AFFIRMATIONS of IDENTITY

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Visual Artists Resource Kit

Teacher’s Handbook

Warning
This text might identify Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people who are now deceased in ways that inadvertently give offence to particular families or communities.

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Tel: (02) 9367 8111 Fax: (02) 9367 8484
Website: www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au
ISBN 978 174147 4350
2006324

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A note on spelling

The anglicising of Aboriginal words has resulted in many of them having a variety of spellings. The spellings in this resource kit are generally consistent with those used by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies in Horton, D (ed), *Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia* (Aboriginal Studies Press, 1994), but it is acknowledged that there are other spellings that are equally valid.
Contents

Foreword by Gordon Stanley 4
Foreword by Carlo Svagelli 5
Introduction to the Affirmations of Identity Kit 6
  Aboriginal Education Policies 6
  Contents of Affirmations of Identity Kit 7
  Indigenous Art and the New South Wales Curriculum 8
  Community Consultation and Protocols 10
  Considerations When Developing Teaching Programs 11
  Strategies for Teaching Aboriginal Students 12
  Terminology 13
Map of Areas Associated with the Featured Artists 14
Timeline and Associated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art 15
Units of work 25
  Unit 1: A Cultural Journey 27
  Unit 2: Ceramic Creatures 35
  Unit 3: Unforgettable Tucker 43
  Unit 4: Ancestors and Family Members 51
  Unit 5: Reconciliation 59
  Unit 6: Objects in the Landscape 67
  Unit 7: Cultural Intersections 75
  Unit 8: Place, Possession and Dispossession 83
Glossary 97
Foreword

It is now seven years since the publication of the original Affirmations of Identity kit. It received a great deal of praise for shedding light on the current and historical diversity of ‘Aboriginal identity’ as represented in the visual arts. This web publication provides a much wider distribution of these resources and allows new functions such as the thematic packaging of images. It also has a wide range of website links to facilitate further research into the world of Aboriginal visual arts.

The visual arts can help break down barriers between people by communicating ideas and emotions that transcend words. When artists imaginatively and profoundly express personal insights, they can move audiences to greater empathy for cultural beliefs or attitudes.

The Affirmations of Identity suite of documents recognises the significance of the visual arts as part of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage and enables teachers and students to appreciate not only the visual messages of the artworks but also the cultural meanings and personal issues that have informed the production of these works.

As well as being useful in the study of visual arts, this kit also has applications in Aboriginal Studies, History and Geography, and more widely across the curriculum to assist in the development of a deeper understanding of Aboriginal culture and artistic practices. The Board of Studies is delighted to support the re-publication of this highly respected curriculum resource.

(Professor) Gordon Stanley
President
Board of Studies NSW
Foreword

This kit of educational resources is called ‘Affirmations of Identity’ because the resources call attention to the pride that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have in their identities and in their cultural heritages.

The material in this kit recognises that not only have the visual arts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people survived, they are flourishing. Nor are they standing still: today’s artists are using new techniques and technologies, and coming up with new art forms, interpretations, stories and statements.

The selection of artists and works that are discussed in the kit suggest the diversity of Australia’s Indigenous visual artists and hint at the depth of talent and wide range of ideas that they have.

In both urban and rural areas, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander visual artists are using their skills to sustain solidarity, to inform and enlighten, to challenge and to reconcile. They are also retelling important inherited stories in traditional and contemporary ways. They are contributing to the continuation of cultures that have existed since the beginning of time.

The internet publication of *Affirmations of Identity* will assist students to appreciate Indigenous artists, to understand something of what they are saying, and to acknowledge the ancient cultures of which they are a part.

Carlo Svagelli
President
NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc
Introduction to the Affirmations of Identity Kit

The Affirmations of Identity kit has been designed specifically for students of Visual Arts in Years 7–10 and as support material for Aboriginal Studies, but it can be used for other subjects such as History, Geography and Legal Studies.

This resource is intended to assist teachers with investigating the nature of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and with incorporating Aboriginal perspectives into their teaching programs. It provides biographies of selected artists and information about their artworks and artmaking practices, as well as images and sample units of work. Issues of copyright and misappropriation are also discussed.

It is hoped that the discussion of artists, artworks, communities and organisations in this kit will contribute to the breakdown of intercultural barriers and to the enhancement of the process of Reconciliation.

Aboriginal Education Policies

This kit addresses the following goals of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy:

Goal 20 – To enable Aboriginal students at all levels of education to have an appreciation of their history, cultures and identity.

Goal 21 – To provide all Australian students with an understanding of and respect for Aboriginal traditional and contemporary cultures.

This kit also supports the dual aims and objectives of the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Policy (NSW Department of Education and Training, 1995). These are:

1. To promote the education achievements of Aboriginal students.
2. To educate all students about Aboriginal Australia.

This policy is mandatory in all government schools in NSW.

The kit also supports the recommendations in the Report of the Review of Aboriginal Education (DET 2004, https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/reviews/aboriginaledu/the_report.htm) In particular, the kit supports the call in recommendation 12(c) for ‘regional support material that identifies Aboriginal cultural knowledge, skills and expertise that can be accessed by schools’, and the call in recommendation 13(a) for ‘mandatory content in current and future Board of Studies syllabuses related to Aboriginal cultures and history be made explicit for teachers and that this content be supported by specific support materials…’
Contents of the Affirmations of Identity Kit

The three resources in this kit are the Teacher’s Handbook, Protecting Australian Indigenous Art and Gallery and Artists.

The Teacher’s Handbook

As well as containing advice on how to make the best use of the Affirmations of Identity kit, the Teacher’s Handbook has eight sample units of work. These cover a diversity of ideas and concepts, providing examples of ways to develop students’ understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and perspectives.

The units of work are designed for implementation in Years 7–10. Students in Stage 4 Visual Arts (Years 7–8) explore artmaking, critical and historical studies and the content of practice, the frames and the conceptual framework. The units of work aim to develop understanding about the range of ways that personal stories, culture, heritage and contemporary issues are represented by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.

Students in Stage 5 (Years 9–10) explore similar content in more complex ways. They consider more challenging ideas that focus on community interests, political issues, life experiences, concepts of identity and cultural differences.

Protecting Australian Indigenous Art: ownership, copyright and marketing issues for New South Wales schools

In this resource http://ab-ed.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/go/visual-arts-7-10/protecting-australian-indigenous-art issues of intellectual property, cultural control, appropriation, misappropriation and copyright are explained and examined with reference to case studies. The text explores the limitations of existing legislation in protecting Aboriginal art styles owned by communities, and the problems associated with misappropriation by artists outside these communities. Proposals for changes are discussed. Many of the issues relate particularly to Aboriginal communities that are seeking to maintain longstanding cultural traditions. Classroom activities are included so teachers can engage their students with these issues. Information about the ways students may use Aboriginal art is also included.

Gallery and Artists

This resource http://ab-ed.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/ contains information about a broad range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, art-producing communities and art galleries. The selected works provide teachers and students with an indication of the extent of the diversity encompassed by the term ‘Aboriginal Art’. Comments on artmaking practices complement biographical and background notes. There are recommendations for further reading and viewing, a glossary, and links to gallery sites to provide access to current works and practices.
Indigenous Art and the New South Wales Curriculum

The following sections describe some of the ways in which the Affirmations of Identity kit relates to syllabuses in the subjects of Visual Arts, Aboriginal Studies, History and Geography.

Visual Arts

Creative Arts K–6 Syllabus (Board of Studies, 2000)

The Visual Arts component of the Creative Arts K–6 Syllabus http://k6.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/files/arts/k6_creative_arts_syl.pdf encourages students to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of the visual arts by engaging in learning experiences in making and appreciating. By including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and Aboriginal perspectives in the teaching of Visual Arts, teachers will assist students in developing an awareness of the diversity of ideas and artworks that can be produced. Such awareness will also assist students in appreciating Aboriginal history and culture, and in comprehending Australian society today. The syllabus recommends that all students from Early Stage 1 to Stage 3 experience the work of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Visual Arts Years 7–10 Syllabus (Board of Studies, 2003)


This syllabus offers a range of learning experiences for students to investigate, both practically and theoretically, the art of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through artmaking, and critical and historical studies. The syllabus provides opportunities for teachers and students to appreciate Aboriginal culture as one of the oldest living cultures, and to consider ways in which vital aspects of cultural knowledge are transmitted through the visual arts.

The frames (subjective, cultural, structural, postmodern) provide alternative ways for teachers and students to investigate ideas, meaning, belief and values in art. The frames generate different understandings about the function of, and relationships between, the agencies of the conceptual framework (artist, artwork, audience, world), the role of the artist and their interpretation of the world, artworks, and the way audiences may respond to artworks.

In artmaking, students are provided with opportunities to make different kinds of artworks in 2-D, 3-D and 4-D forms representing a range of ideas and interests. Students can also consider how their artworks can be informed by their knowledge of the artworks of particular artists and cultural groups.

The syllabus provides opportunities for students to study a range of artworks made by Indigenous artists using traditional and contemporary technologies.

Visual Arts Stage 6 Syllabus (Board of Studies, 1999)

There are many ways in which the study of the artistic practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is relevant to this syllabus. The syllabus addresses the characteristics of, and the types of inquiries that may be undertaken in artmaking, art criticism and art history, and looks at the social nature of these practices. The conceptual framework explicitly addresses the agencies in the artworld – artist, artwork, world and audience.
These aspects of content provide many ways for teachers and students to investigate the artistic practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in contemporary and historical contexts. They can look at the types of work produced and at some ideas, issues and concepts of traditional and contemporary significance. Relationships between artist, artwork, world and audience can be examined with reference to the significance of Indigenous art in local, national and international settings.

The units of work can be used as the springboard for work in the Preliminary and HSC courses through the investigation of concepts and theories raised in general Preliminary course investigations and through the case studies in the HSC course. Teachers could also deepen students’ understanding through the suggested research and related activities.

Using the structural frame, students can consider how the visual arts function as a form of communication: ideas are transmitted about the world through the signs, symbols and conventions that are used in artworks and read by informed audiences. This approach can be developed in artmaking activities and in art criticism and art history activities.

Using the cultural frame, students can consider how the visual arts reflect and construct beliefs and attitudes about cultural identity. The cultural frame offers a way to understand how artworks represent significant beliefs and experiences of particular cultural groups and language groups. This frame also offers a way to understand how the artist can take on the ‘voice’ of the group in producing art. Like the structural frame, this frame offers a way to understand Indigenous art and to consider ways to promote the development of wider understanding of cultural identity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**Aboriginal Studies**

*Aboriginal Studies Years 7–10 Syllabus* (Board of Studies, 2003)


and *Aboriginal Studies Stage 6 Syllabus* (Board of Studies, 1999)


This kit will give valuable assistance to teachers and students in understanding the diversity and complexities of contemporary Aboriginal cultures and identities, and the ways these are manifested in the visual arts. In discussing a variety of Aboriginal artists and their interactions with both the physical and metaphysical worlds, the kit explores the role of the visual arts in the expression and transmission of Aboriginal culture. The kit also provides cultural, legal and historical frameworks for studying the diversity of Aboriginal senses of heritage and identity.

**History**

*History Years 7–10 Syllabus* (Board of Studies, 2003)


The *Affirmations of Identity* kit will be a useful resource for teaching History in Years 7–10 as many artworks examine the nature of colonisation and its ongoing effects (Stage 4, Topic 3). Other artworks examine areas of Aboriginal studies and give Aboriginal perspectives on other
topics. The Stage 5 Australian History course includes a contemporary focus, and the artworks in this kit can be used to include Aboriginal perspectives on the issues raised in each topic.

**Geography**

*Geography Years 7–10 Syllabus (Board of Studies, 2003)*


This kit can be effectively used to support Geography in Years 7–10. The artworks are particularly useful in the Stage 5 Australian Geography course as it focuses on Australia’s identity and Australian environments. The kit can also contribute to effective teaching and learning for the integrated Civics and Citizenship component of the syllabus.

**Community Consultation and Protocols**

The inclusion of Aboriginal perspectives in all aspects of study should be negotiated with Aboriginal people and communities. Consultation will provide the basis for a mutually beneficial relationship between the school and local Aboriginal communities.

The advice in *Working with Aboriginal Communities: A Guide to Community Consultation and Protocols* (Board of Studies NSW, 2001) (search for print item 9780731349388 on Shop Online) [https://bosho.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/links/shoponline.html](https://bosho.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/links/shoponline.html) will assist greatly in the use of this kit. It contains guidance on developing sustainable partnerships between schools and communities, enhancing the learning experiences of students and promoting reconciliation.

The NSW Department of Education and Training provides a support network for Aboriginal education. Consultants in Aboriginal Education and Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers are located in School Education Offices, and Aboriginal Education Assistants are located in schools. These people form the link between schools and Aboriginal communities. Contact your nearest School Education Office to locate your nearest Consultant or Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer. If there is an Aboriginal Education Assistant in your school, invite them to participate in the planning and delivery of your programs.

The Catholic Education system employs Aboriginal Education Officers and Aboriginal Education Workers. More information is available at your nearest Diocesan Office.

The NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc (AECG) is the peak body for consultation on Aboriginal education in NSW. They have local and regional organisations that can be contacted for assistance and guidance. For more information, contact the Secretariat:

NSW AECG Inc  
37 Cavendish Street  
Stanmore NSW 2048  
Phone (02) 9550 5666, fax (02) 9550 3361  
It is recommended that wherever possible schools employ an Aboriginal artist or performer to guide classroom activities. The involvement of Aboriginal people gives authenticity to Aboriginal perspectives. There are Aboriginal artists’ cooperatives throughout NSW and some are listed in the Resources section in this document.

For Aboriginal education to be successful a good consultation process is essential.

When undertaking community consultation teachers must be aware of the protocols that exist in Aboriginal communities. Many of the issues raised by the works in this kit are contentious for Aboriginal people and communities and therefore must be approached with sensitivity. It is vital that teachers view consultation as a two-way, ongoing process where all people involved learn from each other through negotiation, listening, flexibility and open-mindedness.

Below is some general advice about approaching Aboriginal communities. As all communities are different, it is best to seek more specific advice from the local or regional AECG.

- Be introduced to the Aboriginal community by someone from that community or someone that the community knows and trusts. It is generally a good idea for men to consult and spend time with other men, and women with women.
- Recognise that Aboriginal people’s resources and time are valuable. Ensure that you give advance notice of meetings and visits.
- Allow time for people to respond to your proposals. Ask questions indirectly, allowing people time to consider your request as well as allowing room for them to decline without anyone being shamed.
- Be willing to adapt your program and approaches on the advice of the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people you consult. Always respond to requests and concerns put forward by the community who are advising or assisting you with your program.
- Avoid placing Aboriginal people in situations where they may feel uncomfortable. Schools can be one of these situations. This can be avoided by meeting with people in a neutral or negotiated place.
- Be aware of Aboriginal English and the significant level of non-verbal communication that occurs within Aboriginal communities. Ensure that your body language is consistent with your intentions and attitudes.
- Be brief, to the point and speak plainly, avoiding jargon and acronyms.
- Acknowledge and appropriately remunerate Aboriginal people for their consulting services. Ensure that people understand the purpose and outcome of the consultation.
- It will take more than one meeting for effective consultation to take place. Be patient and learn from your mistakes.

**Considerations When Developing Teaching Programs**

Teachers must ensure the programs they are developing are culturally sensitive. The following suggestions might help with developing inclusive and appropriate teaching and learning activities.
Discourage students from copying or using Aboriginal signs or symbols in their own artmaking. This not only causes great offence to Aboriginal people, but also infringes copyright. Students should be encouraged to develop their own symbolic visual language when learning about the systems of symbolic meaning in Aboriginal artworks. Be aware that non-Aboriginal people will never fully know or understand Aboriginal signs or symbols because they are not meant to.

Ensure that any resources used are culturally sensitive and appropriate. If in doubt, consult with Aboriginal people.

Integrate other aspects of Aboriginal art and culture, such as the oral tradition, the performing arts, song, and dance wherever possible.

Avoid aspects of Aboriginal art containing sacred or secret or ‘inside’ information. It is inappropriate to address this area in classroom situations; most Aboriginal people would find it offensive. However, it is important that students are informed about this issue and learn to respect it. Aboriginal artists or advisors may provide some background to this issue.

Encourage an understanding of Aboriginal culture as a dynamic living culture which, like all cultures, adjusts to change and has a history.

Avoid reference to traditional Aboriginal culture as ‘primitive’, ‘Stone Age’, or ‘simple’, as these terms are highly offensive.

Follow correct protocols when using works by an Aboriginal artist who has died. Students should be aware that in some communities the mentioning of names and display of photographs of people who have died are signs of disrespect to them and their families. Permission must be sought from families to show images of the deceased.

Discourage generalised or stereotypical characterisations of Aboriginal art, artists, culture or communities. Make specific reference to place, time, people and events, and draw attention to the rich diversity that exists within Aboriginal societies and the art produced.

Recognise how contemporary Aboriginal art can adapt Western art forms and new technologies and media, and still communicate cultural knowledge and express Aboriginality.

Keep informed of significant developments and innovations in the ways Aboriginal art practice, forms and media change over time. There are numerous magazines, catalogues and newspapers that have current information.

**Strategies for Teaching Aboriginal Students**

As the biographical information in the *Gallery and Artists* webpages shows, visual arts is an area where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students can have opportunities to enrich and affirm their cultural identities. The following are suggestions that teachers should consider.

Wherever possible employ an Aboriginal artist, dancer or storyteller to work with the students in the classroom.

Acknowledge that Aboriginal students will not necessarily be well informed about all aspects of their cultural heritage. Some will know a great deal while others might know little.
Enrich the classroom environment by displaying positive affirmations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and art.

Provide Aboriginal students with opportunities to enrich and affirm their cultural identity if they choose to do so. Do not assume that all students will have the desire to do this. Teachers need to recognise that Aboriginal students, like other students, learn in a variety of ways, have special needs and come from cultures with very rich and diverse creative arts traditions. Teachers need to be flexible in their delivery of programs and in the way they respond to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students’ learning styles.

Avoid stereotyping Aboriginal students by their physical attributes or the way they learn, as this will have negative effects on them. It is best teaching and learning practice to meet the needs of all students as learners from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

Acknowledge and recognise Aboriginal English as the home language of many Aboriginal students; use it as a building block within the classroom.

Develop an awareness of otitis media and other health problems affecting learning outcomes for Aboriginal students.

Acknowledge that some Aboriginal students will need time for family commitments, cultural traditions and events that affect their daily lives.

Encourage the Aboriginal Education Assistant to participate in classroom activities; they are able to offer support for the students and teachers.

**Terminology**

Terminology changes over time within Aboriginal culture and communities. The following is a selection of terms to help teachers with the sensitive implementation of the units of work.

- **Aboriginal people is the preferred term. Aborigine is an outdated term and can often offend some Aboriginal people.**

- In any writing activity, the word Aboriginal should always be written using a capital ‘A’.

- It is unacceptable to use the terms half-caste or full blood when referring to Aboriginal people. This is highly offensive.

- Use terms such as group, nation, language group or cultural group rather than the word tribe, as it is now outdated terminology. Some Aboriginal people refer to themselves as traditional, not tribal.

- Avoid using words such as legends and myths when referring to the Dreaming or Dreaming stories. Dreaming is preferred to Dreamtime as the latter refers to the past, and is not inclusive of the present and the future.

- Torres Strait Islanders do not consider themselves Aboriginal people. There are similarities and differences between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

- Torres Strait Islanders refer to their traditional stories as legends rather than Dreaming stories.

- Aboriginal people will often refer to themselves as Koori, Murri, Noonga etc. These names refer to a particular group or area to which they belong (see glossary). They are not general terms and should not be used as such.
Map of Areas Associated with the Featured Artists

**National**

1. Arrernte – Perkins
2. Eastern Anmatyerre – Kngwarreye
3. Warlpiri – Tjakamarra, Warlukurlangu Artists
4. Gurindji – Croft
5. Mara – Munduwalawala
6. Rembarnga – Wainburanga, Yarinkura
7. Dangbon – Nabardayal
8. Galwanuk-Liyagalawumirr – Bopirri
9. Bathurst & Melville Islands – Orsto
10. Wangkajungka – Thomas
11. Fitzroy Crossing – Mangkaja
12. Ngatatjara – McLean
13. Pintupi – Tjampijinpa
14. Walmatjarri – Pike
15. Pitjantjatjara – Ernabella
16. Ngarrindjeri – Abdulla, Koolmatrie
17. Tasmania – Casey
18. Thanaquith – Thancoupie
20. Meriam Mir – Deacon
22. Kalkadoon – Perkins
23. Waanyi – Watson

**NSW**

24. Wiradjuri – Andrew, June Barker, Coe, Riley, Simon, Wedge
25. Bundjalung – Bancroft, Bostock
26. Yorta Yorta – June Barker, Onus
27. Muruwarri – Roy Barker
28. Ngaku – Campbell
29. Wailwan – Coghlan, Rea
31. Biripi – Heath
32. Wonnarua – Hinton-Bateup
33. La Perouse Community – McKenzie
34. Dainggatti – McLeod
35. Worimi – Tobwabba
**Timeline and Associated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art**

This timeline is designed so teachers are able to see how historical and political events have been interpreted by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists (traditional, contemporary, rural and urban). By no means inclusive of all the events, it is merely a framework for teachers to adapt and develop according to their own needs and programs.

Please refer to the *Affirmations of Identity Gallery and Artists*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Events</th>
<th>Artists and Artworks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-1770</td>
<td>Cultural events celebrate the Dreaming and communicate stories through oral accounts, visual symbols, dance and music. The stories tell of beginnings, survival and relationships.</td>
<td>Paintings&lt;br&gt;Drawings&lt;br&gt;Body Art&lt;br&gt;Clothing&lt;br&gt;Carvings&lt;br&gt;Constructions&lt;br&gt;Utensils – Roy Barker, <em>NSW Artists</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770</td>
<td>Captain James Cook raises the British flag on Possession Island and claims Australia for the British Government. The British assume the land is <em>terra nullius</em>.</td>
<td>H J Wedge, <em>Captain Cook Con Man</em>, 1991, acrylic on masonite.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>British occupation begins at Sydney Cove with a penal colony and a scientific interest in Australian plants and animals. Conflict and Aboriginal resistance is immediate. Pemulwuy, a Bidgegal warrior, conducts a guerilla war from 1788 until 1802 and leads the attack on the British settlement at Toongabbi.</td>
<td>Port Jackson painter, <em>Black Swan</em>, watercolour, c. 1790.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1816</td>
<td>Governor Macquarie gives selected Indigenous Australians ‘passes’ and the protection of British Law. This ‘pass’ is a metal breastplate. Other Indigenous Australians may be shot on sight if they are found carrying spears near the houses of the new.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Artwork Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1822</td>
<td>Governor Macquarie gives Bungaree from Broken Bay near Sydney a life pension and protection for his contribution to Matthew Flinders’ two explorations around Australia.</td>
<td>Augustus Earl, <em>Portrait of Bungaree Wearing a Breast Plate</em>, 1820s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td>Myall Creek massacre. The settlers who shoot and kill 28 Kamilaroi people are the first group to be punished under Australian law.</td>
<td>Ray Baker/Jimmy Baker tapes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>Indigenous people are excluded from the Constitution, Census and laws.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Artist/Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td><em>Primitive Art</em> Exhibition, Victoria</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1930s</td>
<td>Social Realist artists Yosl Bergner and Noel Counihan depict Indigenous people under the impact of racism and European colonial expansion.</td>
<td>Lin Onus, <em>And on the eighth day ...</em>, 1992, oil on canvas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Arnhem Land Aboriginal Reserve declared.</td>
<td>Ginger Riley Mundawalawala, <em>This is My Country – This is My Story</em>, 1992, acrylic on canvas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937–38</td>
<td>Albert Namatjira has sell-out exhibitions in Adelaide and Melbourne. (Despite public outcry he was jailed in 1959 for selling alcohol to his cousin and died the same year.)</td>
<td>Albert Namatjira has influenced numerous artists in this kit. Thancoupie has been likened to Albert Namatjira for her innovations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940s–50s</td>
<td>Aboriginal art from Central Australia and Arnhem Land collected by missionaires and ethnographers are displayed in museums as ethnographic objects, not works of art.</td>
<td>Namiyal Bopirri, <em>Guruwana Story</em>, 1993, earth pigments on bark.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td><em>Art of Australia (1788–1941)</em> exhibition tours the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Artist/Source</td>
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<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Commonwealth <em>Electoral Act</em> entitles Indigenous Australians to enrol and vote in Federal elections.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>The Yirrkala people present a bark petition to the Commonwealth Government protesting the leasing of reserve land to the bauxite mining company, Nabalco.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Freedom Rides by Charles Perkins and Sydney University students draw attention to discrimination and segregation in towns in north-western NSW.</td>
<td>Robert Campbell Jnr, <em>Roped Off at the Pictures</em>, acrylic on canvas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>The land rights movement is born when the Gurindji people walk off Wave Hill and Newcastle Waters cattle stations. This begins an eight-year struggle for land title.</td>
<td>Merv Bishop’s photograph of Vincent Lingiari and Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, <em>Yiribana Catalogue</em>, Art Gallery of NSW.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Australians vote (91.77%) in a referendum to give the Commonwealth Government the power to legislate for Indigenous people and for them to be included in the census.</td>
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<td>1968</td>
<td>W E H Stanner in his Boyer lectures refers to the exclusion of Aboriginal history from the national consciousness as <em>the great Australian silence</em>.</td>
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<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Artist</td>
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<td>1975</td>
<td>Ernabella is established as an outstation industry for Aboriginal women with the support of the newly established Aboriginal Arts Board of the Australia Council.</td>
<td>Destiny Deacon, <em>Three Wishes</em> triptych: <em>First, Second Wish, Third Wish</em>, 1995, bubble jet prints from Polaroids.</td>
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<td>1976–9</td>
<td>In 1976 the Utopia station, 200 km north-east of Alice Springs, is purchased by the Aboriginal Land Fund Commission. In 1979 the Anmatyerre and Alyawarre finally regain ownership of their land. The income from Batik plays an important role in their land claims.</td>
<td>Alice Hinton-Bateup, <em>Ruth’s Story</em>, 1989, screenprint on paper.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
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<td>Artists and Works</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>series, 1994, layout stat colour print.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>the education and culture of Central Desert communities.</td>
<td>polymer paints on canvas.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rea, <em>Look Who’s Calling the Kettle Black</em>, and <em>Resistance 111</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Robert Campbell Jr, <em>Death in Custody</em>.</td>
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<td>1987</td>
<td>The commencement of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in</td>
<td>Gordon Bennett, Brenda L Croft, Brook Andrew, Bronwyn Bancroft, Euphemia Bostock.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Custody.</td>
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<td>1987</td>
<td>Boomalli Aboriginal Artist Co-operative Inc established in Sydney to</td>
<td>Gordon Bennett, Brenda L Croft, Brook Andrew, Bronwyn Bancroft, Euphemia Bostock.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>promote and exhibit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art.</td>
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<td>1988</td>
<td>At the Bicentennial Celebrations, Indigenous people march to promote</td>
<td>David Spearim (Fernando), <em>Invasion Day</em>, 1988, acrylic on canvas.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>their issues.</td>
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<td>ochres with PVC fixative on timber.</td>
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<td>1988</td>
<td><em>Dreamings</em> exhibition, New York, curated by Peter Sutton</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ant), <em>Wardapi (goanna)</em>, <em>Ngarlirdi (witchetty grub) Dreaming</em>, 1994, acrylic on</td>
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<td>canvas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Rover Thomas and Trevor Nicholls represent Australia at the *Venice</td>
<td>Rover Thomas, <em>Dreamtime Story of the Creation of the Erskine Range</em>, acrylic on</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Biennale*.</td>
<td>canvas.</td>
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<td>Year</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Artwork and Artist Notes</td>
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<td>1991</td>
<td>The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation Act (Cth) passes through parliament with cross-party support.</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>The judgement by the High Court of Australia on the Wik case rules that pastoral leases and native title can co-exist.</td>
<td>Jimmy Pike, <em>Journey</em>, screenprint on paper.</td>
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<td>1998</td>
<td>The Commonwealth Government’s Ten Point Plan is launched in response</td>
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<td>Year</td>
<td>Event/Exhibition/Information</td>
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</table>
| 2000 | The Corroboree 2000 Walk for Reconciliation across the Sydney Harbour Bridge draws an estimated 200,000 people.  
*Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius* exhibition at the Art Gallery of NSW. |
| 2001 | Aden Ridgeway is elected deputy leader of the Australian Democrats in April 2001. He is the first Indigenous person in Australia to be elected to a leadership position in a political party with parliamentary representatives.  
Boommali exhibitions in 2001:  
- *Centenary vs Eternity* – Centenary of Federation – Open Invitation  
- *Kevin Gilbert* – *Retrospective*  
- *Jeffrey Samuels* – *Stylin Up*  
- *Euphemia Bostock and Bronwyn Bancroft* – *Back to back* – *Black to Black*  
- *Gordon Hookey and Gordon Syron* – *In Ya Face* |
*Ngurra Kutu (Going Home)*  
Art Gallery of NSW, 8 September 2001 – 23 June 2002. An exhibition demonstrating the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art.  
*Dancing up country: The art of Dorothy Napangardi*. MCA, 11 December 2002 – |
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>Tracey Moffatt. MCA, 17 December 2003 – 29 February 2004.</td>
<td>A major exhibition which brought together all her major photographic series and films from the mid-1980s to the present day.</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>Maningrida Threads: Aboriginal Art from the MCA Collection.</td>
<td>MCA, 26 March – 1 June 2003. A collection of work by artists from Maningrida in Australia’s Northern Territory, this exhibition illustrated the role that fibre plays in the practice of artists from this community.</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>The Australian Government abolishes ATSIC which had been the peak Indigenous body, and Indigenous-specific programs are mainstreamed.</td>
<td>Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri. AGNSW, 14 May – 11 July 2004. A retrospective of Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri, a pioneer of the Western Desert Painting movement.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Deacon’s practice – photography, video, installation and performance.

**Boomalli exhibitions in 2004:**
- Gordon Syron – *New Works and Old*
- Dorsey Smith – *Finding Me*
- Geoffrey Ferguson – *In Defence of Identity*

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<td>2006</td>
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<td>Paddy Bedford. MCA, 6 December 2006 – 15 April 2007. The first major solo exhibition of Bedford’s work, with major paintings from public and private collections across the country.</td>
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<td><em>Bangu yilbara: works from the MCA collection</em>. MCA, 11 May – 1 October 2006. An exhibition reflecting the variety of directions that contemporary artistic practice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists has taken over the past 25 years.</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>Linda Burney is the first Aboriginal person to become a minister in the NSW Government. (Appointed Minister for Fair Trading, Minister for Youth and Minister for Volunteering in April 2007.) Federal intervention in Northern Territory Aboriginal communities after the release of the <em>Little Children Are Sacred</em> report in June 2007.</td>
<td>Founding Members Exhibition. Boomalli, July 2007. An exhibition commemorating the 20th anniversary of the founding of Boomalli, and honouring the ten artist members who formed Boomalli in 1987. These artists were Fiona Foley, Bronwyn Bancroft, Michael Riley, Fernando Martin, Raymond Meeks, Jeffrey Samuels, Euphemia Bostock, Avril Quail, Brenda L Croft and Tracey Moffatt.</td>
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Units of Work

Summary

The eight units of work described here have been developed for secondary school Visual Arts teachers as examples of ways to develop students’ understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and to incorporate Aboriginal and Indigenous cross-curriculum content in the classroom. Teachers of Visual Arts and Aboriginal Studies and other subjects should feel free to adapt the units of work to meet the learning needs and abilities of their students.

The eight units of work present a broad range of interests and issues that relate to contemporary urban and rural Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists. The units of work support the NSW Board of Studies Visual Arts Years 7–10 Syllabus (2003) and Visual Arts Years 7–10 Advice on Programming and Assessment (2003) and explore the practice of artmaking, and critical and historical studies.

The units include Related Activities to deepen students’ understanding of Aboriginal history, art and culture, and of the beliefs and practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and their communities.

The following table correlates the units of work with examples of artists and artworks that could be the focus of investigations in artmaking and critical and historical studies.