website: gomelaka.my</i></p>	<p>This section introduces students to an example of a kingdom that emerged in a coastal habitat and the way the society there evolved in relation to the coastal environment. Students can learn to compare the ecological and cultural setting of the coastal community with those of highland and lowland environments.</p>

Section	Lesson Development	Resources	Rationale
Closure [5 minutes]	5. Reflection 5.1 Students reflect and write about what they would do if they moved to live in a coastland. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where would you live?• What kind of clothes would you wear?• What would you do to earn a living? 5.2 Some students share their responses with the rest of the class.		

Sources and handouts

Glossary

Entrepôt:	a trading centre in a strategic location. Merchants from outside the entrepôt bring their goods to this location and they are either bought and sold or exchanged with other goods.
Global trade:	also known as international trade, is the import and export of goods and services across international boundaries.
Straits of Melaka:	a waterway that runs in between the island of Sumatra and the Malay peninsula. It was and still is one of the most important routes for world shipping.
Tax:	a sum of money paid by the population to a government in exchange for services or protection.
Trade:	the act of buying, selling or exchanging commodities.

Source 1: Images of highland, lowland and coastland

Highland: Batad, Philippines



Source:

Aranas, Uwe. commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Banaue_Philippines_Batad-Rice-Terraces-04.jpg

Lowland: Mekong Delta, Viet Nam



Source:

Garrett, Wilbur E. www.flickr.com/photos/13476480@N07/17850359166

Coastland: Bali, Indonesia



Source:

Fuhrmann, Martin. www.flickr.com/photos/martinfuhrmann/24068107063

Source 2: Image of Orang Laut, Malaysia



Source:

Venning, Torben. commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bajau_Laut_Pictures_6.jpg

Source 3: Ancient trade routes through the Straits of Melaka showing major trading centres between the sixth and sixteenth centuries



Source: commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Melaka_Sultanate_en.svg with addition by the author

Source 4: Image of eighteenth century Melaka



Source:

commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Antique_Map_Valentijn_Melaka.jpg

Source 5: The entrepôt

An entrepôt is understood to be a port city that grows into a center of political, economic and cultural life. In the region's history, these cities represent an important form of community in Southeast Asia.

Southeast Asia has been known for world-renowned port cities that emerged along the region's mainland and island coastlands. Some of them include Srivijaya in today's Sumatra (Indonesia) from the seventh to twelfth centuries, and later the entrepôts of Bago (Myanmar), Ayutthaya (Thailand), Manila (Philippines) and Melaka, formerly known as Malacca (Malaysia). Most of these important port cities were connected to maritime trade, the type of commerce that brought goods and people to the region via the sea. Some of these products were brought from places as far as the Middle East, India and China, while other products were brought by ships and land from within the region. Thus, these city ports were important hubs where people, cultures and ideas came together. Some entrepôts controlled other islands or port cities, forming a type of sea-borne kingdom. Another type of entrepôt acted as a gateway into the interior by being located at the mouth of a river (controlling entry into it), thereby controlling what went up into the kingdom and what came out. While it is not clear how much authority Melaka exerted into its interior hinterland, it was able to expand its power over other coastal ports throughout the Straits of Malacca, the Gulf of Siam, the Andaman Sea and the South China Sea.

Entrepôts offered a safe haven for a ship to stop in to get supplies, carry out repairs, and store their goods in warehouses. Due to the seasonal monsoons or winds, shipping companies made plans to wait for the direction of the winds to change, so they often needed to spend some time in these port cities. All sorts of skilled craftsmen and other occupations connected to shipbuilding were drawn to these port cities, as were other technicians, religious groups, scholars, porters, moneylenders and traders. These cities were considered 'global': one could find many religions, languages and cultures represented within the city limits.

By the sixteenth century, Arabs were the middlemen that connected Europe to Asia. Europeans soon came into the region on their own to take advantage of the existing trade dynamism that characterized the Bay of Bengal and the Straits of Malacca. Europeans were interested in spices, which represented the secret to tasty food and the ability to preserve it. Though only a small group amongst many Asian trading communities, Europeans soon came in greater numbers and focused on these entrepôts. Spices were considered to be of the highest value, with only a small bag for pepper or cinnamon easily paying for the cost of the journey from Europe.

Southeast Asian hubs began to compete with each other for monopolies on spices and other goods. These competitions would eventually draw Europeans into conflicts.

Source 6: Images of artefacts from museums in Melaka

A plate (kraak porcelain) with VOC emblem, a part of Dutch heritage in Melaka



Source:

Gryffindor, [commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:National_Museum_KL_2008_\(34\).JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:National_Museum_KL_2008_(34).JPG)

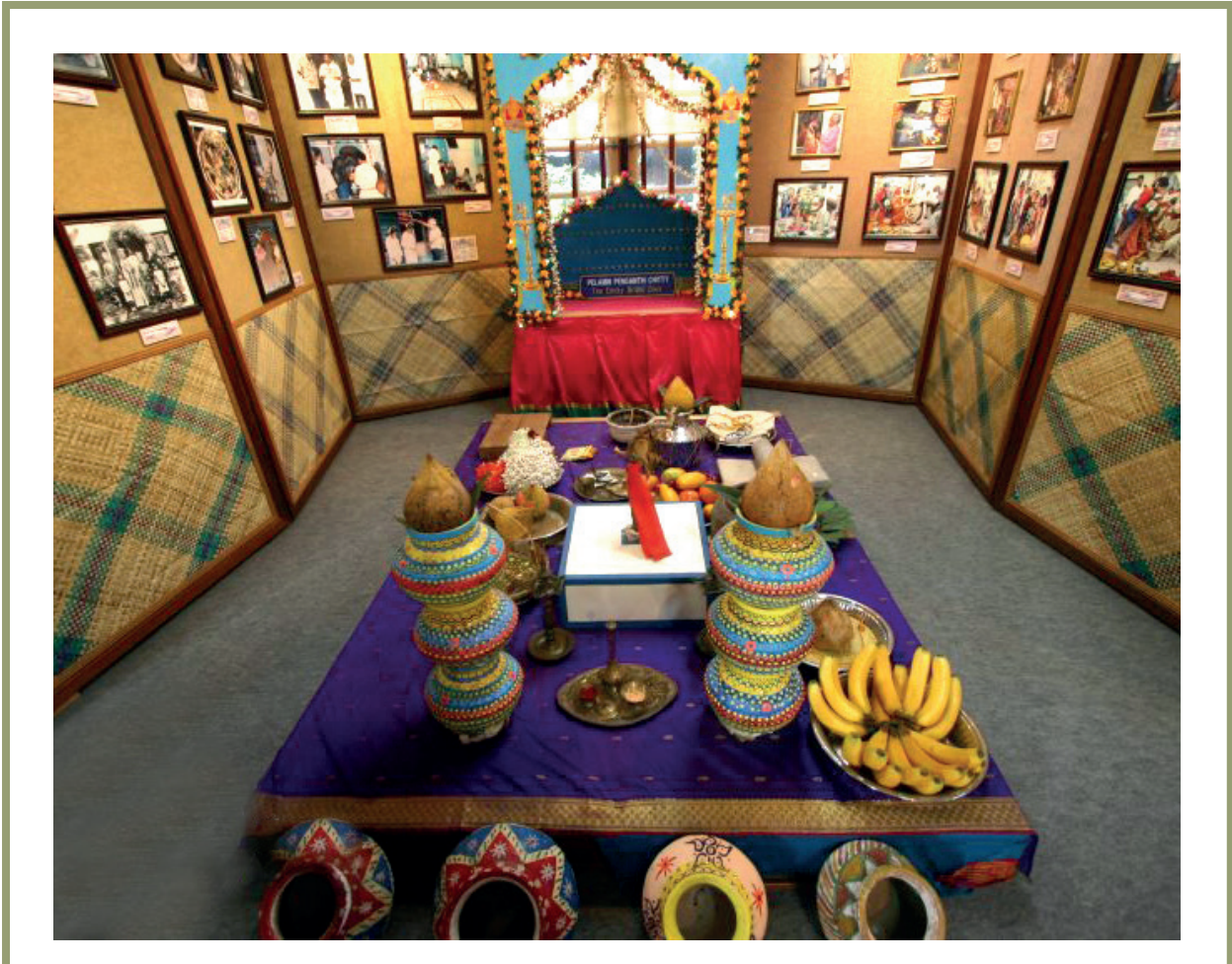
An Arabic ceramic displayed at Melaka Islamic Museum



Source:

Achilles, Vanessa.

South Asian containers for offerings displayed at Chitty Museum, Melaka



Source:

Tye, Timothy. www.penang-traveltips.com/malaysia/malacca/chitty-museum.htm