



WORLD BOOK WEB

Torres Strait Islanders Scavenger Hunt – World Book Student

Learn about the people of the Torres Strait Islands and their culture. Use the World Book Web to find the answers to the questions below.

Find it!

1. Where are the Torres Strait Islands?
2. How many islands are there and how many are inhabited by people?
3. How did the arrival of British settlers affect the culture of Torres Strait Islanders?
4. What are the two main traditional languages spoken by Torres Strait Islanders today?
5. How did Torres Strait Islanders get food?
6. How did the environment of the island affect whether they hunted and gathered or farmed?
7. How were Torres Strait Island societies organised?
8. How did Torres Strait Islanders convey their histories and beliefs?
9. What did traditional religious ceremonies on the islands feature?
10. How did Islanders use their canoes?
11. How did the arrival of the London Missionary Society impact Torres Strait Islander culture?
12. What impact did the Stolen Generations have on Torres Strait Islander culture?

Learn more:

- Learn more about the Torres Strait Islands, here: <http://www.worldbookonline.com/student/article?id=ar725241>
- Learn more about NAIDOC Week, a week that commemorates the history and culture of Australia's native peoples, here: <http://www.worldbookonline.com/student/article?id=ar756629>
- Learn more about the Stolen Generations and consider the impact government policies have had on Torres Strait Islanders and their culture: <http://www.worldbookonline.com/student/article?id=ar750182>

Torres Strait Islander Scavenger Hunt Answers:

1. The Torres Strait Islands lie in the Torres Strait, which separates the northern tip of Australia and the island of New Guinea.
2. There are over 100 islands in the archipelago but people live on only 18 of them.
3. Colonists began to operate many fishing boats in the strait. Missionaries soon spread Christianity through the islands and outlawed many traditional practices. The British also employed workers from the South Sea Islands, who brought additional foreign influences to the Torres Strait Islands.
4. Kala Lagaw Ya and Miriam or Miriam Mir.
5. The Islanders were hunter-gathers and farmers. They fished and hunted sea animals as well as birds. They farmed and gathered wild plants.
6. Farming was particularly important on the strait's eastern islands, because of their fertile volcanic soil. Some of the rocky western islands had mudflats with abundant wildlife, so hunting was important there.
7. The people were organised into clans. Men typically hunted, fished, and headed the households and clans. Women were primarily responsible for taking care of children and the home. Women also fished and gathered wild plants.
8. The Torres Strait Islanders used songs and stories to convey their histories and beliefs. They performed with drums and other percussion instruments, as well as horns made from shells. Storytelling was also important.
9. Traditional religious ceremonies on the islands featured music, dance, and elaborate masks. Some masks were made of turtle shell and adorned with feathers, shells, and other materials.
10. Islanders used their canoes for fishing as well as for visiting, raiding, and trading with other communities on the other islands.
11. The missionaries outlawed many of the Islanders' dances, songs, and religious practices. The teachers introduced elements of Pacific Island cultures and languages together with their own understanding of Christianity. The Islanders also combined their own traditional rituals and beliefs with Christian practices and ideas.
12. Australian government authorities placed Torres Strait Islander children in institutions, missions, and foster homes in an effort to force the children to adopt Western culture. Many children grew up not knowing their culture.