Traditional ceremonies in Zambia

Lesson plan and teacher's notes · Form 1 History · 1 period of 40 minutes

School	(write school name)	**Teacher**	(write name)
Date	(date)	**Class**	Form 1
Subject	History	**Enrolment**	Boys ___ Girls ___ Total ___
Time	40 minutes	**Topic**	Traditional ceremonies in Zambia

Learners explain what a traditional ceremony is, group ceremonies by purpose and give reasons why valuable ceremonies matter and should be passed on. The lesson uses well-known Zambian ceremonies: Kuomboka, Nc'wala, Umutomboko, Ukusefya pa Ng'wena, Kulamba and Chisungu.

Specific outcomes

By the end of the lesson, learners should be able to:

1. Explain what a traditional ceremony is and name six well-known ceremonies of Zambia
2. Group ceremonies into life cycle, farming year, and chiefs and history
3. Analyse the importance of ceremonies for a community and the nation using an example
4. Suggest ways of protecting and passing on valuable ceremonies

Prior knowledge

- The meaning of culture, custom and chief
- That Zambia has many peoples and languages
- Learners' own experience of a local ceremony

Teaching and learning materials

- chalk and board
- a list of ceremonies and the peoples who hold them written on the board
- exercise books

References

Ministry of Education (CDC) Form 1 History syllabus and module; 25Schools learners' note: Traditional ceremonies in Zambia.

Lesson development

Stage and time	Teacher activities	Learner activities
Introduction 5 min	Ask which learners have attended a ceremony such as a wedding, a funeral, an initiation or a chief's gathering. Take three answers and write ceremony on the board.	Share what they saw, who gathered and what was done.
Development: what a ceremony is 10 min	Build the meaning with key words: tradition, culture, chief, initiation, first fruits, heritage. Fill the table of six ceremonies, the people who hold each and its meaning.	Copy the table and add one ceremony they know from home.
Development: kinds of ceremonies 10 min	Draw three groups: life cycle, farming year, chiefs and history. Place Chisungu, Nc'wala and Kuomboka or Umutomboko in the right group and explain why.	Sort the remaining ceremonies into groups and give a reason for each.
Development: importance and protection 10 min	Work the Kuomboka worked example: culture and history, unity and respect, economy. Then ask how each reason could be protected today.	Give one reason with an example and one way to keep a ceremony alive.
Conclusion 5 min	Ask two learners to state, in their own words, the three groups. Set the homework.	Answer and copy the homework.

Teacher's content notes

Read these before the lesson. They are what you need to know, not what to copy onto the board.

What a traditional ceremony is

A traditional ceremony is a public event in which a community marks an important moment such as a harvest, the installation of a chief or the passage of young people into adulthood. It follows customs handed down by older generations, and has leaders, special dress, music, dance and food.

Well-known ceremonies

Kuomboka is Lozi, Nc'wala is Ngoni, Umutomboko is Lunda, Ukusefya pa Ng'wena is Bemba, Kulamba is Chewa and Chisungu is Bemba initiation. Name the people who hold each one when you answer.

Three groups

Life cycle ceremonies follow a person from birth to death, such as naming, initiation, weddings and funerals. Farming year ceremonies are held at planting or harvest, such as the Nc'wala. Ceremonies of chiefs and history honour leaders or remember an event, such as the Kuomboka.

Why they matter

They preserve culture and history, teach values and behaviour, unite people, honour leaders and support respect for authority, and bring income to local people through visitors who buy food, use transport and need lodging.

Protecting ceremonies

Where a custom is harmful it should be changed, and where it is valuable it should be kept. Elders can explain ceremonies to the young, the history can be written down, and young people can be taught to take part and understand each ceremony.

Questions to ask during the lesson

Question	Expected answer
A boy in a village hears that the Litunga will move from the flooded plain to higher ground, and that the Lozi people will follow the royal barge with drums. (a) Name the ceremony. (b) Say why it is held. (c) Say what it shows about the Lozi people.	(a) Kuomboka. (b) It remembers the yearly rise of the Zambezi floodwater. (c) Loyalty to their king and togetherness.
A learner whose family farms is told that people taste the first fruits of the harvest in February to thank God and the ancestors. (a) Name the ceremony. (b) Name the people who hold it. (c) Say which group of ceremonies it belongs to.	(a) Nc'wala. (b) The Ngoni. (c) Farming year.
A teacher asks a class why a Lunda ceremony of songs, dances and speeches is useful in a place where little is written down. (a) Name the ceremony. (b) Say what it carries from one generation to the next. (c) Give one other reason ceremonies are important.	(a) Umutomboko. (b) History, such as how the Lunda moved and won their lands. (c) Teaches values, unites people, honours leaders or brings income.
A shop owner near a ceremony ground sees many visitors buy food, use transport and rent rooms during the ceremony week. (a) Name the benefit to local people. (b) Name one other purpose of the ceremony. (c) Say how this shows a ceremony serves more than one purpose.	(a) Income, the economic benefit. (b) Preserving culture or uniting people. (c) The same ceremony preserves culture, unites people and brings income.

Worked examples for the board

Example 1: one ceremony, three purposes

The Kuomboka is the Lozi ceremony in which the Litunga moves from the flooded plain to higher ground. Purpose 1: the barge, drums and dress keep Lozi history alive. Purpose 2: many Lozi follow their king, showing loyalty and togetherness. Purpose 3: visitors buy food and use transport, so local people earn money.

Example 2: grouping ceremonies

A learner is asked to group Chisungu, Nc'wala and Kuomboka. Chisungu marks a girl's passage to womanhood, so it is life cycle. Nc'wala thanks God for the first fruits, so it is

farming year. Kuomboka honours the Litunga and remembers the floodwater, so it is chiefs and history.

Example 3: keeping a ceremony alive

Elders in a village explain the ceremony to the young, the school writes down its history, and learners are taught to take part. These three steps pass the ceremony from one generation to the next.

Board plan

Write the title and the word ceremony. Left: the key words with short meanings. Centre: the table of ceremonies. Right: three groups of ceremonies with an example each. Keep the Kuomboka purposes in a corner for the worked example.

Group	Example	What it marks
Life cycle	Chisungu	A girl's passage into womanhood
Farming year	Nc'wala	The tasting of the first fruits
Chiefs and history	Kuomboka	The Litunga moving from the floodplain

Three groups of traditional ceremonies

Mistakes to expect

Learners often think	Put it right
Traditional ceremonies are only for entertainment.	Show that each ceremony teaches history or values, unites people and honours leaders. The Kuomboka remembers the yearly rise of floodwater.
Every old custom should be kept.	Valuable customs should be kept, but harmful practices should be changed.
A ceremony belongs only to the people who hold it.	Many ceremonies draw visitors and the nation, such as the Nc'wala, which also brings Chewa and Ngoni people from neighbouring countries.

Differentiation

Learners who struggle

Give learners a three-column strip with life cycle, farming year and chiefs and history, and let them place ceremony names under each heading before they write reasons.

Learners who finish early

Ask learners who finish early to compare two ceremonies, one from the life cycle and one from the farming year, and explain which brings more people together.

Hearing or visual impairment

For learners with hearing impairment, write each key word and group on the board and face the class. For learners with visual impairment, read the table aloud row by row and let learners describe a ceremony from memory.

No projector, no printing

All work is on the board. Learners use ceremonies they have seen at home, and elders in the community can be asked to describe one.

If time is short

Teach the meaning, the three groups and the Kuomboka example. Leave the protection of ceremonies as homework discussion.

Evaluation

Question or task	A correct answer shows
A learner from the Eastern Province tells her class that her family travels each year to a gathering where Chewa chiefs and people meet their paramount chief. (a) Name the ceremony. (b) Say which group of ceremonies it belongs to. (c) Say what it does for the sense of belonging of the Chewa people.	(a) Kulamba. (b) Chiefs and history. (c) It brings together people who have moved to towns and strengthens belonging.
A girl in a Bemba village is taken to a gathering where elder women teach her respect, responsibility and how to behave in marriage. (a) Name the ceremony. (b) Say which group it belongs to. (c) Give one value taught.	(a) Chisungu. (b) Life cycle. (c) Respect, responsibility, hard work or behaviour in marriage.
A community wants to keep its harvest ceremony alive because young people are moving to towns and the elders fear it will be forgotten. (a) Name one way elders can help. (b) Name one way the school can help. (c) Say why valuable ceremonies should be kept.	(a) Explain the ceremony to the young. (b) Teach learners to take part and understand its meaning, or write down the history. (c) They are part of the heritage of a people.

Homework

A visitor at a village market asks a learner why her community holds a yearly ceremony when people are busy. (a) Name two reasons ceremonies are important. (b) Give a Zambian ceremony as an example for one reason. (c) Say one way the learner can help keep the ceremony alive.

Extra practice with answers

Question	Answer
1. A learner is asked why the Ukusefya pa Ng'wena is called a traditional ceremony and not just a party. (a) Name the people who hold it. (b) Give two features of a traditional ceremony. (c) Say what makes it traditional.	(a) The Bemba. (b) Any two of leader, special dress, music, dance, food, a known time. (c) It follows customs handed down by older generations.

2. A girl is told she will join other girls for Chisungu so that elder women can prepare her for adult life. (a) Say which group it belongs to. (b) Name two things she may be taught. (c) Say why it is held for a few girls and not the whole community.	(a) Life cycle. (b) Any two of respect, responsibility, hard work, behaviour in marriage. (c) It is for the girls of a family or village.
3. A chief's counsellor says a ceremony honours the chief and keeps people loyal to him. (a) Name one such ceremony. (b) Name the group it belongs to. (c) Say which importance reason is shown.	(a) Kuomboka or Umutomboko. (b) Chiefs and history. (c) Honouring leaders and supporting respect for authority.
4. A town dweller who left the village says he has forgotten how his people celebrate. (a) Name the Chewa ceremony that could bring him back. (b) Say what it strengthens. (c) Give one way he could learn about it.	(a) Kulamba. (b) Sense of belonging. (c) Ask elders or attend it.
5. A community notices that one old practice in its ceremony harms young girls. (a) Say what should be done. (b) Give a reason. (c) Say what should happen to the valuable parts of the ceremony.	(a) Change the harmful practice. (b) Harmful customs should not continue. (c) They should be kept as heritage.
6. A school plans an end-of-term day to teach pupils about a ceremony from their area. (a) Name one person who could be invited. (b) Name one activity. (c) Say what the pupils will learn.	(a) An elder or chief's representative. (b) Songs, dances or a talk. (c) The meaning and history of the ceremony.

Answers to the learners' check-yourself questions

1. What is a traditional ceremony?
   A public event, based on customs handed down from older generations, held to mark something important to a community, such as a harvest, a chief's installation or the passage into adulthood.
2. Name the people who hold the Nc'wala and say what it celebrates.
   The Ngoni of Eastern Province. It is held in February when the first fruits of the harvest are tasted. It thanks God and the ancestors, honours King Mpezeni and remembers the Ngoni migration.
3. Match each ceremony to its people: Kuomboka, Umutomboko, Ukusefya pa Ng'wena.
   Kuomboka: Lozi. Umutomboko: Lunda. Ukusefya pa Ng'wena: Bemba.
4. Give the three groups into which ceremonies can be divided, with one example of each.
   Life cycle (for example the Chisungu initiation or marriage), farming year (for example the Nc'wala), and chiefs and history (for example the Umutomboko or the installation of a chief).
5. What is the Chisungu, and who takes part in it?
   The Bemba initiation of girls into womanhood. It is held for the girls of a family or village, not for the whole community, and elder women teach the girls the duties of adult life and marriage.

6. Explain how initiation ceremonies help the community.
   Young people are taught respect, responsibility, hard work and how to behave in marriage and in the community. Elders are the teachers, so the values of the community are passed on.
7. Why do ceremonies help to unite people?
   They bring families and villages together, sometimes including people who have moved to towns, so they share one celebration and feel they belong to one people. The Kulamba is an example.
8. State two economic benefits of ceremonies such as the Kuomboka.
   People who come to watch buy food, use transport and need places to stay, so local traders, drivers and guesthouses can earn money.

Teacher's reflection

What went well:

What I will change next time:

Learners who need follow-up: