

Bakya – Wonderful Wooden Shoes

TEACHER: *What do you see in this photo?*

STUDENTS: *A pair of shoes*

What makes these shoes different than the shoes you are wearing?

They are made of wood; have pictures carved into them; high heels; crocheted top; etc.

What makes these shoes the same as the shoes you are wearing?

They have a heel; they slip on and off; they are dress shoes; they are the same color; etc.

These wooden shoes have a special name. They are called bakya. Bakya means “wooden shoe” in Tagalog. These shoes were made in Paete, Philippines. The mountain village of Paete has been a town of wood carvers for over 400 years. In fact, the name Paete means, “chisel.” People from all over the world come to Paete to buy bakya and other things carved from wood. These bakya were hand carved from a piece of wood using a band saw and a chisel. What do you see carved into the heel of the shoe?

A house, plants and leaves, flowers, a landscape, etc.

Traditionally, the heel of the bakya is carved with a beautiful picture. Usually, the carvings are of houses, landscapes, flowers, birds, or animals. Sometimes different carvings are made for shoes that will be worn for a special occasion, like a wedding. If you owned a pair of bakya, what would you want to have carved into the heel? Turn to your neighbor and share your ideas.

(Have the children turn to the person next to them to share their answer. When they are finished sharing, have them give a “thumbs up” so you know you are ready to move on.)

Many years ago, women all over the Philippines wore bakya. The women would wear them for work and for fun. Because they are made of wood, they could even be worn in the water. The bottoms of the bakya were usually chiseled to be rough. Many women liked to wear their bakya when they washed clothes in the river, because they helped to keep them from slipping on the rocks. Bakya are also very easy to take on or off because they do not have ties or buckles. Raise your hand if you are wearing shoes that can be slipped on and off without using your hands.

(Allow kids a moment to check their shoes and raise their hands.)

Bakya were very popular between the 1930's-1950's. During that time, the Philippines was involved in a war. People from all over the world saw the Filipino women wearing these beautiful shoes and wanted to buy them as souvenirs to take back home to their countries. After the war was over, a new style of shoe came to the Philippines from Japan. It was made of rubber, and quickly started to replace the wooden shoes. In America, we call these shoes "flip flops." Today, most people in the Philippines wear bakya only for special occasions. Many people wear sneakers, sandals or dress shoes just like you do in America. Nevertheless, people in the Philippines still love the bakya so much that they have written poems, songs and even movies about them. They certainly are special shoes!

Kindergarten Standards:

NYS Common Core Kindergarten Social Studies Standards

- K.2.b Cultures include traditions, beliefs, and shared values and ideas generally accepted by a particular group of people.
- K.2.c Children, families, and communities from different cultures all share some common characteristics, but also have specific differences which make them unique.
- K.9.a Children, families, and communities of today can be compared with those in the past.
- K.10.a People use folktales, legends, oral histories, and music to teach values, ideas, traditions, and important events from the past.

Kindergarten ELA Power NYSCCLS (ICSD Power Standards in Bold)

Reading Standards for Informational Text: Kindergarten

- **Integration and Knowledge of Ideas**
7. With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the text in which they appear (e.g., what person, place, thing, or idea in the text an illustration depicts).

Speaking and Listening Standards: Kindergarten

- **Comprehension and Collaboration**
1. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
 - a. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others and taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion).**
 - b. Continue a conversation through multiple exchanges.**
 - c. Seek to understand and communicate with individuals from different cultural backgrounds.**
- 2. Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.
- 3. **Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.**
- **Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas**
6. Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.

Language Standards: Kindergarten

- **Vocabulary Acquisition and Use**
6. Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts.