



Indigenous Culture in the Upper Murray

Weaving Questions

For thousands of years, our Indigenous people had to use the landscapes around them for food, water, shelter and to make fire. When we wish to carry something today, we sometimes use a box or even a bag. Aboriginal people had to use a weaving technique to make their own bags, nets and jewellery.

1. What was the main purpose of weaving natural vegetable fibre such as rushes and sedges?
2. In Aboriginal society, there were often specific tribal rules about who could perform what task. Was string or cord-making women's business or men's business, or could both participate and why?
3. Can you remember what Talea said about who kept the knowledge and passed it on?
4. Why did Talea twist or spin the raw material before forming it into a cord? Is this done with other natural materials such as wool, cotton or hemp (the raw material used to make string)?
5. Can you remember some of the uses that Talea mentioned that the string or cord could be used for?

Extension Questions

6. Can you think of some other uses?
7. Can you think of other natural fibres or materials that the Aboriginal people may have used for various purposes?



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Weaving Answers

1. To make string or cord to be used on its own (eg. fishing line) or to be used to produce other items (eg. baskets)
2. Both men and women made cord. Women used it to make soft items while men used it to construct tools and weapons.
3. The knowledge was usually retained and passed on by the women. It was also the women who did the majority of this work.
4. Tarea did so to increase the strength of the raw material. It causes the individual fibres contained within the plant material to be forced together and “locked in” with one another to work as a “team” thus magnifying its strength. This practise is applied to nearly all natural fibres when producing thread, string, cord or rope.
5. Basket making, dilly bags, tying tools and weapons when required and ornamentation such as bracelets, amulets, necklaces and headbands. Dilly bags were very important for carrying numerous essential small items from one camp to another (eg. fire-making materials). Think how often you or your parents use a bag in everyday life. (eg. school bags, shopping bags, toiletry bags, women's hand bags, etc.)
6. Fishing lines, fishing nets, bird nets, the string to hold a bull-roarer.
7. Fibre from native flax, fibre from the Currajong tree, boot-lace plant, Stringy bark fibre, possum fur, human hair and sinew (eg. the long sinew from a kangaroo or wallaby tail).

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