



STUDENT ACTIVITY AND TEACHER RESOURCES – GRADES 7-12

OVERVIEW

This document will help educators guide learning experiences through the Angkor Special Exhibit at the Natural History Museum of Utah.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Before Your Visit.....2

During Your Visit.....2

After Your Visit.....2

Map Of Exhibit.....3

Comparison Timelines, 800-1450 Ce.....4

Student Exploration Grades 7-12.....6

Glossary And Important Individuals.....11

Interdisciplinary Activities And Resources.....15

Special Thanks.....23



BEFORE YOUR VISIT

1. Print out student guide and go through the questions and the map with the students. Make sure that they have a pencil and a writing surface like a clipboard.
2. Look at some of the resource materials and give your students a basic background on Cambodia and the Khmer Empire. You may want to watch a film about Angkor. <https://youtu.be/KsDGDzWuQ-I>
3. Please remind students to pay attention to signs letting them know if an object can be touched. Students have a unique opportunity to get very close to many items in this exhibit so please remind them to be respectful to the collection, even those pieces made of stone.

DURING YOUR VISIT

1. Remind students that everyone is responsible for caretaking the artifacts in the exhibit. They should remember, and remind others, that touching them can cause damage.
2. Have students enter the exhibit in small groups. Allow time for a previous group to move on before allowing the next group in.
3. If students have guides to write on, they should be careful to use their clipboards and not exhibit spaces for writing surfaces.

AFTER YOUR VISIT

1. What will you remember from this visit? Does the visit inspire you to know more about Cambodia, the Khmer people, or the Angkorian period?
2. Do the students have any questions that either came up during their visit or that weren't answered by the visit? Where can they find the answers? (For example, research on their own or send the question to Museum educators to ask for help finding the answer)
3. Look through the interdisciplinary activities for more ideas to extend student learning.

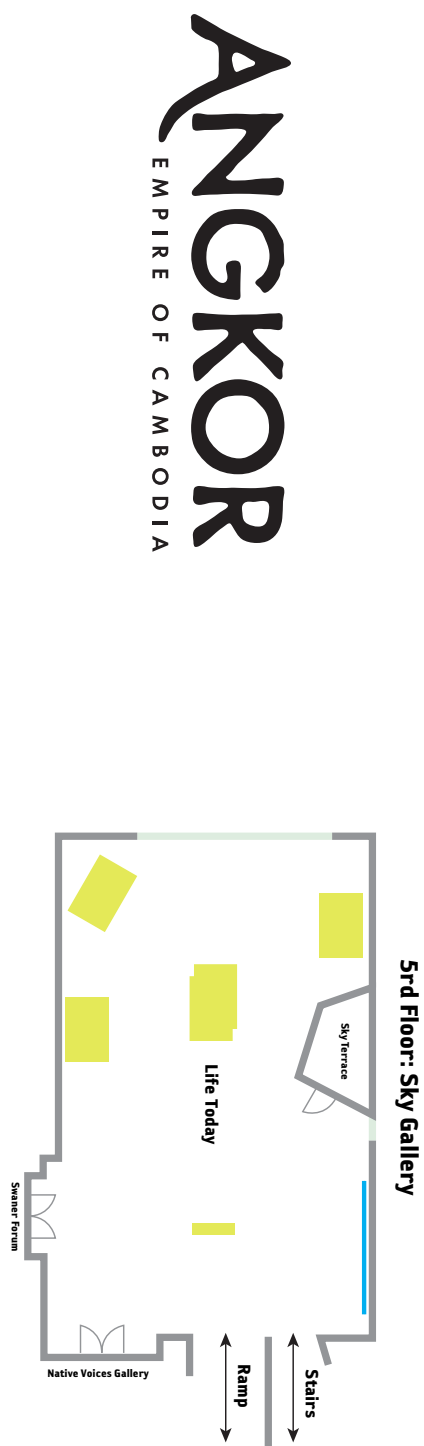
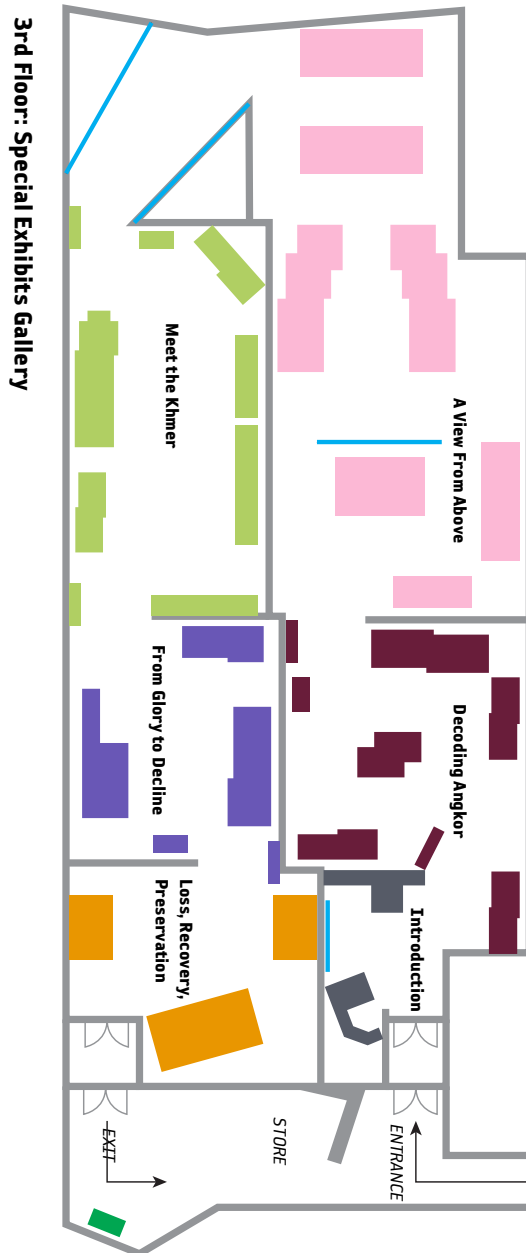
Activity Guide 7th-12th

EXHIBIT MAP

ANGKOR

EMPIRE OF CAMBODIA

EXHIBIT MAP



ANGKOR

EMPIRE OF CAMBODIA

Activity Guide 7th-12th COMPARISON TIMELINES

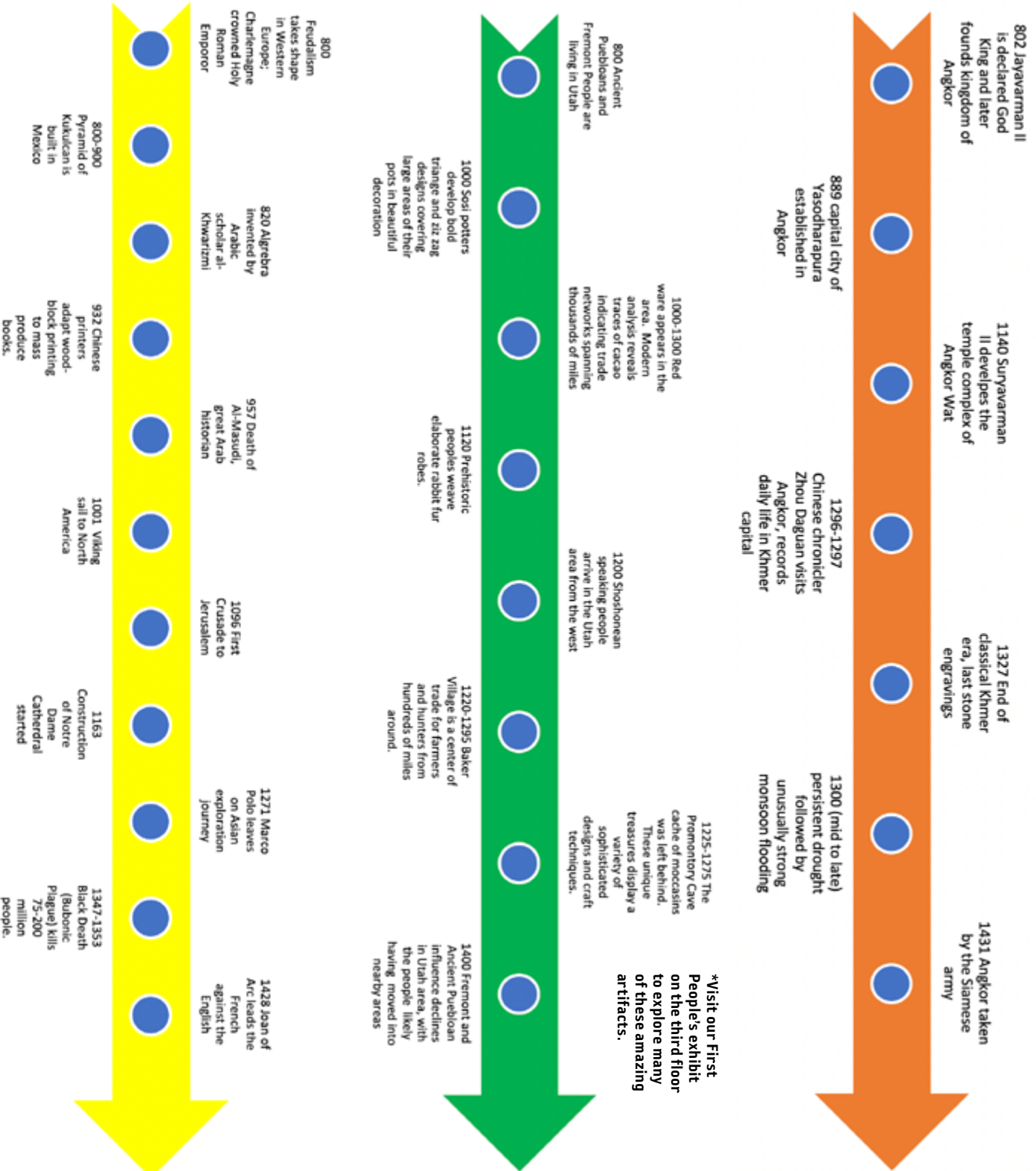
ANGKOR EMPIRE OF CAMBODIA

COMPARISON TIMELINES, 800-1450 CE

KHMER EMPIRE, SOUTHEASTERN ASIA (ANGKORIAN EMPIRE)

TERRITORY THAT WILL BECOME UTAH*

WORLD



Activity Guide 7th–12th COMPARISON TIMELINES

ANGKOR

EMPIRE OF CAMBODIA

- **802 C.E.**—Jayavarman II is crowned, rules until 850, founds kingdom of Angkor.
- **899**—Yasovarman I becomes king, rules until 917, establishes capital Yasodharapura on Angkor Wat site.
- **928**—Jayavarman IV takes throne, establishes capital at Lingapura (Koh Ker).
- **1002**—Khmer civil war between Jayaviravarman and Suryavarman I, construction begins on Western Baray.
- **1050**—Udayadityavarman II takes throne, builds Baphuon.
- **1080**—Mahidharapura Dynasty founded by Jayavarman VI, who builds Phimai temple.
- **1113**—Suryavarman II crowned king, rules until 1150, designs Angkor Wat.
- **1140**—Construction begins on Angkor Wat.
- **End of 12th century**—Angkor Thom (“Great City”) built as new capital, including state temple at the Bayon.
- **1296-97**—Chinese chronicler Zhou Daguan visits Angkor, records daily life in Khmer capital.
- **1327**—End of classical Khmer era, last stone engravings.
- **MID 1300 AND EARLY 1400**—Severe droughts in the Angkor area, followed by periods of flooding.
- **431**—Angkor abandoned after invasion by Siam (Thais), although some monks continue to use the site.
Lake overfished.



STUDENT EXPLORATION GRADES 7-12

FROM LEGEND TO SCIENCE

a. Look carefully at the drawings and photographs in this room. Describe what is happening. Who is creating the action in the image?

b. Sketch an important detail from the drawing or photograph.

Activity Guide 7th-12th
STUDENT EXPLORATION



DECODING ANGKOR

សូមស្វាគមន៍មកកាន់ប្រាសាទអង្គរវត្ត (Translation: Welcome to Angkor Wat.)

Practice writing in the Khmer language. Trace the letters, then try writing them on your own.

សូមស្វាគមន៍មកកាន់ប្រាសាទអង្គរវត្ត

ANGKOR FROM ABOVE

a. The roads of the Khmer Empire were compared to arteries connecting the capital of Angkor with sites across the region. Does this comparison make sense? What does it mean? If the roads are arteries, what does that make the city of Angkor in the comparison?

b. Why do you think roads and transportation are so important to a city with a large population?

Activity Guide 7th–12th

STUDENT EXPLORATION



TEMPLE DESIGN

Gods were believed to live among heaven's mountains and oceans. Temples in Angkor resembled those peaks, and reservoirs symbolized the seas. Our own NHMU building was created with interior space which mimics a canyon valley with mountains reaching up on either side. Sketch a building that reflects aspects of the natural world that are important to you.



MEET THE PEOPLE

a. Name at least two classes of people represented in the Khmer Empire and describe their role in society.

b. Why don't we have many artifacts from the everyday life of Angkor residents? What artifacts would be helpful to teach us about everyday life for citizens of Angkor?

THE END OF AN EMPIRE

a. Explain two reasons archaeologists theorize that the population moved away from Angkor.

b. Angkor Wat's caretakers are devoted to maintaining it as a living heritage site and a place of active worship. They must also accommodate scholars and tourists. It is not easy to balance these different needs while safeguarding the remarkable legacy.

How could tourists, scientists, and worshippers share the same site and respect each other's needs?





LOST AND FOUND

When the temple of Prasat Chen was looted, some of the nine statues arranged inside the temple were taken to different auction houses and museums around the world. Why is it important that these statues be returned to the Cambodian people?

LIFE TODAY

Describe a way in which modern Khmer items or ideas are incorporated with ancient Angkorian traditions in the practice of Buddhist or Hindu worship.

GLOSSARY AND IMPORTANT INDIVIDUALS

Angkor—Capital city of the Khmer Empire, although some scholars use Angkor Empire and Khmer Empire interchangeably.

Angkor Thom—This is the planned city and temple complex built by King Jayavarman VII around 1200. It consists of a royal palace, the Bayon Temple, neighborhoods for residents, causeways, roads, and bridges, etc. It is encircled by a perfectly square moat of water. The moat represents the founding myth of Cambodia when only a tiny island of land existed and the rest of the world was water. The Bayon Temple, while not as large as Angkor Wat, contains impressive bas reliefs which are the only clues to the daily life of everyday individuals recorded in Angkor.

Angkor Wat—The word “wat” in Cambodian means Temple. Angkor Wat is the specific temple complex built by Emperor Suryavarman II, who ruled the region from 1113 to 1150. Angkor Wat is created in the form of the sacred Mount Meru whose five peaks are represented in the five towers of the temple.



Antefix—Temple roof ornament placed at the corner of each temple eave, the place where the roof meets the building.

Apsara—Female spirits of the water and clouds in both the Hindu and Buddhist cosmology. They were known for their graceful dancing and beauty. Their representation is an oft repeated motif in the bas-reliefs decorating Angkor Wat. In fact, there are roughly 600 meters of narrative bas-reliefs at Angkor Wat and these feature approximately 2000 female dancing figures.



Asura—A demon.

Brahma—Part of the Trimurti, the triple deity of Hinduism, along with Vishnu and Shiva. He is the omnipotent Hindu god of creation. He is depicted with four faces to show his ability to see in all directions and know all.

Deva—God-like or celestial beings from the Buddhist pantheon. They were not venerated as Buddha was, but were seen to be protectors of the temple. Also known as devata.

Devata—See above.

Durga—She is a Hindu goddess, also known as Devi and Shakti. She is a mother goddess associated with wars, destruction, protection, and strength.

Finial—an ornament at the peak of a roof or building, or on the top, end or corner of an object.

Ganesha—One of the most popular and easy to identify members of the Hindu pantheon. He is remover of obstacles and a bringer of luck. He has the head of an elephant because after Shiva cut his head off he sent Brahma to find a replacement from the first creature he found facing north. Brahma returned with an elephant's head and Shiva placed it on Ganesha's head and brought him back to life.

Gajashima—A mythical animal from Hindu mythology. It has the body of a lion and the head or trunk of an elephant.



Garuda—He is a Hindu demigod and the mount of Vishnu. He is bird-man figure often modeled after the kite bird. This representation is shown in the small sculpture Vishnu on Garuda. His anthropomorphic form is a man with bird wings and some bird-like features. This representation is shown in the small sculpture “Vishnu on Garuda”. Garuda’s zoomorphic form, more bird than man, is depicted as a giant bird with open, or partially open wings. This form can be observed in the large sculpture “Garuda on the Naga”.

Hamsa—This is a bird based on either a swan or goose. It is a Hindu symbol of the release from the cycle of birth and reincarnation. A hamsa is also the vahana, or mount, of Brahma and his spouse Saraswati.

Hanuman—A Hindu god and a divine varana. Varanas are either monkeys or a forest dwelling people. They are often depicted as humanoid apes. He is a companion to Rama (an avatar of Vishnu) and central character in the epic Ramayana, one of the two most important Hindu legends.

Hevajra—He is a Buddhist protective deity, or enlightened being. He is often pictured with sixteen arms, four legs, and eight heads. Often in one set of arms he holds symbols of deity and in the other set he holds their mounts. Variations exist across South East Asia. He is generally pictured with his consort, but in Cambodia in particular he is pictured alone.

Jayarajadevi—A passionate devotee of Buddhism, Queen Jayarajadevi supported her husband, King Jayavarman VII in his efforts to spread its teachings. She became a teacher whose efforts focused on educating girls. She died fairly early in her reign. Her sister Indradevi, who initially taught Jayarajadevi about Buddhism, became queen and continued the educational community for girls.



Jayavarman VII—Known as the builder king, he ruled the Angkor Empire from 1181-1220. He was the first Angkor leader to fully embrace Buddhism and disseminate it through the empire by making it the official state religion. He built the monumental city of Angkor Thom and also expanded infrastructure creating hospitals, highways, and rest houses throughout the empire. Additionally, the empire reached its greatest expansion of territory under his rule.

Khmer—This term is used as a synonym for the Cambodian people. It is also used to name the language and the empire which ruled over present day Cambodia during the middle ages.

Khmer Rouge—This is the name for the Communist Party group which ruled Cambodia from 1975-1979. The name means Red Khmer. The Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot, fought against the Khmer Republic in a civil war. They captured the capital in 1975 and began a campaign to remake the country. Intellectuals, artists, musicians, and dancers were murdered. Cities were emptied as a campaign to return the country to a land of pastoral farmers began. Children were removed from their families. Thousands of individuals perceived as enemies of the government were murdered in the “Killing Fields”. Thousands more died from starvation. In the end, an estimated 1.5 to 2 million people, approximately 25% of Cambodia’s population, died under their leadership. Their reign ended in 1979 when Vietnam invaded Cambodia. Several iterations of government followed, including the restoration of the monarchy in 1993 and the formalized change in name to the Kingdom of Cambodia. A general amnesty for former members of the Khmer Rouge led to the surrender of thousands of individuals in the following year.

Activity Guide 7th–12th

GLOSSARY

ANGKOR

EMPIRE OF CAMBODIA



Lakshmi—The Hindu goddess of wealth and good fortune. She is married to Vishnu.

LiDAR—Light Detection and Ranging. A detection system that uses rapid laser pulses to measure variable distances from the laser to earth. This data can then be used to create 3-D imaging and maps.

Linga—An abstract, not literal, representational symbol of Shiva. In three-dimensional form it is a smooth cylinder resting in a circular disk. However, in our exhibit the linga has a square base highlighting regional variations in items. It is a votary object in the worship of Shiva. Two dimensional carvings of lingas were carved into the stones of rivers allowing the water to flow over them thereby blessing the water.

Lokeshvara—The bodhisattva of compassion and mercy. A bodhisattva is a “buddha-to-be,” meaning a being who could attain enlightenment, but chooses to delay doing so that they may help others to achieve enlightenment, and thus end their suffering.

Mount Meru—According to Hindu cosmology, Mount Meru was the home of the gods. It had five peaks, which are mirrored in the five towers of Angkor Wat. Thus, the temple was a literal representation of the home of the gods. Additionally, Mount Meru was surrounded by ocean. This is reflected in the massive moat that surrounds the temple.

Naga—Snake. Also, the mythological snake beings whose kingdom was under their ocean. Khmer origin mythology recounts that a naga princess married the only man on the tiny plot of land that existed, which was Cambodia and inhabited by a prince. Her father “chased away” the water and thus the land of Cambodia was born and later its population by the naga princess. Even today Cambodians still may say they are “born from the naga”.



Narasimha—This is an avatar of Vishnu. He incarnates, or appears on earth as part man, part lion. In this form he killed the demon Hiranyakashipu. This is the form in which he will come to earth to dispel wickedness and save humanity from danger.

Pandava-Sahadeva—The Pandavas were five brothers, the foster sons of Pandu King of Kuru. He was unable to have children, but his wife Kunti was granted a boon that she could bear the children of deities. Sahadeva and his twin brother Nakula were the children of the Ashvins, twin Hindu gods of medicine and health. These five brothers are the protagonists of the Hindu epic Mahābhārata. This tale recounts the war between cousins called the Kurukshetra War.

Prajnaparamita—A Buddhist deity of wisdom. The word prajnaparamita in Sanskrit means “the perfection of wisdom” and refers to the wisdom needed for enlightenment. Thus the female deity is referred to as the “Mother of all Buddhas.”

Preah Noreay—This is the name of Vishnu, a Hindu deity, incorporated into Buddhist worship at Angkor Wat. Preah means “god,” “king,” or “sacred” in the Khmer language.

Repatriation—The return of items, artifacts, art, or human remains to the country of origin.

Activity Guide 7th–12th

GLOSSARY

ANGKOR

EMPIRE OF CAMBODIA



Sadashiva—This is the highest manifestation of Shiva in Hinduism. He is depicted with five heads which represent the five creators or the five realities, and 10 arms which represent the 10 directions.

Sema—A Buddhist boundary marker, particularly associated with the Theravadin form of Buddhism practiced in Cambodia. They delineate the sacred space inside Buddhist temples where monks perform rituals.

Shiva—Part of the Trimurti, the triple deity of Hinduism, along with Vishnu and Brahma. Shiva is known as “The Destroyer.” He is a complicated figure—benevolent and frightening. These contradictions are shown in his aspects as he is both married to Parvati, also known as Uma, and father to Ganesha, but is also a hermit who leads an ascetic lifestyle.



Stela—an upright stone slab or column carved with a commemorative inscription or relief.

Uma—She is also known as Parvati. The goddess of power, love, beauty, motherhood, fertility and devotion. She is mother to Ganesha and married to Shiva. Uma originally created Ganesha out of turmeric to guard her while she was bathing. Ganesha was beheaded by Shiva for forbidding him entry. Upon discovering the death of her child Uma declares she will destroy all creation unless Ganesha is brought back to life and worshipped before all other gods. Shiva repented his folly when he learned who Ganesha was and brought him back to life using the replacement elephant head Brahma located. Shiva then declared Ganesha his son as well.

Vaishnava—A Branch of Hinduism devoted to the worship of Vishnu as the supreme being.

Varuna—He is the god of waters, ocean, and rain, yet in earlier iterations of Hinduism he was also associated with the sky. His mount is the crocodile Makara, but here he is pictured riding a hamsa, a heavenly swan. He is associated with the western direction.

Vishnu—Part of the Trimurti, the triple deity of Hinduism, along with Brahma and Shiva. He is known as “The Preserver”. Whenever the world is threatened by chaos, evil, or destructive forces he descends to protect it. He is married to Lakshmi.

Yama—The Hindu god of death and the underworld. He is associated with the south direction.

INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES

ART

Compare the unfinished state of Vishnu to the finished state of Vishnu. What techniques are being used to create the sculpture? What similarities do you see? What does the artist have yet to complete?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jkwlpIUOW4g>

This is a 3:38 long clip posted by UNESCO of the Sbek Thom, Khmer Shadow Theatre. It contains both performance elements and information about the tradition of puppetry, and the creation of the puppets.

Activity Guide 7th-12th
ACTIVITIES & RESOURCES

ANGKOR

EMPIRE OF CAMBODIA



Activity Guide 7th–12th

ACTIVITIES & RESOURCES



Curators of this exhibit note that Angkor was not always the reddish-brown or gray stone we now see. Some parts of the temples were brightly colored and decorated. “Archaeologists can see remnants of decorated plaster covering some temples. Traces of gold and colorful pigmentation remain. These would have depicted floral designs and scenes from mythology, just as in the carved stones that endure.”

Students can illustrate a scene in color, or draw and color a statue.

A similar detection of color has been revealed in the classical statues of Greco-Roman origin. The following articles discuss the beauty and controversy of attempting to reintroduce color to ancient art works.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/17/arts/design/reproductions-museums-sculpture-met-brink-mann-antiquity-polychromy.html>

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/10/29/the-myth-of-whiteness-in-classical-sculpture>

We have even experienced this controversy in the modern arena as black and white films have been colorized.

The Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies at Cornell University has a wonderful resources for teachers. Use the link below to explore their detailed lesson Maps and Memory: Using Contemporary Art to Learn About Vietnamese and Cambodian History <https://ecommons.cornell.edu/handle/1813/69855>



LANGUAGE ARTS

Compare and contrast Portia's speech from the Merchant of Venice to Rabbit's speech from the Cambodian folk tale, "Rabbit, the Judge".

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE ACT 4 SCENE 1

Portia

A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine:
The court awards it, and the law doth give it.

Shylock

Most rightful judge!

Portia

And you must cut this flesh from off his breast:
The law allows it, and the court awards it.

Shylock

Most learned judge! A sentence! Come,
prepare!

Portia

Tarry a little; there is something else.
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;
The words expressly are 'a pound of flesh:'
Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound
of flesh;
But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands
and goods
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate
Unto the state of Venice.

Portia

Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh.
Shed thou no blood, nor cut thou less nor more
But just a pound of flesh: if thou cut'st more
Or less than a just pound, be it but so much
As makes it light or heavy in the substance,
Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair,
Thou diest and all thy goods are confiscate.

EXCERPT FROM FOLKTALE, "RABBIT, THE JUDGE"

"Oh Great Judge, you sure have won the bet. As a result, you can chop his head off," Sophea Tonsay (respectful title for Rabbit as a lawyer) replied.

The farmer was very upset and angry. He yelled at the rabbit: "I put my life in your hands, and now look at what you are doing to me! You've just invited the judge to chop off my head. What kind of help is that?"

The farmer, trembling uncontrollably from head to toe, did not dare to oppose the verdict. He bent down on all fours, ready to have his head chopped off by the judge. The latter lifted the sword, but the rabbit stopped him short.

"Great Judge, pay attention to what you are going to do." Pointing to the farmer's hair, the rabbit asked:

"What is this?"

"It's the hair," said the judge.

"And this? What do you call it?"

"The skin," the judge replied.

"And what are you going to chop?"

"The head" the judge said suspiciously.

"Ah, Great Judge, when you made your bet, you saw everything but the oxcart. Now look at this object, I do not see the head either. I see the hair, the skin, and the flesh. If you can convince me that this is the head, I'll show you the oxcart."

It was decided that the judge and the farmer were even. Once again, Sophea Tonsay had resolved a dispute.



HOW THE SNAILS OUTWITTED THE HARE

(From “Tales of the Hare: 27 Classic Folktales from Cambodia”)

One early morning, Suphea Rabbit was very thirsty so he headed towards a big pond full of water lilies, lotuses and many snails. Once he reached the pond, Suphea Rabbit lowered himself to a good drink of the water.

At the very minute he opened his mouth, a snail on top of a lotus leaf shouted at him, “Brother Rabbit! Why do you drink my water?” Rabbit answered, “This water does not belong to anyone nor to your snail ancestors. I have been drinking this water for years and nobody has ever stopped me. Why do you slow, gnarled snails dare to stop me today?”

The snail was furious at the rabbit for calling his kind slow and gnarled, so he shouted back, “How dare you call us slow and gnarled! Would you dare bet on a race with me for rights to the pond water?”

Hearing this proposal amused Suphea Rabbit. How can a crawling snail beat the racing hops of a rabbit? He replied, “Brother Snail, why are you asking for this bet? Don’t you see our long legs?” The snail became even more daring and shouted back, “Come back tomorrow to start the race!” Rabbit responded, “Yes, Brother Snail.”

After Rabbit left, Snail thought to himself, “I sure got myself into deep trouble. How can I win a race with a rabbit when I can hardly crawl a few feet at a time?” The snail thought and thought, then he came up with a brilliant idea.

Snail called all his snail brothers and snail sisters to a meeting and told them about the upcoming race with the rabbit in the morning. Then he said to them, “I need you all to place yourselves around the pond but stay invisible. When Rabbit calls out to find my location, the one of you ahead of him should answer his call.” All the snails answered, “Yes, Brother Snail”.

The next morning, Suphea Rabbit came to the contest walking slowly and lazily because he thought he could easily beat the snail and win the race. When he reached the pond, he yelled, “Brother Snail, are you ready to race?” Snail replied, “Yep, let’s go!”

So the two started the race. About one minute later, Suphea Rabbit called out, “Brother snail!” The snail ahead answered “Yep!” Another minute later, Suphea Rabbit called out again, “Brother snail!” Yet another snail ahead of him answered, “Yep!” Rabbit was confused. How can this slow poke beat me?!

So Suphea Rabbit lost this race to the snail and also lost his bet to drink water from the pond.

This is why rabbits never drink water from lakes or ponds. Rabbits only drink morning dew.



MATH

The concept for zero may have developed in the Cambodian area as a placeholder long before it was developed in other areas of the world. Talk about the importance of having a zero placeholder. Students can recreate the symbols that were found meaning the number 605.

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/origin-number-zero-180953392/>

<https://www.maa.org/press/periodicals/convergence/mathematical-treasure-the-cambodian-zero>

MUSIC AND DANCE

This is 3:41 long clip of the Cambodian Royal Ballet performing an apsara dance at Angkor Wat. Apsaras were female spirits of the water and clouds in both the Hindu and Buddhist cosmology. They were known for their graceful dancing and beauty. Their representation is an oft repeated motif in the bas-reliefs decorating Angkor Wat. In fact, there are roughly 600 meters of narrative bas-reliefs at Angkor Wat and these feature approximately 2000 female dancing figures. The Royal Ballet of Cambodia wears costuming modeled after the reliefs and perform dances whose gestures narrate Khmer mythology. Intricate and precise hand movements are a hallmark of Khmer dance tradition which require training from childhood to properly execute.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Erbp1Isk96M>

The Instagram account of the Cambodian Royal Ballet is a stunningly beautiful visual resource. It has modern performance and rehearsal photographs, videos, and historical photos of the company. UNESCO has declared the company to be part of the “Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity”. The ballet company was subjected to a program of systematic destruction under the rule of the Khmer Rouge who eliminated almost all of the master dancers. However, a small number remained and following Pol Pot’s defeat in 1979 dance troupes reemerged to save the art form.

<https://www.instagram.com/cambodianroyalballet/?hl=en>



SCIENCE

This is an academic article on mapping ancient cities with remotely sensed data. Although the information in this article is advanced for most students, there are some good photographs and maps that teachers may wish to use with students, especially the photographs that show different time periods of the same view. Angkor was a city where water was highly controlled. This article talks about mapping water. Ask students why water is a vital commodity.

<https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.1721509115>

Here is more information on Lidar: <https://velodynelidar.com/what-is-lidar/>

SPORTS AND GAMES

The Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies at Cornell University has wonderful resources for teachers. Use the link below to explore their lesson on Traditional Games of Cambodia.

<https://ecommons.cornell.edu/handle/1813/69883>

SOCIAL STUDIES AND HISTORY

Compare medieval European sumptuary laws to customs/laws of dress in Angkor. According to Chinese envoy Zhou Daguan men and women of the 13th century Khmer Empire wore minimal clothing being “naked to the waist” and a piece of cloth wrapped below. When they ventured into public they wrapped a second, larger piece of cloth over the smaller one worn below. However, despite wearing minimal clothing due to living in a warmer climate than much of medieval Europe, the Khmer Empire still created customs and laws regarding who was able to wear specific types of adornment. Compare Khmer rules to English sumptuary laws.

Khmer Laws

1. Only the king was allowed to wear fabric that had a full pattern of flowers. Much of the most extravagant and finest cloth came from Siam, Cham (what is modern day Vietnam) and the Western Seas (India or the Malayan Peninsula) which was widely regarded as the highest quality. Some of the cloth pieces for the king could cost several ounces of gold each.
2. The king's relative and senior officials of the court can wear fabric that have a scattered floral design.
3. Junior officials only can wear a two-flower pattern cloth. However, women of “ordinary” or comparable to peasant class, were able to wear a two-flower design. Among men, only the king was allowed to dye his palms, and the soles of his feet red. Women were allowed to dye their palms and soles red.

English Laws

1. 1337 No one except the king, queen and their children to wear imported cloth. Import of all foreign cloths forbidden.
2. 1363 Grooms and their wives, daughters and children are to wear no suits of clothing worth more than two marks for the cloth, nor anything of gold or silver, embroidered, enameled or of silk. Craftsmen and yeomen, and their wives, daughters and children are to wear no suits of clothing worth more than 40s. (shillings), nor precious stones, silk, silver, nor items made of gold or silver, embroidered, enameled, or of silk, and the wives and daughters to wear no silk veils but only of thread made within the realm, and no fur or budge (lamb skin with the wool dressed outward) but only lamb, coney (rabbit), cat and fox.
3. Esquires and gentlemen under the rank of knight, with incomes below £100 p.a. (pounds annually), and their wives, daughters and children, are to wear no suits of clothes worth more than 4½ marks, nor cloth of gold, silk, silver or embroidered cloth, rings, buttons, items made of gold or silver, precious stones, or any furs. Wives and daughters the same, and with no turnings-up or purples (ruffles), no excess trimmings, or any apparel of gold, silver or precious stones.

Questions

1. What similarities do you see among Khmer clothing rules and English clothing rules?
2. What differences are there?
3. In Khmer society women, even of the “ordinary” class can wear fabric reserved for male junior officials and adorn themselves with red dyed soles and palms. Why do you think lower class women were allowed to have these privileges, but not men of the same social standing?

Activity Guide 7th-12th
SPECIAL THANKS



ANGKOR

Presented
by

GEORGE S. AND DOLORES DORÉ ECCLES

F O U N D A T I O N

Exhibit Sponsors

I.J. and Jeanné Wagner Foundation

Janet Quinney Lawson Foundation

Lawrence T. & Janet Dee Foundation

Community Sponsors

Clark and Nancy Giles

Special Exhibition Endowed Fund

Marriner S. Eccles Foundation

Institutional Support



This exhibition is a collaboration with the
National Museum of Cambodia and was
produced by MuseumsPartner