Hands On Learning
with Reading Museum Service

THAILAND G77

Thailand, called Siam in the past, is in Southeast Asia. Its neighbours are Burma (Myanmar) on the north and west, Laos on the north and northeast, Cambodia on the east, and Malaysia on the south. Thailand is about the size of France and is home to several distinct geographic regions of mountain, plateau and flat river valley.

The Thais began to settle in the 6th century and by the end of the 13th century ruled most of the western portion. During the next 400 years, they fought from time to time with the Cambodians to the east and the Burmese to the west. Thailand has never experienced foreign colonization.



Karen basket



The Karen people (or Kariang) live mostly in the hilly western and nothern areas of Thailand including the eastern border region of Burma. They come from a diverse ethnic mix with many different languages and religions. The Karen originate from Burma but emigrated in large numbers to Thailand as a result of war. The basket is made from bamboo and is durable. They use it as a wardrobe or to keep rice seeds or corn seeds because the weave is very tight. They also use these baskets to carry vegetables back home after working in the fields.

Living in the mountains and forests, the Karen people plant according to the seasons and the soil conditons of the area. In the past, they produced food for personal consumption. At present they have become commercial farmers and have started using modern technologies to replace traditional way to produce as much as possible for market sales.



Reading Borough Council
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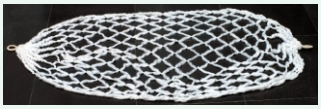
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Hammock

The hammock is a fabric sling used for sleeping or resting. It is stretched between two trees or attached to a metal or wood structure.





In the past, Thai people put a newborn child in a hammock or cradle. As Thailand is a hot climate country, rocking the hammock to and fro would keep babies happy and comfortable. Hammocks can be made from different materials such as sarong, cloth and rope. After feeding a child, a mother would put him or her into the hammock, cradling and singing him or her to sleep.



Mobile

This mobile is a woven fish called Pla Ta Pian in Thai language. It can be made of palm or bamboo leaf or ribbon. The fish is a symbol of prosperity because when the rice is ripe, the fish is in the rice field.





The fish mobile is usually hung above the cradle or hammock to encourage the baby to grow healthy and strong. Another reason is to divert the child, to test eyesight and perception, and to check if the child can fix its gaze on something.

Basket

A basket is a container which is traditionally made of bamboo and is also made today from plastic.



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Woven belt

In the past hill tribes weaved their own clothes. At present, there are few people who weave by their own. Weaving is only used for tiny accessories such as a bag or cloth for the shoulder or around the waist.



Cotton sarong

A sarong is a large sheet of fabric, often wrapped around the waist and worn as a skirt by men and women throughout south Asia and southeast Asia, parts of Africa, and on many Pacific islands. In Thailand, the fabric is often with checkered or geometric patterns. Sarongs are also used as other forms of clothing, such as shawls, complete dresses or upper body clothing and used as towels, baby carriers or hammock.













Pair of bead decorated slippers

Shoes may vary from a simple flip-flop to a boot. A houseshoe, also called a slipper, is a soft and lightweight indoor type of casual footwear. The term "slipper" is sometimes used interchangeably with the terms flip-flop and sandal. In Thailand footwear is not customarily worn indoors. This pair of slippers is made for tourists sales.





Printed Thai silk square

The scarf tied around the neck for warmth or decoration. The printed images are a traditional Thai motif.