

THE NEW HEROES

STUDENT VIDEO HANDOUT

Coopa Roca in Brazil featuring Maria Teresa "Tete" Leal.

“By making this work we will be promoting lots of women in Brazil to believe that they have the capacity to work and improve their lives. So we are promoting a movement. Much more than a job.”

--"Tete" Leal

SUMMARY:

"Tete" Leal founded a cooperative of seamstresses in the favella (slum) of Rio de Janeiro. Women use handcraft skills to sew high-fashion clothing. They have traditional knowledge and skill, and are paid by the piece. They earn more than they could by working in the market. 150 women belong to this cooperative called Coopa Roca.

This is a story about capacity. Tete Leal wants these women to believe that they have capacity--to create beautiful objects, to generate profits, to support their families, to change their lives.

1. Why are these people living in the slums of Brazil? Where did they come from and why?
2. Why make traditional clothing for a fashion show?
3. How did you feel when you learned they might not finish the clothes in time?
4. Seeing the women at the fashion show—the mix of cultures—she felt it was good for them all to meet each other. What do you think?
5. She talks about “the pride of the seamstresses” Why is this important?
6. Are you starting to understand the term “social entrepreneurship” and how it harnesses energy and creativity of people to create value? Why is it different from traditional business models?