

# LESSON 4

Cultural heritage of  
Southeast Asia:  
Why does cultural  
heritage matter  
to us?

## Integrated essay

Dialogue between different cultures requires a great deal of time, experience, willingness and effort. The development of inter-cultural approaches often depends on both people's openness and on the political elites, especially with regards to how they introduce and facilitate inter-cultural exchanges within their own societies and at the international level. Education is one of the most influential tools used to facilitate this important process of investing in long-term world peace. Through educational projects, youth from different cultures are encouraged to get to know each other, to exchange viewpoints and to experience each other's cultures and ideas, thereby deepening mutual understanding and appreciation of the other.

The following lesson plan is designed to introduce the basic concept of shared cultures within ASEAN. Its main objective is to introduce a dialogue between different cultures of the region and between the past and the future. Through introducing cultural heritage beyond its geographical and national boundaries, we wish to generate a collective sense of embracing cultural diversities while promoting the cultural unity of Southeast Asia with its intertwined histories. This notion of collective consciousness will enable the future generations to define who they are, understand what their societies have been through in the past, and think about where they are headed in the twenty-first century and how they can approach cultural diversities in order to live together in peace. In this sense, the main concern of the lesson designers is to support educators in encouraging youth to be responsible citizens of their nations as well as citizens of the world who respect differences and understand the values of interculturalism.

In **Lesson Plan 4: Cultural heritage of Southeast Asia**, the focus is on the role of culture and national heritage in our lives. This is explored as individuals and citizens of our respective cultures and countries, and as members of the region where commonalities in our diverse cultures can be identified and appreciated.

As we move into the twenty-first century, we can foresee the trends that will dominate education worldwide, at least for the near future. Cultural heritage education challenges important received ideas of the past and is a tool offering youth a new type of identity-building process. So often in the twentieth century, citizens and scholars watched in despair as heritage was misappropriated to serve nationalist aims and nation-building projects. But, especially in a globalizing world, heritage does not belong to a modern nation state *per se*, and there must be room for reinterpretation. This is especially true for multicultural societies. There is also the growing appreciation that cultural heritage does not have to be tangible. When we talk of culture, we refer to more than bricks and mortar, paint and canvas, and the contents of neatly organized museums. 'Culture' incorporates every aspect of society possible – the politics, religion, songs, literature, economics, tradition, costume, drama and cuisine. It is defined as 'the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes not only arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs.' (UNESCO, 1982).

All these aspects need to be protected, and UNESCO has been actively promoting the transmission of living expressions and values from generation to generation (UNESCO, 2003). It is this, therefore, which needs to be taught in schools to children who live in rapidly evolving and multicultural societies. Most of the activities we have suggested in this lesson are derived from the educational materials created by UNESCO, but we strongly advise that teachers encourage students to think about how ordinary people throughout Southeast Asia have campaigned to preserve heritage and how they do this.

We are well aware of the variations across national curricula when it comes to the teaching of art and social studies, and in particular the teaching of history. Therefore, we have designed the lesson plan with alternative in-class and after-class activities. Teachers can decide which is more suitable and applicable to their own teaching plans and styles as well as their own cultural and social settings.

## References

UNESCO. 1982. *World Conference on Cultural Policies: final report (Mondiacult)*. Paris: UNESCO. [unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000052505](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000052505)

UNESCO. 2003. *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*. [ich.unesco.org/en/convention](http://ich.unesco.org/en/convention)

## Supplementary resources

New South Wales Government. n.d. *Teaching Heritage: Exploring Heritage in New South Wales*. [www.teachingheritage.nsw.edu.au/section01/index.php](http://www.teachingheritage.nsw.edu.au/section01/index.php)

UNESCO. n.d. Resources on World Heritage Education: [whc.unesco.org/en/176/](http://whc.unesco.org/en/176/)

UNESCO. 2003. *Text of the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage*. [www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00022#art2](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00022#art2)

UNESCO. 2008. *Seeing with Young Eyes: Third Southeast Asian Teacher Training Workshop on Using Art to Teach about World Heritage*. [unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0017/001791/179114e.pdf](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0017/001791/179114e.pdf)

UNESCO. 2012. *Traditional Children's Games in South-East Asia*. [bangkok.unesco.org/content/traditional-childrens-games-south-east-asia-interactive-games](http://bangkok.unesco.org/content/traditional-childrens-games-south-east-asia-interactive-games)

UNESCO. 2015. *Learning with Intangible Heritage for a Sustainable Future: Guidelines for Educators in the Asia-Pacific Region*. [www.unescobkk.org/culture/creativity/ich/ichesd](http://www.unescobkk.org/culture/creativity/ich/ichesd)

The Open University. n.d. *What is Heritage?* (Online course) [openlearn.open.ac.uk/mod/oucontent/view.php?id=402286&section=2.1](http://openlearn.open.ac.uk/mod/oucontent/view.php?id=402286&section=2.1)

<b>Subject</b>	History/Social Studies
<b>Topic</b>	Cultural heritage of Southeast Asia
<b>Level</b>	Lower secondary
<b>Key idea</b>	<p>Regional identity in Southeast Asia has been created out of diversities and commonalities by regional organizations and through regional events as well as through everyday activities such as popular sports, art, and popular culture. This identity is continually evolving and contributes toward the envisioning of Southeast Asia as a region for the future.</p> <p>Culture and heritage take multiple forms: places, objects, knowledge and traditions. They define our identity and play a role not only for our community but also in the shared histories of the region. Everyone has a role in safeguarding them.</p>
<b>Key concepts</b>	<p>Culture</p> <p>Heritage</p> <p>World Heritage</p> <p>Cultural heritage (moveable, immoveable, intangible/living)</p> <p>Natural heritage</p>
<b>No. of periods/lessons</b>	1 – 2 periods (1 period is approximately 50 minutes)
<b>Facilities needed</b>	<p>A/V equipment and Internet access to play the video clips (or hard copy with similar content)</p> <p>World Heritage map (downloadable)</p> <p>Post-it notes</p> <p>Area for museum display</p> <p>Objects valued by the teacher and students</p>
<b>Prerequisite knowledge</b>	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"> <li>Understand what heritage, culture and cultural heritage are.</li> <li>Understand how national, regional and global heritage are part of the shared histories of humanity.</li> <li>Understand and explain different types of heritage .</li> <li>Demonstrate awareness of national, regional and global issues related to cultural heritage.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct basic differentiation analysis of different types of heritage.</li> <li>Engage in discussion and debate about cultural heritage.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better appreciate culture and heritage in general.</li> <li>Realize the importance of heritage protection and preservation for the future generations of citizens.</li> <li>Cultivate greater appreciation for and responsibility concerning the protection of heritage.</li> </ol>

Section	Lesson Development	Resources	Rationale
Introduction [3 minutes]	<p><b>1. Pre-teach</b></p> <p>1.1 The day before this lesson is taught, instruct students to bring an object of something valuable and important to them that has been passed down from their parents, grandparents or great- grandparents.</p> <p><b>2. Teacher talk</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce cultural and natural heritage of Southeast Asia with the focus on cultural heritage.</li> <li>• Present the scope of the lesson:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Learning the following terms/concepts: culture, heritage, cultural heritage, different types of heritage</li> <li>- Valuing and protecting global cultural/natural heritage in general, Southeast Asian cultural/natural heritage in particular.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		<p>The teacher talk puts the lesson in context. It provides an opportunity for the teacher to explain where the topic stands in relation to the curriculum the students are following.</p>
Development [75 minutes]	<p><b>3. Let's talk about culture, let's talk about heritage, let's talk about cultural heritage</b> (30 minutes)</p> <p>3.1 Introduce W. Somerset Maugham's definition of <i>Culture</i>: <i>'Men and women are not only themselves; they are also the region in which they were born, the city apartment or the farm in which they learnt to walk, the games they played as children, the tales they overheard, the food they ate, the schools they attended, the sports they followed, the poets they read and the God they believe in.'</i></p> <p>3.2 Randomly ask students 'What does the word culture mean to you?' and write their answers on the board. Explain that culture can be defined in the many different ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spaces shared by a society, such as. villages, cities, landscapes, seascapes, etc.;</li> <li>• Arts (performing arts: music, dances; visual arts: painting, sculpture) and architecture (temples, houses, bridges, roads) shared by a society;</li> <li>• Knowledge shared by a society (language, crafts techniques, schools people attended, agricultural processes, health practices);</li> <li>• Manners shared by a society (how people eat and drink, how people entertain, games children play, relationship between a mother and a child/men and women/husband and wife);</li> <li>• Values shared by a society (what is good/bad/funny)</li> <li>• Rituals, ceremonies organized by a community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display area for a classroom museum</li> <li>• Objects valued by the teacher and students</li> </ul>	<p>This learning activity seeks to introduce students to the concepts of culture, heritage and cultural/natural heritage. It involves collaborative work through group discussions and the creating of a mutual definition.</p> <p>Through the follow up activity, students share the knowledge they learned in school with their parents. This engages families as well.</p>

Section	Lesson Development	Resources	Rationale
	<p>3.3 Show the students an object (a painting, a piece of jewellery, a rug or a piece of pottery, a photograph for example) that has been passed down to you from great-grandparents and that you cherish and value.</p> <p>3.4 In pairs, students explain why the items they brought are important to them.</p> <p>3.5 Explain that these objects are examples of heritage and present a definition of <i>heritage</i>: <i>Heritage is something that we have gotten or that is left for us from the past, that we live with in the present and that we pass on to future generations. We may prefer to think of heritage as those places and objects we wish to keep. These are cultural and natural places and objects that we value because they come from our ancestors, are beautiful, scientifically important and irreplaceable examples and sources of life and inspiration.</i></p> <p>3.6 Discuss the value of the object to you and the reasons why you want to look after and protect it. Ask students: if someone wants to look after the object and pass it on to her/his children, what must she or he do to protect it?</p> <p>3.7 Students work in groups to come up with a basic definition of cultural heritage.</p> <p>3.8 After group discussions each group shares their mutual understanding of cultural heritage.</p> <p>3.9 Conclude by introducing the following definition: <i>Everything (places, arts, architecture, knowledge, manners, values) that we have gotten or are left to us from the past, that we live with in the present and that we want to pass on to future generations. Heritage comes sometimes from nature like forests, coastal areas, etc. We call this <b>natural heritage</b>. Nature and culture also have a very important connection. Many buildings, monuments and sites owe part of their beauty to their natural surroundings.</i></p> <p><b>4. Group work: What is living heritage?</b> (15 minutes)</p> <p>4.1 Introduce and explain the following types of heritage: movable, immovable, intangible and natural by listing examples from their own nation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some heritage cannot be moved, like archaeological sites, sacred worship places like temples, churches, mosques and historic cities. We call them <b>immovable heritage</b>.</li> <li>• Heritage objects such as coins, paintings, artefacts and botanical samples are called <b>movable heritage</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-it notes</li> </ul>	<p>This activity encourages students to reflect on the various types of heritage as well as on the concept of shared heritage. It provides an entry point to discuss similarities among the people in the region, even though shared heritage can take different forms in different areas.</p>

Section	Lesson Development	Resources	Rationale
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heritage that we cannot touch, see or define exactly and that come with the form of practices, knowledge and values is called <b>intangible cultural heritage</b> or <b>living heritage</b>. It defines the identity of the people and communities practicing it.</li> </ul> <p>4.2 Ask students, 'Can you think of any three examples of living heritage shared by the people of Southeast Asia?'</p> <p>4.3 Students write their answers on post-it notes.</p> <p>4.4 Stick the post-its on the board and invite students to walk around and view all the answers.</p> <p><b>5. Group work: Our cultural heritage</b> (10 minutes)</p> <p>5.1 Introduce the main concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The importance of valuing regional and global cultural heritage;</li> <li>UNESCO World Heritage Convention.</li> </ul> <p>5.2 Hand out copies of the World Heritage Map and corresponding activity sheet.</p> <p>5.3 Students work in groups of four to five people to find ten World Heritage sites in Southeast Asia. They write the names and geographical locations of the sites and indicate the type of heritage site that they are.</p> <p>5.4 Students compare and contrast their lists in class to complete the activity.</p> <p>5.5 Highlight that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The region includes a mix of cultural and natural sites;</li> <li>Being World Heritage sites implies that these have value for their country as well as for the whole region/world.</li> </ul> <p><b>6. Alternative in-class activity: Heritage and tourism</b> (20 minutes)</p> <p>6.1 Divide the class into two groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group 1 makes a list of the advantages of tourism for a regional heritage site.</li> <li>Group 2 makes a list of threats caused by tourism to regional heritage sites.</li> </ul> <p>6.2 Groups present their lists and discuss how the threats of tourism to regional heritage sites could be reduced.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Source 1: Sites listed in the UNESCO World Heritage list in Southeast Asia (2019)</li> <li>World Heritage Map, downloadable from UNESCO's website at <a href="http://whc.unesco.org/en/wallmap">whc.unesco.org/en/wallmap</a></li> </ul>	<p>This activity allows students to become more aware of the importance of heritage sites, not only in their country but also throughout the region. Ideally, it provides an opportunity to discuss threats and protection mechanisms.</p>
<p>Closure [2 minutes]</p>	<p><b>7. Suggested home extension activities</b></p> <p>7.1 Research: Students (individually or in groups) do research and then deliver presentations on specific UNESCO sites in Southeast Asia. They should cover the history of the sites and why they were chosen as heritage sites.</p> <p>7.2 Class Museum: Create a temporary class museum by putting the objects brought by students on display and discussing them.</p>		

## Sources and handouts

### Source 1: Sites listed in the UNESCO World Heritage list in Southeast Asia (2019)

As of 2019, there are 41 World Heritage sites, both natural and cultural, in Southeast Asia.

The annually-updated list and information on the Southeast Asian sites is accessible through website of UNESCO World Heritage Centre. You can use this shortcut link: [tiny.cc/SEAworldheritage](https://tiny.cc/SEAworldheritage)

#### Legends:

◆ cultural site

◆ natural site

◆ endangered site

#### Cambodia

- Angkor ◆
- Temple of Preah Vihear ◆
- Temple Zone of Sambor Prei Kuk, Archaeological Site of Ancient Ishanapura ◆

#### Indonesia

- Borobudur Temple Compounds ◆
- Komodo National Park ◆
- Prambanan Temple Compounds ◆
- Ujung Kulon National Park ◆
- Sangiran Early Man Site ◆
- Lorentz National Park ◆
- Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra ◆
- Cultural Landscape of Bali Province: the Subak System as a Manifestation of the Tri Hita Karana Philosophy ◆
- Ombilin Coal Mining Heritage of Sawahlunto ◆

#### Lao People's Democratic Republic

- Town of Luang Prabang ◆
- Vat Phou and Associated Ancient Settlements within the Champasak Cultural Landscape ◆
- Megalithic Jar Sites in Xiengkhuang – Plain of Jars ◆

#### Malaysia

- Gunung Mulu National Park ◆
- Kinabalu Park ◆
- Melaka and George Town, Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca ◆
- Archaeological Heritage of the Lenggong Valley ◆



### *Myanmar*

- Pyu Ancient Cities ◆
- Bagan ◆

### *Philippines*

- Baroque Churches of the Philippines ◆
- Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park ◆
- Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras ◆
- Historic City of Vigan ◆
- Puerto-Princesa Subterranean River National Park ◆
- Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary ◆

### *Singapore*

- Singapore Botanic Gardens ◆

### *Thailand*

- Historic City of Ayutthaya ◆
- Historic Town of Sukhothai and Associated Historic Towns ◆
- Thungyai-Huai Kha Khaeng Wildlife Sanctuaries ◆
- Ban Chiang Archaeological Site ◆
- Dong Phrayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex ◆

### *Viet Nam*

- Complex of Hué Monuments ◆
- Ha Long Bay ◆
- Hoi An Ancient Town ◆
- My Son Sanctuary ◆
- Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park ◆
- Central Sector of the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long – Hanoi ◆
- Citadel of the Ho Dynasty ◆
- Trang An Landscape Complex ◆◆