

#9242

INDONESIA:

A SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATION

BENCHMARK MEDIA

2000

Grade Levels: 6-10

20 minutes

DESCRIPTION

Offers a brief history of Indonesia's thousands of islands, and an overview of its varied resources, religions, people, and cultures. Mentions Sumatra, Borneo, Java, and Bali. A problem for Indonesia, so separated by its diversities and needs, is how to remain united.



ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Subject Area: Geography: Places and Regions

- Standard: Understands the physical and human characteristics of place
 - Benchmark: Knows the human characteristics of places (e.g., cultural characteristics such as religion, language, politics, technology, family structure, gender; population characteristics; land uses; levels of development)
 - Benchmark: Knows the physical characteristics of places (e.g., soils, land forms, vegetation, wildlife, climate, natural hazards)
 - Benchmark: Knows how technology shapes the human and physical characteristics of places (e.g., satellite dishes, computers, road construction)

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To present the varied physical geography, climate, farming, and industrialization of this island nation, Indonesia.
2. To portray unification and exploitation under colonial rule, then independence in 1945.
3. To illustrate that although predominately Islamic, there is diversity of and traditional tolerance for other religions.
4. To depict Indonesia's famous handcrafts and performing arts.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

If you were in a country with the world's 4th largest population, made up of over 3,000 islands spread out over 3,000 miles, where would you be? Indonesia.

This video examines its history and geography. Because of its many still volcanoes, the resulting volcanic ash had made Indonesia one of the most fertile nations in Southeast Asia. Terraced rice fields are characteristic. The island of Borneo has the nation's largest rain forest, home to many exotic animals.

The island of Java, the most industrialized, has 55% of the country's population. The nation's capital, Jakarta, has 11 million in population, with a daytime influx of about an additional 10 million workers from the surrounding area. Javanese has highly skilled handcrafts, including "batik," a technique for hand-decorating textiles.

The islands were first unified by colonial powers, mainly the Dutch. The islands declared independence in 1945.

Of Indonesia's 188 million population, 85% are Muslim, making it the country with the largest Muslim population in the world. Other prominent religions include Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, and Animism. The problem for Indonesia, so separated, with so different religions, traditions, and needs; is how to remain united. But all the while, along with the rest of Southeast Asia, Indonesia continues to industrialize and its economy improves.



BEFORE SHOWING

1. Using a wall map, have students locate Indonesia. How far is it from where they live? Locate places such as Jakarta, and the islands of Sumatra and Bali. How do physical geographic features and climate of Indonesia compare with those of the United States'?
2. Discuss the problems of keeping such a country of far-flung separate islands united.
3. Ask students to make a list of how different cultures have shaped their lives, for example, the foods they eat, the sports they play, the language(s) they speak, the music they listen to, their religion. How would their everyday life be different if it had not been influenced by other cultures?
4. Discuss how physical geography and climate, local commerce and farming, available transportation and communications affect the way people are able to live and work together in your local area. What recent changes have resulted from modern communications? Expand the concept to other regions of the country, including Indonesia.

AFTER SHOWING

1. Stimulate class discussion about physical geography, climate, and the reasons for the success of the nation's long-term industrialization, and economic improvement.
2. Divide the class into two groups, and assign one to a life of a professional Muslim middle-class person in Jakarta, and the other to a Hindu Bali Island "batik" craftsman. Ask the students to prepare a class presentation on a typical day in the life of their subject. Compare those typical daily events with similar daily events in the students' lives.
3. Ask students to plan a trip to Jakarta, to Bali, and to the rain forests of Borneo, using maps, tourist information, information from the Web, books or articles, and the video. Reports should address how they would travel, where they would choose to visit, what they would want to see, do and buy, which time of year they would prefer to travel and why, what clothing they would bring, and what the weather and landscape would be like.



4. If any Indonesian political or economic issues are currently in the headlines, have students bring in clippings and discuss them. Lead an investigation into the nation's larger economic and political structure and problems.



RELATED RESOURCES



Captioned Media Program

- Destination: Southeast Asia #8696
- I Love My City: Yogyakarta #3482
- Indonesia #8772



World Wide Web

The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **INDONESIA**

<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/id.html>

From the CIA World Factbook, presents information on Indonesia, such as a brief background on its geography, people, government, economy, transportation, the military, and other facts.

- **INDONESIA**

<http://www.interknowledge.com/indonesia/>

"Unity in Diversity," the national motto of Indonesia, also offers a cultural and geographical variety. Also discussed is its climate and history.

- **ISLAM IN THE UNITED STATES**

<http://usinfo.state.gov/usa/islam/>

Provides up-to-date news relating to the Muslim world, explains what Muslim life is like in America, where mosques are located, and other relevant topics.