



Economies and Cultures

TERMS & NAMES

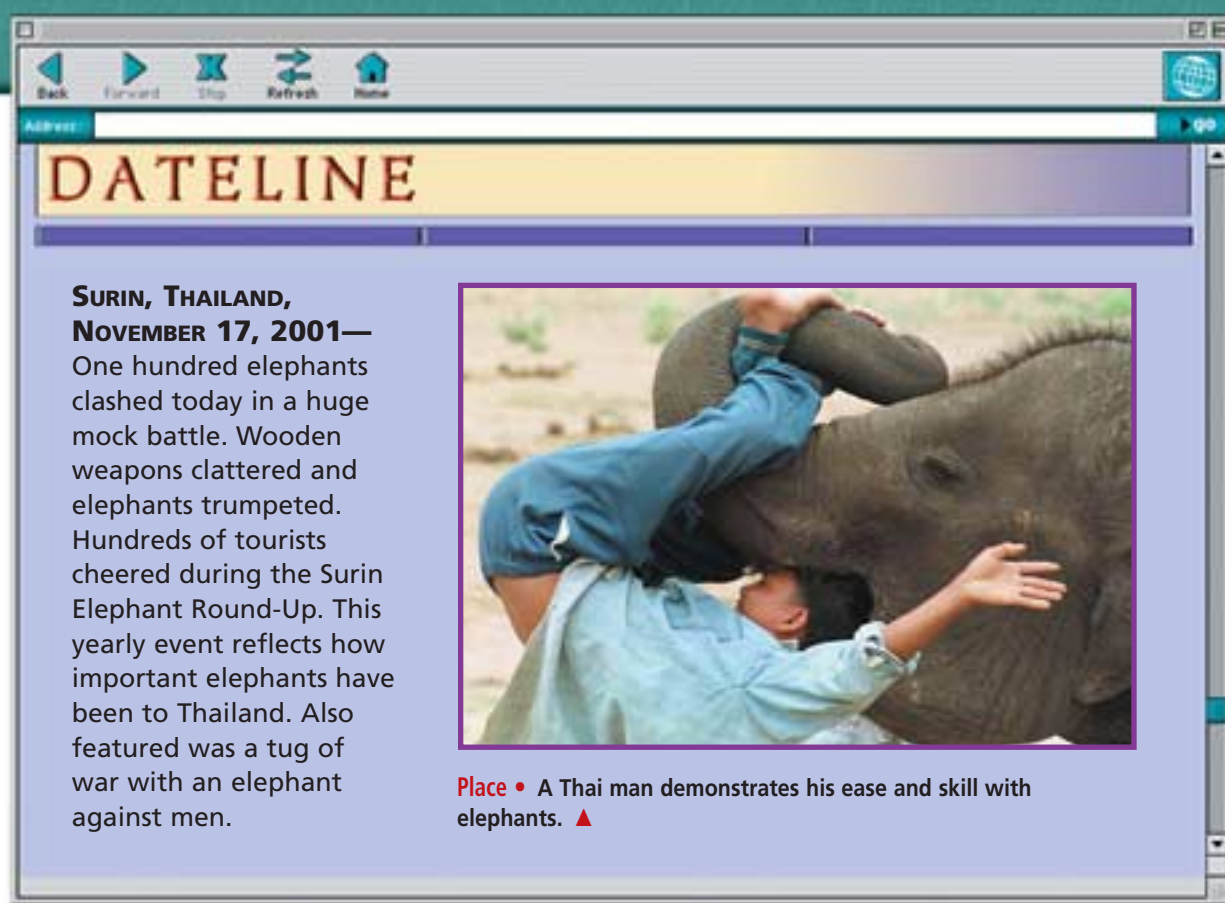
developing nation
Bahasa Indonesian
pagoda
thatch
batik

MAIN IDEA

The economically and culturally unique nations of Southeast Asia trade with most of the world.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Southeast Asia's successes contribute to the strength of other economies.



An Agricultural Economy

Events such as elephant roundups take place in rural areas, where three-fourths of the people in Southeast Asia live, many of them on small farms where they grow rice to feed their families, not to sell for profit. Many nations of Southeast Asia are **developing nations**. They are working to improve their economies and to help people live safe, healthy, successful lives.



Small Farms and Factories The Green Revolution and irrigation have helped some farmers grow more food. But many others have small plots of land and cannot afford to buy fertilizers, chemicals, and modern equipment. They must rely on good weather and hard work for successful harvests.

In the past 50 years, industry has become more important in Southeast Asia. Small factories that process crops, make clothing and fabric, and produce small electronic parts are the most common. Many people have moved into the larger cities looking for work.

Singapore The small country of Singapore is an exception in Southeast Asia. Virtually everyone lives in the city, also called Singapore. Though small in size, Singapore is one of the richest nations in the world and has one of the busiest ports. The production of electronic goods is its most important industry, and more than half of these goods are exported.



Place • The people of Singapore enjoy a high standard of living. ▲

The Cultures of Southeast Asia

The people of Southeast Asia live in widely differing geographical regions. In rural communities, people's lives have not changed much in the past century. In the big cities, however, history and tradition stand side by side with modern architecture, automobiles, and fast-food restaurants.

Languages In Indonesia, the Philippines, and Myanmar, where communities are separated by water, dense forests, or mountains, people speak many languages. However, most people from Indonesia also speak **Bahasa Indonesian** (bah•HAH•suh), the national language. In places where there is a large Chinese population, dialects are spoken. Indians who live in parts of Southeast Asia speak Hindi or Tamil.

Reading Social Studies

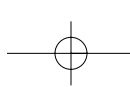
A. Drawing Conclusions
How can geography affect the languages of a nation?

Languages of Southeast Asia, 2002

Country	Official Language	Other Languages Spoken
Brunei	Malay	English, Chinese
Cambodia	Khmer	French, English
Indonesia	Bahasa Indonesian	English, Dutch, Javanese, local dialects
Laos	Lao	French, English, local languages
Malaysia	Bahasa Malay	English, Chinese dialects, Tamil, Hindi, Telugu, Malayalam, Punjabi, Thai, local languages
Myanmar	Burmese	Local languages
Philippines	Filipino, English	Local languages
Singapore	Mandarin Chinese, Malay, Tamil, English	
Thailand	Thai	English, local languages and dialects
Vietnam	Vietnamese	Chinese, English, French, Khmer, local languages

SKILLBUILDER: Reading a Chart

1. Which country has the most official languages? Why do you think that is?
2. Why do you think French is spoken in several countries?



Region • Buddhist temples are a common sight in Southeast Asia. ►



Religions A form of Buddhism is the most common religion in mainland Southeast Asia. Islam, brought by Muslims who came to Southeast Asia several centuries ago, is practiced in Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia. Spanish and Portuguese missionaries spread the Catholic faith, which is most important today in southern Vietnam and the Philippines. Protestantism and Hinduism are also practiced in the region.

Architecture Statues of the Buddha can be seen in temples all over Southeast Asia. Often the temples consist of one or more **pagodas**, or towers, built in many levels, with sculptures or carvings of Buddha on each level. Houses, built of wood or bamboo, have roofs made of **thatch**, or woven palm fronds. In areas where there is flooding from monsoons, houses are built on stilts.



Wayang Kulit For over 1,000 years, shadow puppet theater has been a popular form of entertainment in Java, Bali, Thailand, and Cambodia. The most famous shadow theater is the Javanese *wayang kulit*. It tells ancient Hindu stories, such as the *Mahabharata*. To perform *wayang kulit*, the puppeteer sits behind a screen, moving the puppets (which are made from water buffalo hides) with rods connected to their bodies and arms. A light shines behind the puppets, casting shadows on the screen, and the audience sees only the shadows.



THINKING CRITICALLY

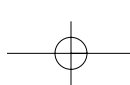


1. Drawing Conclusions

What does the popularity of this art form tell you about Indonesian culture?

2. Making Inferences

How can you tell from the design of these puppets that Javanese craftspeople are highly skilled?



Culture •
Weaving is an important part of Laotian culture. ▲



Culture • This Thai dance tells the story of the *Ramayana*. ▲

Dance Dancing is a popular art form in much of Southeast Asia. A dance might tell a story from history or the *Ramayana*, one of India's great epic poems. Dancers must train for years. They wear elaborate and beautiful costumes. The motions of their hands often tell the story.

Weaving Weavers in Southeast Asia use available resources. In the Philippines, fabrics are sometimes made of pineapple fiber. In Indonesia, weavers make cotton **batik** (buh•TEEK), using wax and dye to make intricate patterns on fabric. In Laos, they weave cotton and silk from fibers that are grown in Laos.

SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

Terms & Names

1. Identify: (a) developing nation (b) Bahasa Indonesian (c) pagoda
(d) thatch (e) batik

Taking Notes

2. Use a chart like this one to list important characteristics of the economies and cultures of Southeast Asia.

Economic Characteristics	Cultural Characteristics

Main Ideas

3. (a) Where do most of the people in Southeast Asia live?
(b) How have the economies of Southeast Asia changed in the past 50 years?
(c) What are the three main religions in Southeast Asia?

Critical Thinking

4. Synthesizing

Why are so many languages spoken in Southeast Asia?

Think About

- the region's varied history and cultural influences
- how geography contributes to the development of different ethnic groups and their languages

ACTIVITY -OPTION-

Trace a **map** of Southeast Asia from the Unit Atlas on page 366. Draw arrows and write labels to show the paths of cultural influences.