

# Countries Around the World™

## Cambodia

### Program Summary

Meet Neary. She lives in a suburb of Phnom Penh — Cambodia's capital city. Follow her to school to see what a typical day there is like. Along the way, students will learn about Cambodia's location in Southeast Asia, the country's official language, as well as the currency used by people who live there. Then, travel with Neary and her classmates to the Royal Palace. Students will learn that Cambodia is a constitutional monarchy and hear about some of the legends surrounding the establishment of the capital. Discover the importance of agriculture in Cambodia as Neary and her mother bring mangoes they have picked to the market to sell. They use the money they make to purchase other items they need. After shopping at the market, explore Wat Phnom, a pagoda built on a hill in the historic center of Phnom Penh. Finally, venture with Neary across land and water to marvel at the beauty of Angkor Wat. The journey there will unveil how life in Cambodia is based around water. While some villages consist of houses built on boats, many homes are built on stilts to keep them above the floods of the rainy season.

### Country Information

- **location:** Southeast Asia; bordering the Gulf of Thailand; bordered by Thailand, Vietnam and Laos
- **capital:** Phnom Penh
- **official language:** Khmer
- **government type:** constitutional monarchy
- **total area:** approximately 181,040 sq km
- **climate:** tropical with a monsoon season (June to October) and a dry season (November to May)
- **terrain:** mostly low, flat plains with mountains in the Southwest and North
- **major bodies of water:** Mekong River, Tonlé Sap Lake, Gulf of Thailand
- **natural resources:** includes oil and gas, timber and gemstones
- **agricultural products:** rice, rubber, corn, vegetables, cashews and tapioca

### Vocabulary

**Temple of Angkor Wat** — The largest religious temple in the world. Built during the 12<sup>th</sup> century, it was dedicated to the Hindu god Vishnu, but became a Buddhist temple centuries later. Angkor Wat has become a symbol of Cambodia and appears on its national flag.

**Southeast Asia** — A subregion of Asia. It includes countries geographically south of China, east of India and north of Australia.

**Khmer** — The aboriginal people of Cambodia and the official language of the country.

**riel** — The official currency of Cambodia.

**constitutional monarchy** — A government with a constitution, elected representative body and monarch with limited powers.

(Continued)

**motodop** — A motorbike taxi, it is a popular mode of transportation in Cambodia.

**krama** — A traditional Cambodian scarf, typically made of cotton or silk, that has multiple uses. It is primarily worn to provide protection from the sun, dust and wind.

**pagoda** — A Buddhist place of worship. Wat Phnom is an important pagoda in Phnom Penh.

**Buddhism** — A religion based on the life and teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha. This religion is practiced worldwide. Buddhism is the official religion of Cambodia.

**karma** — The Hindu and Buddhist belief that a person's actions affect what happens to him or her.

**Tonlé Sap Lake** — The largest freshwater lake in Southeast Asia. During the rainy season, the lake can swell to cover nearly 20% of Cambodia.

### Pre-viewing Discussion

- Locate Cambodia on a map. Use the map and other geographical information to make inferences about the country's landscape and people. Return to this list after viewing the program. Which inferences were confirmed? Should unconfirmed inferences be regarded as false? Why or why not? Discuss the pros and cons of investigating the country from the viewpoint of one child.
- Have students prepare a schedule of what a typical weekday is like for them. They can include details of what they do before, during and after school. As students watch the program, instruct them to note any similarities or differences between their day and Neary's day.
- Cambodia's climate is tropical. Considering factors such as temperature and rainfall, determine how life in a tropical climate might influence one's way of life. Some parts of Cambodia receive over 200 inches of rainfall each year. Ask students what they would do (or how their life would be different) if they lived in a region that received that much rainfall.

### Follow-up Activities

- Provide students with an outline map of Southeast Asia. Students can locate and label Cambodia, its capital, neighboring countries and major bodies of water. For reference, visit [sf.factmonster.com/atlas/country/cambodia.html](http://sf.factmonster.com/atlas/country/cambodia.html). Have students answer questions such as: What borders Cambodia to the north, south, east and west?
- Southeast Asia is a unique region of the world that consists of island nations as well as countries on the Asian continent. In some ways, these countries are similar in that they have similar climates and their geographic proximity to each other has allowed for their cultures to influence each other. In other ways, these countries can be very different. Geography, belief systems and language, for example, may differ from one country to the next. Engage students in a comparative study of Cambodia with other nations of this region. Determine a few areas of focus (e.g., geography, religion, agriculture, etc.) and organize findings in a class chart. Consider watching *Indonesia, Vietnam and Myanmar (Burma)* of this series.
- Discuss the cultural elements of Neary's daily life. Which aspects of her life appear to be unique to Cambodia or the region of Southeast Asia and which are more universal in nature?
- Rice is a staple of the Cambodian diet. Conduct an investigation with students into the nutritional value of rice as well as the dishes rice is served with in Cambodia. Students will discover that fish is also a big part of Cambodians' diet. Discuss how these two foods correspond to the geography and climate of the country. Younger students may enjoy reading Norah Dooley's *Everybody Cooks Rice* (Lerner, 1992) and discovering that rice is an ingredient in the traditional dishes of many cultures. As an extension, hold a cultural potluck in which rice is the key ingredient. The dishes students bring in can be a part of their cultural heritage or simply a favorite household dish.

(Continued)

- Khmer is the official language of Cambodia. Visit [www.embassy.org/cambodia/tourism/learnkhmer.html](http://www.embassy.org/cambodia/tourism/learnkhmer.html) to learn some basic words and phrases of the Khmer language. Share this with students. To help them practice saying these words, have students respond to simple questions in Khmer, such as: What month is it? How old are you? What is your name?
- Investigate Cambodia's monthly rainfall totals and compare these to those of your local community. Visit [www.bbc.co.uk/weather/world/city\\_guides/results.shtml?tt=TT002520](http://www.bbc.co.uk/weather/world/city_guides/results.shtml?tt=TT002520) for a chart that features average monthly precipitation totals for Cambodia's capital, Phnom Penh. As students compare rainfall totals for these two locations, ask questions such as: Is there a time when your local community receives more rain than Phnom Penh? Compare rainfall totals for the driest and wettest month in each place. With this data you can also: build graphs, express greater than/less than relationships, find the difference between numbers, practice measurement and convert units of measurement.
- The Temple of Angkor Wat is the largest religious temple in the world. Considered one of the world's most magnificent architectural masterpieces, it is a destination for thousands of visitors to Cambodia each year. Visit [www.world-heritage-tour.org/asia/kh/angkor/map.html](http://www.world-heritage-tour.org/asia/kh/angkor/map.html) to take a virtual field trip of this very special location. Students can sketch their favorite part of the tour. Discuss the temple's history and how it has become a symbol of the country. Conduct some additional research to create travel brochures for this Southeast Asian destination. Be sure to highlight its history, location and architectural beauty.
- In this program, we see Neary and her friends release birds for good luck. Have students discuss other traditions that they or people they know practice for good luck. Students can also discuss acts and symbols that are linked with bad luck. Challenge older students by encouraging them to discuss the concept of luck. What is it? Do they believe in it? Can one actually do things that influence good or bad luck? Students might enjoy designing an investigation to test the use of lucky symbols or objects.

## Suggested Internet Resources

- [www.einaudi.cornell.edu/SoutheastAsia/outreach/resources/CambodiaWebUnit/cambodia.html](http://www.einaudi.cornell.edu/SoutheastAsia/outreach/resources/CambodiaWebUnit/cambodia.html)  
"Cambodia: A Classroom Study" is based on a classroom study kit prepared by the Southeast Asia Program at Cornell University. Includes teacher-developed activities.
- [lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/khtoc.html](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/khtoc.html)  
The Library of Congress presents this overview of Cambodia's history and culture. A helpful resource for both teachers and older students.
- [www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov)  
The CIA World Factbook web site presents detailed and up-to-date information on Cambodia and many other countries. Topics include geography, people, government, economy, transportation and communication. On the main page of the CIA site, click on the "World Factbook" link.

## Suggested Print Resources

- Giraud, Herve. *Kradji: A Child of Cambodia*. Thomson Gale, Farmington Hills, MI; 2005.
- Phillips, Douglas A. *Southeast Asia*. Chelsea House, New York, NY; 2006.
- Yip, Dora and Dayaneetha De Silva. *Welcome to Cambodia*. Gareth Stevens, Milwaukee, WI; 2001.

Teacher's Guide written by Megan Carnate, M.Ed., Curriculum Specialist, Schlessinger Media

Teacher's Guides for titles in this series are available at [www.LibraryVideo.com](http://www.LibraryVideo.com)

- |                  |             |                   |                  |
|------------------|-------------|-------------------|------------------|
| • Algeria        | • Estonia   | • Jordan          | • Portugal       |
| • Argentina      | • Finland   | • Kenya           | • Romania        |
| • Australia      | • France    | • Lebanon         | • Russia         |
| • Austria        | • Germany   | • Madagascar      | • Rwanda         |
| • Belgium        | • Greece    | • Mali            | • South Africa   |
| • Bolivia        | • Guatemala | • Malta           | • Spain          |
| • Brazil         | • Iceland   | • Mexico          | • Sweden         |
| • Cambodia       | • India     | • Mongolia        | • Switzerland    |
| • Canada         | • Indonesia | • Morocco         | • Turkey         |
| • Chile          | • Ireland   | • Myanmar (Burma) | • United Kingdom |
| • China          | • Israel    | • Netherlands     | • United States  |
| • Czech Republic | • Italy     | • Norway          | • Venezuela      |
| • Denmark        | • Japan     | • Peru            | • Vietnam        |



Teacher's Guide Copyright 2007 by Schlessinger Media, a division of Library Video Company

P.O. Box 580, Wynnewood, PA 19096 • 800-843-3620

Program © Marathon and Pixcom Productions - MMIV All Rights Reserved