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MODULE: CULTURAL IDENTITY



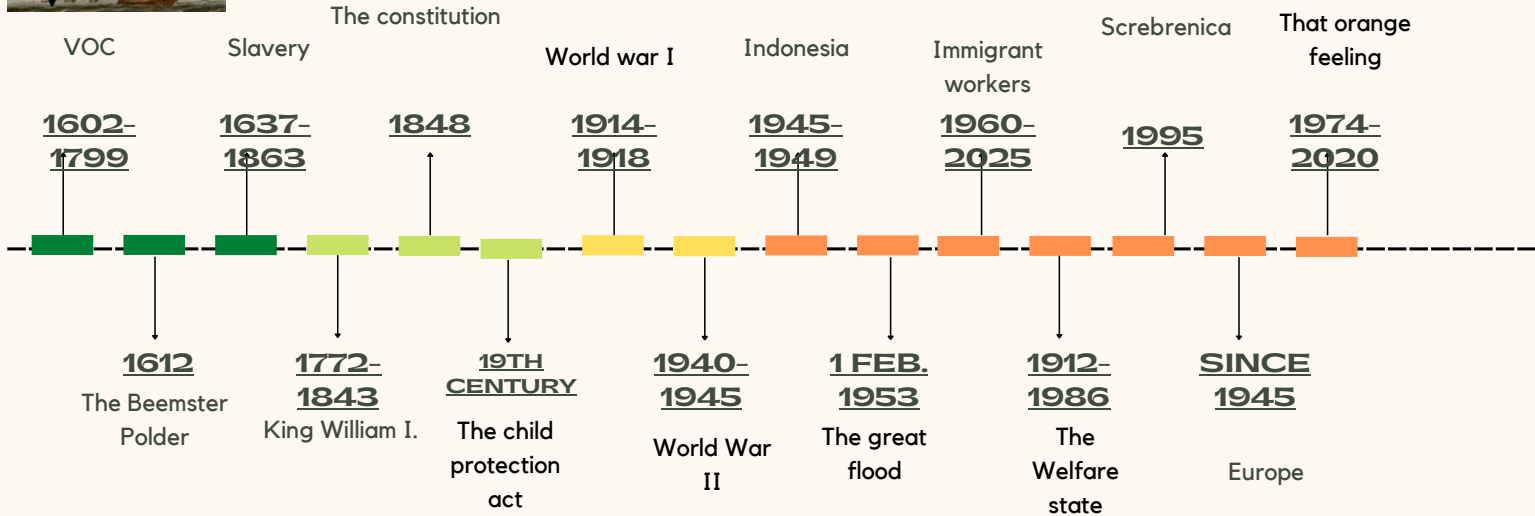
INTRODUCTION



In the Netherlands, as well as in other countries in the world, there are lots of discussions about 'national identity' and 'the feeling of homecoming'. You can see those subjects on television, museums, newspapers, social media as well as in politics. So now and then it seems that we are a polarized country, but luckily there are more things that are typical for the Netherlands and its inhabitants. In this chapter you will find out which aspects belong to the general knowledge of the Dutch. The relationship with our national history will also be explained.



HISTORY



RELIGION AND VALUES

Religion

More than half (54 percent) of Dutch people aged 15 or over do not consider themselves to belong to a religious movement. In 2019, 20 percent of the Dutch considered themselves to be members of the Catholic Church, 15 percent were Protestant, 5 percent Muslim and 6 percent belonged to another religious group.

Erasmus put the unity of Christianity above all else. Click on the stamp to find out who was Erasmus.

Values

The 3 most important values of the Dutch are:

Freedom:

In the Netherlands, everyone is allowed to think, do and say as they wish. This means that:

- everyone may state their own opinion;
- everyone may follow their own religion, being free in their choice whether or not to believe;
- everyone is free in their own sexual orientation;
- everyone is entitled to own choices and independence (right to self-determination).

There are also limits to this freedom. You may not say or do things which are against the law. For example, you may not discriminate, incite hate or encourage hostility.

Equality:

In the Netherlands, all citizens are treated equally. We do not accept discrimination against gender, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation, even though there are people who, of course, disagree with this.

Solidarity:

All citizens have the right to a safe living environment, decent housing, fair employment conditions, a minimum working wage, good education and good medical care.



HABITS AND ATTITUDE



Habits

'Poldermodel'

The polder model is seen as a typical Dutch form of consultation economy and consensus model, which goes back to the Middle Ages.

The first Dutch landscapes, also called 'polders' arose in the 11th century AD. During this time, dikes were already placed around an area filled with water, after which this area was pumped empty to gain extra land. The term 'polder model' comes from the cooperation that was necessary to keep the water out of the new polders. In periods of flooding, nobles and citizens were forced to work together and in this way to stop the flood. In times of need, cooperation between different groups was possible.

Nowadays the polder model is the name given to the Dutch consensus model in which employers, trade unions and government sit down to negotiate about working conditions and wages.

For the Dutch it's very important to listen to different opinions on a subject. That is why de 'polder model' has a positive and a negative connotation.

Attitudes

Check the bicycle to find out the characteristics of the Dutch according to themselves and foreigners.



LANGUAGE

In the report 'Thinking about the Netherlands', 2019, by the SCP (Social Cultural Planning Office) people say they value the Dutch language, symbols and traditions. In the top 5 of what people consider most typical of the Netherlands, the Dutch language is proudly on top.

Dutch is the main official language of the Netherlands. Dutch Sign Language (NGT) and the Frisian language in the province of Fryslân are also both recognized as official languages by law in the Netherlands.

Hebban olla vogala

But how did our language originate? The first written words in Dutch that we have date from about 1100 AD. They were written by a Flemish monk. 'Hebban olla vogala nestas hagunnan hinase hic anda thu, what unbidan we now?' is one of the best-known phrases in Dutch language and literature history. It means: 'All the birds are already nesting, except me and you. What are we waiting for?' They are lines from a medieval love song.

For more info, click on the lyrics

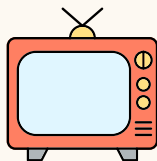


VOC

Another important influence on our language is our so-called VOC mentality. Being a small country where trade is very important, our children are taught languages such as English, French, Spanish and German from an early age. No wonder our language is so full of expressions or words that come from other languages. An enrichment for some, an abomination for language purists.

A strange language?

Check the next movie



Try to speak Dutch

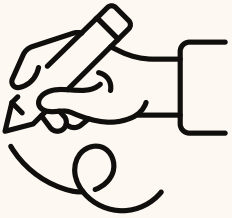
Assignment

Try to translate en pronounce the following words in the Dutch language.

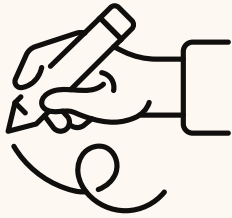
- *Goodmorning
- *Goodafternoon
- *Goodevening
- *Goodnight
- *Hello
- *Goodbye
- *Please
- *Thank you

DUTCH WRITERS

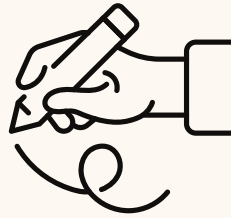
MULTATULI



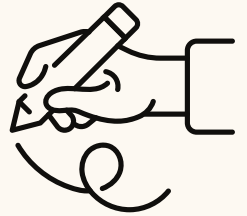
ANNE FRANK



**ANNIE M.G.
SCHMIDT**



DICK BRUNA



SPORTS AND ACTIVITIES



11 Stedentocht

Almost everybody in the Netherlands knows the 11 stedentocht "11 city tour". The famous tour is a ice skatingtour of almost 200km that passes 11 cities in Friesland. Friesland is the province in the upper part of the Netherlands. The tour is starting in Leeuwarden and is ending in Leeuwarden. When the ice is thick enough, complete holland is turning crazy to be part of the 11 stedentocht. The attendees are from the whole Netherlands, plus some from Belgium and Germany as well. From the first edition in 1907 till the last one took in place in 1997, the tour was rode 15 times. Besides the iceskating, there is also one on by bike, motorbike, oldtimer cars, steps and even one with triathlon. For more info, click on the iceskating icon.

Assignment:

- 1: What was the year of the first ice skating tour?
- 2: How many kilometers is the tour?
- 3: Name two other tours besides the ice skatingtour.

Fierljeppen

Fierljeppen is a traditional sport in the Dutch province of Fryslân. Farmers of Fryslân were leaping with a long pole over the waterway to access different plots of land, because the Netherlands has many waterways.

Back in the days, it was normal for the Frisian farmers to access al their land by pole.

How do you fierljepp by yourself? You should have a long pole between the 8 and 13 metres with a flat round plate on the bottom tp prevent it from sinking into the ground/mud. You should sprint to the pole, jump and grabbing it, then climbing so high as possible to the top and lean forward with your body so you and on the opposite side of the water. More info when you click on this icon



Assignment:

- 1: Go to an area with a little waterway
- 2: Take a big pole (minimum 8 meters)
- 3: Make 2 teams.

Each team can practice 5 minutes. After practicing, each team is allowed to cross the waterway 3 times. The team that has come the furthest, has won!

Kaatsen

Kaatsen is a ball game with 2 teams of 3 players. They play against on each other on grass, where one team takes care of the service and the other party takes care of the return stroke from the perk.

The rules are quite difficult to explain. But it is the one of the oldest games in the Netherlands.

Originally it stems from the north of France (jeu de paume). There are many variaties nowadays, like fives in England and Pallone col braccide.

Famous Dutch Athletes

1: Johan Cruiff



2: Max Verstappen



3: Sven Kramer



4: Ramoni Kromowidjojo



5: Memphis Depay



SPORTS AND ACTIVITIES



Skûtsjesilen

Skûtsjesilen is synonymous with sailing competitions with old cargo ships, flat-bottomed boats that were built at the beginning of the last century to bring peat, manure and other cargo to the farms. For this, the ships had to enter shallow channels. That is why the ships were made long and flat. When there were competitions, and the skipper could earn a few extra cents, all household goods were removed from the skûtsje and put on shore.

The competition is taking place each summer in different kind of cities and villages in Fryslân. Only 14 skûtsjes can join the game and if you want to be a captain, you should have 7 or more years' experience in sailing with a skûtsje.

It is a big happening each summer where a lot of Frisian and Dutch people come over to see the skûtsjes sailing. There are a lot of people who see the game from the water in their own boat.

Assignment

- 1: Name two participants who are joining the competition
- 2: Why are the ships long and flat?
- 3: Is the competition held in the spring, winter, fall or summer?

MUSEUMS AND THEATRE

Who hasn't heard of Rembrandt, or how about Van Gogh? Both of these were famous Dutch painters. Now of course, they are long dead, but the arts and crafts sector in the Netherlands definitely isn't. No. We, as a small country, are big in culture.



Of course there is a 'top 3' in most popular museums with the Rijksmuseum as the ultimate number one destination (click on the museum icon for more info). The Anne Frank house is, according to Tripadvisor, the second best museum. With queues along the canals, the museum is a very popular stop for both local and international tourists because you can literally go behind the scenes and check out how this girl and her family lived during the second world war, which you can also do in VR and not just her diary!



Apart from the more 'static' museums, there are also location museums like de Zaanse Schans, where you will dive into an 18th and 19th century residential area filled with old windmills, and the Zuiderzee museum, where you can stroll the cobbled streets like a child in the year 1900. The latter also focuses on crafts from back in the day. On the next page, you can watch the craftsmen at work in the outdoor museum.

Performing arts however are equally important in Dutch culture. In 2016 another one of the Netherlands' most exceptional women in Dutch history was brought to life through ballet. In the video (click on the prima ballerina) you can see how the Dutch National Ballet created a show around this mysterious Frisian femme fatale. Now the Dutch are usually considered very direct and openminded but perhaps Mata Hari was a bit ahead of her time. However, it now shows in Dutch arts as well. Especially in 'older' movies nudity was one of the things the Dutch were known for. However small the Dutch film industry is, so far three Dutch films have won an Academy Award. The first being 'De Aanslag', which received a so-called Oscar in 1986. In theatre, one of the most beautiful theatres itself is actually royalty: Carré! One of our great export 'products' in the field of acting is Dutch actress Carice van Houten, who is famous for not only Game of Thrones but also other films and series.

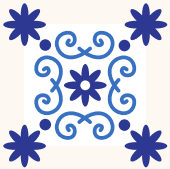


CRAFTS AND EVENTS

As mentioned on the previous page. In outdoor museum De Zaanse Schans, you can check out Dutch craftsmanship from way back when. Although, that is not really true. Even now we still have a many people that work in crafts. Watch the short clip of 'de visroker' (the fish smoker) by clicking on the fish.



Also in the Zuiderzee Museum you can still see traditional workmanship all together in one central place. This includes making wooden shoes (yes, people still wear them these days, but definitely not everybody walks around in those!), glassblowing and shipbuilding.



Another of the internationally acclaimed crafts is the 'Delfts blauw', in English 'Delft blue' or 'Delftware'. In the online lesson from learndutch.org you will hear much more about not only the Delft blue pottery but also Dutch vocabulary on this topic. Click on the Delft blue tile on the left for the lesson!

In Friesland, the northern province of the Netherlands where Mata Hari came from, there is the popular Fries Museum that gained international attention with their exhibition on MC Escher. This Dutch graphic artist made mathematical objects and tessellations. Check out the Escher inspired lizard tessellation here →



Assignment: make your own tessellation by following the steps in this [video](#).

One of the biggest dance events would be the Amsterdam Dance Event or the AMF (Amsterdam Music Festival). With so many amazing Dutch DJs this is no surprise. Who hasn't heard of DJs Tiësto, Armin van Buuren, Martin Garrix or Hardwell to name a few (check out more Dutch DJs [here](#)). They are well known all over the world!

Obviously there are many more festivals around the Netherlands! A unique festival in the Netherlands is the Oerol Festival. This 10-day cultural event has been held annually since 1982 on the Dutch island Terschelling and includes music, dance, theatre and visual arts surrounded by the island's natural beauty. For an impression of the festival click [here](#)!



Don't forget the national event: Koningsdag! Click on the crown and see how you can survive this event!

ARTISTS

**Painter
Vincent
van Gogh**



**Painter
Rembrandt
van Rijn**



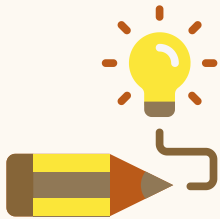
**Painter
Maurits Cornelis
Escher**



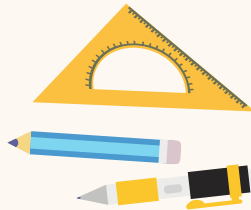
**DJ
Martin Garrix**



**Artist
Daan
Roosgaarde**



**Architect
Rem Koolhaas**



**Actress
Carice van
Houten**



**Director
Anton Corbijn**

