

**CRAFT-EFACT!
CREATE YOUR OWN
*HAJ BELT***

**HERITAGE RESOURCE FOR
TEACHERS, PARENTS & CAREGIVERS**

WHAT IS CRAFT-EFACT?

- Craft-efact is a play on the word 'craft' and 'artefact' where children can observe an artefact and learn more about them through a simple colouring and craft activity.
- Teachers, parents and caregivers are encouraged to facilitate the observation and learning process by referring to the actual artefacts on display in the gallery, or through artefact images and information available in this resource.
- Craft-efact! Create Your Own Haj Belt aims to provide an opportunity for
 - Students/children/seniors to gain a basic understanding of what the *haj belt* is and its significances to Malay culture.
 - Teachers, parents and caregivers to delve further into a discussion and exploration about Malay culture through an object that is still relevant to present day.

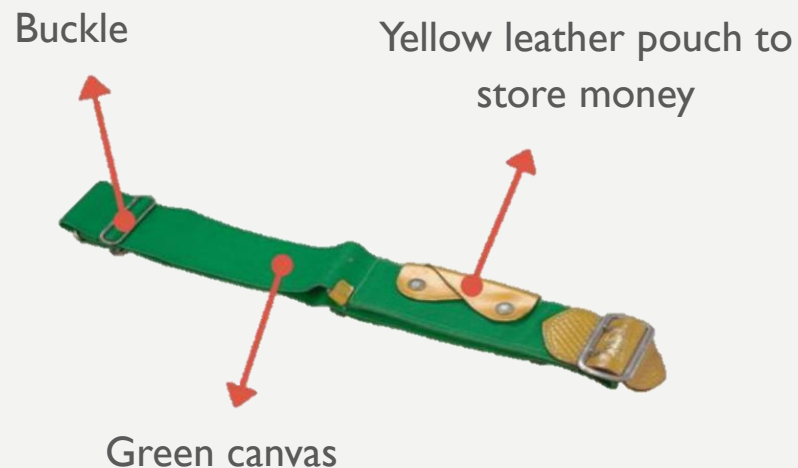


We would love to hear how you have facilitated this activity. Please share your experience with us so we can continue to improve on our resources and benefit others too!

Reach us at shereen_tan@nhb.gov.sg

ABOUT THE HAJ BELT

- Haj belts, also known as *tali pinggang haji*, are an essential accessory for pilgrims. Worn under the *kain ihram* (pilgrim's robes), it has a special hidden pouch used to store valuables and money. The belt is designed to hold up unstitched *ihram* cloth around a male pilgrim's hips while performing Haj related rituals.
- Similar belts are still sold in Kampong Gelam today, such as by haj belt maker V.S.S. Varusai Mohamed & Sons. There is also a haj belt on display in one of Malay Heritage Centre's Permanent Galleries, *Air*.



A later version of the *tali pinggang haji* made by Varusai Brothers still in operation today along North Bridge Road.

Collection of Malay Heritage Centre

ABOUT THE HAJ & CONNECTION TO KAMPONG GELAM

- The Haj is the world's annual single largest movement of Muslims where millions from all over the world travel to the city of Mecca. Visiting the *Ka'bah* and performing the Haj, if one is physically and financially able, is one of the five pillars of Islam. It is a five-days affair during the last month of the Islamic lunar calendar in the month of *Dhu-al-Hijjah* (or *Zulhijjah*). This Islamic practice has a significant impact on global travel, politics, commerce and economy.
- From the late 1800s up to the 1970s, Muslims from all over the Malay Archipelago would congregate to Kampong Gelam to prepare for their steamship passage to Jeddah on the way to perform the Haj. These pilgrims would come to Singapore laden with goods and wares to be traded while others were prepared to work for funds for their pilgrimage. Haj brokers called *sheikh haji* or *mutawiyah*, solicited for business by offering travel arrangements and guidance regarding the ritual requirements of the Haj.

HAJI YUSOFF, INVENTOR OF HAJ BELTS

- The first haj belt in Singapore was invented by a Javanese merchant, Haji Yusoff Noor Mohamed, who used to reside in *Gedung Kuning* (Yellow Mansion). The *Gedung Kuning* is the mansion adjacent to Malay Heritage Centre.
- He lived in a family that encouraged enterprise and business. At the age of 22, Haji Yusoff started manufacturing *songkoks* (brimless headwear) with his brother. He then went on to design, manufacture and sell these multi-purpose belts.
- Haji Yusoff's belts were so famous that he became known as "Haji Yusoff *Tali Pinggang*" or "Haji Yusoff of Belts". He is known for his successful business selling the *songkoks* and haj belts which were sold locally and exported internationally.



Source: One Kampong Gelam

INSTRUCTIONS

You will need..

1. Coloured markers (sufficient)
2. A pair of scissors
3. Double-sided tape
4. Stapler

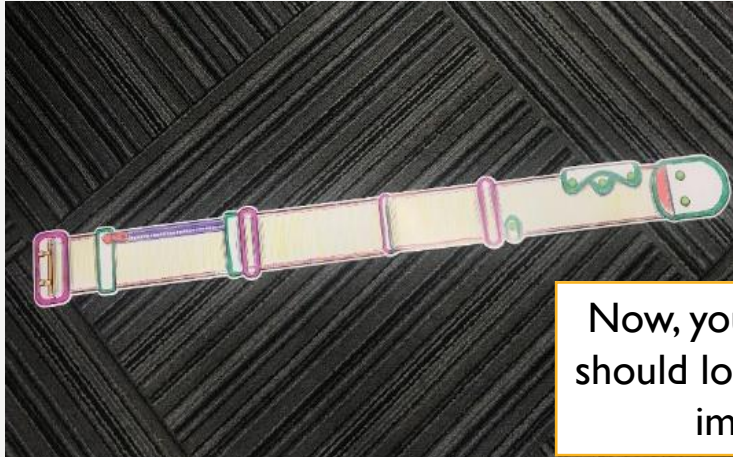


Step 1: Fill in your haj belt with your favourite colours before removing the haj belt from the craft sheet by tearing it along the perforated lines.

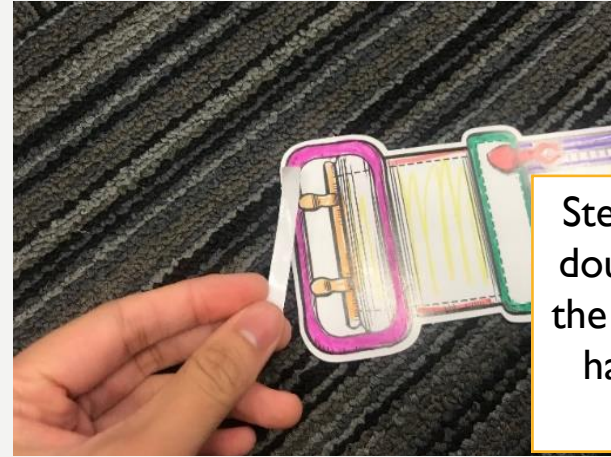


Step 2: Stick a double-sided tape on one end of your belt and paste the two ends together.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARENTS



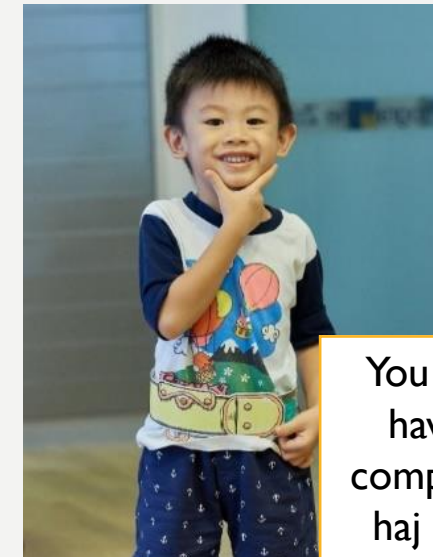
Now, your haj belt should look like this image.



Step 3: Stick another double-sided tape on the other end of your haj belt where the buckle is.



Step 4: Remove the backing on the double-sided tape and secure the belt. Alternatively, you may choose to use a stapler to secure the belt.



You now have a completed haj belt!

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

- Describe the object – what do you see?
- Where is the object from?
- What is the object for?
- When is it made?
- What is it made of?
- How was this object made?
- Who do think is the owner of this object?
- What do you think is this object used for?



TEACHING IDEAS

- Encourage close-looking by exploring and observing a [3D scan of the haj belt](#)
- Use the haj belt as a prop for a dramatised storytelling with/for your student or child.
- Read more about Singapore as a pilgrimage hub in the past using the Kampong Gelam Heritage Trail brochure and visit the various sites featured.
- Visit the Malay Heritage Centre's permanent gallery 'Air (Over water)' and watch "Permanent Galleries: Curator's Tour (Air)" on YouTube to learn more about the haj (see next slide).
- Share about your haj experience if you have performed the haj, or research about it together.
- Watch a YouTube video together to learn about haj belt makers in Singapore (see next slide).
- Get your student/child to design their own haj belt and do a show-and-tell of their special haj belt.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- A Haj Belt Maker by Roots Sg

<https://youtu.be/4FvliAKNBv0>

- Permanent Galleries: Curators' Tour (Air) by the Malay Heritage Centre

<https://youtu.be/UjYSfykNf8Q>

- Mecca by National Geographic

https://youtu.be/jM8lwroj_MQ