The Chemistry of Cosmetics



Blending science with art in the lab!

Sharon Parsons

Nelson Literacy Directions

The CHEMISTRY of Cosmetics

For teachers' inspection ONLY



Dear Reader

The global cosmetics industry is worth many billions of dollars, and creates and sells thousands of products to people worldwide. Many consumers today are interested in how cosmetics are manufactured and tested, and they read the ingredient lists on product labels. This book contains information about the ingredients and basic chemistry involved when companies produce cosmetics, including everyday products like toothpaste and sunscreen.

In Chapter 5, find out how public pressure has brought about bans on animal testing in cosmetic production. In part, these restrictions were made possible when enough people learnt more about the chemistry of cosmetics.

> "ROSEHIP OIL WAS LIKE NO OTHER COSMETIC PRODUCT ..."
> FOUNDERS OF TRILOGY

I hope that you will be inspired to do more of your own research on how cosmetic products are made, so you can make informed choices when you buy them.

Sharon Parsons

My sincere thanks to the following people for their time, information, images and enthusiasm for this book:

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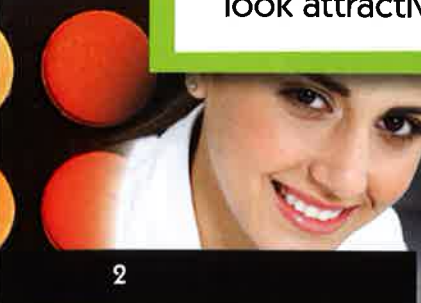
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1 Traditional Uses of Cosmetics

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Since the earliest civilisations, in almost every society around the world, people have used cosmetics to enhance their appearance. In fact, the word "cosmetic" comes from the Ancient Greek word *kosmetike*, which means "the art of dress and ornament".

South America, Australia and the Pacific Islands

Indigenous peoples in places such as South America, Australia and the Pacific Islands have long used paints and other facial or body decoration for ceremonial events, for battle or to enhance the performance of traditional stories and dance.



In South America, an Amazonian Indian woman uses red paint to dye areas around her eyes and nose.



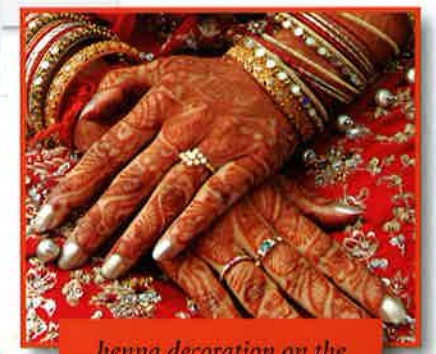
In Papua New Guinea, a Pacific Island country, a woman's make-up prepares her for the skeleton dance in a tribal festival.



In Australia, a member of the Nunukul Yuggera dance group portrays the Dreaming story of the goanna.

Africa and India

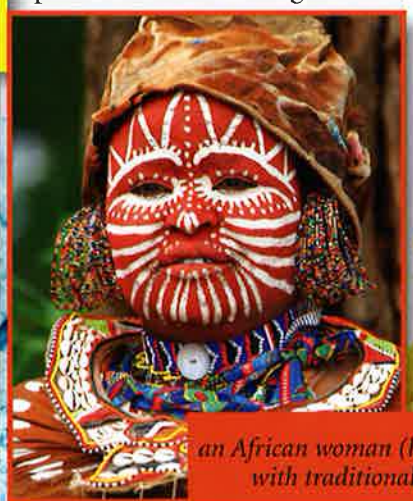
In Africa and India, many people used natural substances, such as henna, to dye their hair and skin. They used beeswax mixed with the sap of certain plants to make hair gel.



henna decoration on the hands of a bride in India



A mother paints her child's face according to tradition in a village near Jodhpur, India.





an African woman (left) and man (right) with traditionally painted faces

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China

In early Chinese society, people used colours on their fingernails as a mark of their social status. Royalty wore gold and silver, while workers were forbidden to wear any bright colours.



an ancient Chinese make-up cosmetics box



a Shanxi Opera character in full make-up and costume



An operatic actress in Beijing has a scenic mask painted on her face.

Nepal

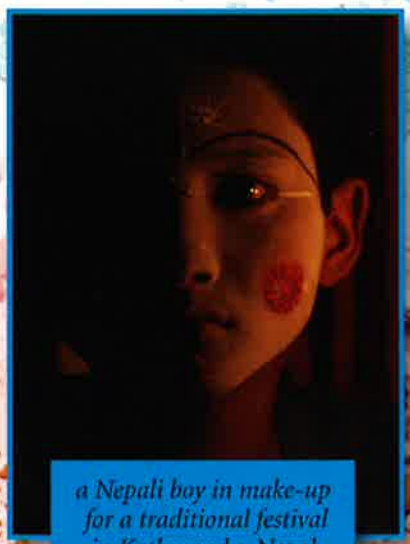
In Nepal, festivals are an important part of the culture. At many festivals, it is common for babies and small children to wear make-up using rich shades of red and yellow, and thick black lines around their eyes.

Japan

Since the 1600s in Japan, performers in traditional kabuki theatre have worn make-up called *kushi*. This make-up is integral to the story being dramatised. All performers apply a thick, white face paint before adding the detailed features.



an actor dressed to perform in Japanese Kabuki theatre



a Nepali boy in make-up for a traditional festival in Kathmandu, Nepal



England's Queen Victoria (1819-1901) thought that cosmetics were improper, vulgar and should only be used by actors.

Europe

In wealthy or aristocratic European societies, it was popular among both men and women to wear cosmetics that made their skin appear whiter, as a sign of their status. Unfortunately, the most common face-whitener was white lead paint, mixed with arsenic, both of which were extremely poisonous. The search for beauty and status through the use of cosmetics sometimes proved harmful.