

Rich in Heritage

Continuing ideas for exploring the environment through International Years - in 2023, the IY of Millets.

By Jeanie Clark

What an impressive slogan— ‘Rich in heritage; full of potential’. [1]* What sorts of things might your learners think could have this slogan? Perhaps something cultural? Perhaps something related to the environment? It is actually for 2023’s International Year (IY).

This article will explore slogans, as an aspect of literacy, and suggest literacy and numeracy activities to introduce this IY, with a focus on the first part of its slogan. You could adapt these activities to other materials and topics.

Slogans

What are slogans? Why are they used? What are some great slogans in your experience? Such questions could introduce this inquiry to your learners. A dictionary (book or online) should give learners answers to the first two questions.

* Square brackets [] indicate an on-line reference, found at the end of this article.

Short and catchy slogans are important in setting a scene. A list of some slogans that may be familiar to your learners is below. But the second column is mixed up. Can your learners match the columns correctly? (Check matches at the end of the article.)

As a literacy exercise, some older learners may like to have a go at writing slogans—an essential tool of an advertising job. Some help in writing slogans could come from Amarnani at Logo.com who provides ten tips for slogan writing and ten analyses of very successful slogans. [2]

On the right is the 2023 IY of Millets slogan (IYM) [3]. What are millets? ‘Rich in heritage’ suggests something with long-term value, so probably not a computer game! ‘Full of potential’ suggests something with yet-to-be-used benefits. What sort of thing could that be?



Slogan	Company/ organisation
A better future	Amazon
Finger lickin’ good	Amnesty International
Good works	Australian Labour Party 2022
Just do it	Essendon Football Club 2013
Just like a chocolate milk shake, only crunchy!	Kellogg’s Coco Pops
Strong economy, stronger future	Kentucky Fried Chicken
The fresh food people	Liberal Party 2022
Whatever it takes	Nike
Work hard. Have fun. Make history.	St Vincent de Paul Society
You can shine the light of hope.	Woolworths Supermakets

'I may be small, but I am strong.
I grow where others cannot.
I thrive in harsh and dry conditions,
providing food where other harvests fail.
I nurture soils and ecosystems, and boost
biodiversity.
I am nutritious and delicious, and highly
diverse in types and flavours.
Rooted in ancient cultures and traditions, I
am a powerful source of innovation.
I want to share my benefits widely with all
people and the planet.
But I cannot do it alone.
So bring me back to your table.
I am millets.' [5]

Millets

What do you and your learners know about 'millets'? I must confess that I knew almost nothing about millets before writing this article, but the IYM prompted me to discover what they are, why they are valued and what educational activities could be based on them, beginning with what they are.

A great introduction to millets is found in the one-minute IYM video [4]. It has both spoken and subtitled text, so that the video can be used for reading. The text in the box above can be used for literacy activities prior to seeing the video:

- As a reading exercise, the words have different levels of complexity. For younger learners, the text can be used for a learning activity to identify target sounds they are currently learning. Or use it for practice reading aloud with any age.
- As a grammar activity, your learners could underline the adjectives, which are not all in the simple adjective+ noun position. There are many descriptive words in this text which could be used to make an adjective tree diagram around the word 'millet', with the actual adjectives, or converting phrases into adjectives.
- As a comprehension activity, your learners could look up the meanings of any unfamiliar words, e.g. nurture, nutritious, innovation.
- Then, look for clues in the text (above) to identify what type of thing 'millet' is. Can your learners explain their decision about what millets are from this text? Did they notice key words: grow, food, harvest, soil? Together, they suggest a plant.

What sort of plants are millets? The video has interesting images and may be worth watching a couple of times, to focus on them, rather than the words. Can your learners now say what type of plant a millet is? Confirm that from a dictionary.

Millet Types

There are many types of millets. To the right is the IYM's drawings of 15 different millet types, showing colours and shapes of the plants [6].

Individual drawings of each of these millets are also available online at the *Food and Agricultural Organisation* (FAO)-IYM website [7]. These could be used for a literacy activity with two or more learners, where an instructor can see these drawings and describes one type for the other(s) to draw. When that drawing is done, the 'artist' sees the FAO one.

A numeracy activity for younger learners could be to group the plants by shapes, (e.g. vertical/wavy/drooping or single/multi-stemmed) or by colours. Data can be inferred from these groups, such as which the dominant colour of the grains is.

Can your learners correctly match any names to these plants' pictures, in the diagram below, by using the names as a hint for shape or colour? Here is the list alphabetically, (the list by position in the diagram is at the end of this article):

Barnyard millet;
Black fonio;
Browntop millet;
Finger millet;
Foxtail millet;
Guinea millet;
Job's tears;
Kodo millet;
Little millet;
Pearl millet;
Proso millet;
Raishan;
Sorghum;
Teff;
White fonio.

Photos can be found on the web: e.g. *American Gardener* shows fifteen of these millet types [8].

Rich in Heritage

How could plants be described as rich in heritage? If your learners grow plants, consider any heritage involved. What aspects of your lifestyle are based

Diagram of 15 millet types [6]



on these plants? Recipes? Perhaps knowledge of growing, harvesting and using them well?

The FAO reports that millets 'are deeply rooted in Indigenous Peoples' culture and traditions and help guarantee food security in areas where they are culturally relevant' [9]. CSM, a blogger from Tamilnadu, India, has provided eight photos of his local millets, with all their local dialect names, and makes the point that millets were ignored because they were what the lower castes ate, when rice and wheat were improved in the Green Revolution [10].

Like India, developing countries of the semi-arid tropics of Africa and Asia are the homelands of the indigenous growing of millets [11]. As an example, from the pearl millet map [12] to the right, how long ago did pearl millet begin to be used by people of Central Africa? What sort of heritage might be held there today for agriculture, food and culture?

Two food examples are: 1) from Niger's mountains - millet flour is mixed with dried dates and dried goat cheese—a nutritious food for long Saharan journeys, needing no water or cooking; and 2) from Nigeria- a traditional weaning food for babies is made from fermented millet. [13] Are these 'rich in heritage'?

From these two examples of traditional uses, do your learners might think that there may be similar heritage knowledge that could be useful elsewhere? Such traditional knowledge about millets (like what to grow, how to grow it and how to use it, with potential benefits for other peoples) leads to the

claim 'full of potential' because of that heritage knowledge.

With changing climates issues, sustainability and food security challenges, millet has become a traditional food of potential benefits—something to explore in the next article.



Map of pearl millet's origins [12]

Answers

The correct order for the company/organisation column, should be, from the top: ALP 2022, KFC, St Vincent de Paul Society, Nike, Kellogg's Coco Pops, Liberal Party 2022, Woolworths supermarkets, Essendon Football Club (2013), Amazon, Amnesty International.

The millet types from left to right on each line:
Top: Sorghum, Pearl, Foxtail, Little, Kodo
Middle: Proso, Barnyard, Browntop, Guinea, Black
Bottom: White, Raishan, Job's tears, Finger, Teff [6]

Header image based on FAO_248830012.jpg by Andrews Esiebo,
FAO (C) image FAO_248830012.jpg on trello.com
Sources of other images acknowledged in the website links.
(C) text by J. Clark, Warracknabeal, 2023.

Direct links to webpages in this article

- [1] FAO, 2022, IYM logo in 'Visuals and infovisuals' on Trello at <https://trello.com/c/t816XAtu/11-twitter-covers>
- [2] Amarnani, Kari, 2022 'What Is a Slogan - Types, Examples, And Tips To Create One' at <https://logo.com/blog/what-is-a-slogan>
- [3] Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), 2022 International Year of Millets, at <https://www.fao.org/millets-2023/en>
- [4] FAO, 2022, IYM 2023 at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rKvrjTrTqPQ>
- [5] ibid
- [6] FAO, 2022, '4.3 Millets Illustrations' in IYM2023 Communications handbook and toolkit and at <https://digital-assets.fao.org/home/action/viewAsset?id=26959&index=0&total=16&view=viewSearchItem>
- [7] FAO, 2022. Millet illustrations at <https://digital-assets.fao.org/home/action/browseItems?categoryId=137490&categoryTypeId=2&cachedCriteria=1> (cc) licence
- [8] American Gardener, 2022, 15 Different Types of Millet And Their Benefits at <https://americangardener.net/types-of-millet/>
- [9] FAO, 2022, 'International Year of Millets: Unleashing the potential of millets for the well-being of people and the environment' at <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/detail/international-year-of-millets-unleashing-the-potential-of-millets-for-the-well-being-of-people-and-the-environment/en>
- [10] CSM, 2014, 'Millets -hardy and nutritious' in Farm- yeah at <https://csm-fanaa.blogspot.com/2010/03/millets-hardy-and-nutritious.html>
- [11] Vega, M. 2022. 'Where is millet grown?' in Dependable at <https://www.dependablepickup.com/where-is-millet-grown/>
- [12] Natural History Museum, 2012, 'Millets- seeds of trade' map at <https://www.nhm.ac.uk/resources/nature-online/life/plants-fungi/seeds-of-trade/images/maps/millet.gif>
- [13] National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 1996. Lost Crops of Africa: Volume I: Grains. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/2305>. Page 81 at <https://nap.nationalacademies.org/read/2305/chapter/7#81>