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Balinese Elementary Schools

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Balinese Elementary Schools

Abstract

Kerambitan's elementary school houses approximately 100 students. These students, from first to sixth grade, attend class six days a week from 8 AM until noon (the afternoon heat is too strong). Like in many American elementary schools, the teachers on this level teach all core subjects; in Indonesia these subjects are math, reading, culture, and social studies. Subjects are highly standardized on a national level; students in Bali are learning the same things as students in Java or any of the other islands. The exception to this rule is the culture class; here students learn about Balinese culture, arts, and traditions. Other subjects, such as music, are extracurricular activities that take place after school. [*excerpt*]

Keywords

Bali, Indonesia, education, elementary school

Disciplines

Asian Studies | East Asian Languages and Societies | International and Area Studies | International and Comparative Education

Comments

This piece is part of the Bali Soundscapes collection, which features photographs, audio essays, and written essays by Gettysburg College students who took the *Language, Culture, & Immigration in Bali* course during the summer of 2013. See <http://cupola.gettysburg.edu/balisoundscapes/> for more.

Jane Best

Elementary Schools

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At home, students mostly speak in Balinese, but they speak mostly Indonesian at school. Since citizens from the huge country of Indonesia speak hundreds of different languages, learning this national language helps unite the islands and fosters effective communication. Students also study English, starting in fourth grade.

Students occasionally bring tools, such as scythes or brooms, to school. Instead of a maintenance staff, the students do the yard work- sweeping classrooms, gardening, and cutting the grass. The responsibility to take care of the school's appearance gives the students a sense of pride over their school and its grounds.

A sixth-grade classroom in Banjar Wani



Students pose for pictures outside of class, showing off their uniforms and cleaning tools.

A group of Balinese elementary school teachers pose for a picture.

