

The Handicrafts of Pakistan

Every country has its own local crafts, which exhibit the taste and colour of its region. Pakistan is a country rich in culture. Crafts were the main source of livelihood for the people of the country, and were handed down from father to son. With the passage of time, the crafts had access to bigger markets and became more profitable trades.

Some areas have specialized in different crafts which are supplied to other regions. Within the province of Punjab, different cities have their own specialties. Faisalabad specializes in cotton and hand-woven fabrics. Lahore has brass items. In Gujranwala, pottery and hand-made items are produced. Sialkot specializes in cutlery, surgical tools, sports and stainless steel items. These are exported and have a growing market abroad. Gujrat produces pottery and electrical fans. Murree produces basketry and walnut wood items. Ghakkar specializes in bedsheets, *durries and kbais*. Baluchistan produces carpets, jackets and garments with glass work. In the NWFP, the city of Peshawar produces pottery. Dera Ismail Khan and Chiniot produce wood carvings, decoration pieces and furniture. Abbotabad and Dasu produce jewellery and warm clothing and Chitral is famous for woollen overcoats and caps. Azad Kashmir produces basketry, carpets and walnut furniture. "Ajrak" and caps with silver and embroidery are made in Sindh.

It is owing to the skills and hard work of our people that these crafts have been preserved over the years. They have utilized the resources of their regions and by acquiring special skills have managed to produce goods, which have developed our cottage industry. Despite the availability of imported goods in the markets, our goods have managed to retain a special place. Even the people of medium income group have established small businesses and are contributing towards the growing economy of the country. These people are quite self-sufficient and do not get any aid from the government agencies.

Handicrafts are also a part of the cultural heritage of a country. They represent the culture and traditions of the people. Old skills which have survived and developed, are the backbone of the cottage industry. These handicrafts, special in kind and unique in shape, are really the pride of a country.

Words	Meanings
exhibit	display
preserve heritage	to keep the things passed down in good condition

unique	special
traditions	beliefs, customs, habits

EXERCISES

1. Answer the following questions.

- i. What do crafts exhibit about their region?
- ii. What does Faisalabad specialize in?
- iii. Name a few of the crafts in various cities of the province of Punjab.
- iv. Which handicrafts are produced in Baluchistan?
- v. What do the crafts of a country represent?
- vi. Write an account of any of the Pakistani crafts that you have seen in an industrial exhibition. (not more than 50 words).

2. Choose the correct answer.

- i. Cutlery is a special item of
 - a) Peshawar.
 - b) Abbotabad.
 - c) Sialkot.
 - d) Gujrat.
- ii. The word specialized means
 - a) expert.
 - b) research.
 - c) struggle.
 - d) display.
- iii. Crafts are limited to a specific area because of the availability of the
 - a) resources of that region.
 - b) climate of that region.
 - c) number of craftsmen in that region.
 - d) popularity of that region.

3. Write the name of the city where these items are found.

- i. _____ specializes in cotton and hand woven fabrics.
- ii. In _____ pottery and hand made items are produced.
- iii. Cutlery, surgical tools, sports and stainless steel items are produced in _____.
- iv. _____ produces pottery, electrical goods and sports items.
- v. Basketry and walnut wood items are produced in _____.
- vi. _____ produces wooden carvings, decoration pieces and furniture.

- vii. Carpets, jackets and garments with glass work are produced in _____.
- viii. _____ is famous for woollen overcoats and caps.
- ix. _____ produces basketry, carpets and walnut furniture.
- x. _____ specializes in bed sheets, *durries and kbais*.

4. Fill in the blanks with who, when, from, where, what, for, to.

_____ Pakistan was created, the people _____ decided to live in Pakistan migrated _____ India to Pakistan. .
 Most families did not know _____ to settle and _____ to do _____ a living.
 But as the days passed, every body became a Pakistani, found a place _____ live and some job _____ his livelihood.

5. Make pairs of the opposites.

Example: foreign, local

past, foreign, profitable, similar, despite, backward, attractive, in spite, different, developed, local, unprofitable, present, unattractive

6. Look up the meanings of the following words in a dictionary then use five of them in your own sentences.

exhibit, source, livelihood, access, specialize, utilize, acquire, manage, despite, handicrafts, traditions

7. These words are in the singular form. Write their plural forms.

country, city, quality, century, supply, carving, resource

8. Write a letter to your friend giving an account of any craft of your choice that you have seen in the market.

Example: You may have seen woollen caps and walnut decoration pieces in Abbotabad, Murree or in an exhibition.