

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY SHEET:

Year 9

Overview

This Year 9 unit presents four activities that are designed to enhance and enrich student's knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the Stolen Generations. This unit is designed to align with Sorry Day (26 May), Reconciliation Week (27 May–3 June) or NAIDOC Week (July) but it can be delivered at any time of the year.

The activities may be delivered in a one-day workshop or spread over the course of a week, a month or a term. They are designed to allow the teacher to guide and support students in their learning, incorporating individual responses, small group activities and whole-class discussions. This unit allows students to consolidate their prior learning of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and Australian history. The activities are designed to scaffold students in acquiring new knowledge and developing critical analysis skills in response to different viewpoints and perceptions. The transcripts and worksheets included with these activities may be printed individually or compiled as a booklet for students to document their responses.

Each of these activities is linked to Year 9 Australian Curriculum Content Descriptions, as well as the Australian Curriculum Cross-curriculum Priority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures.

ACTIVITY 1: RESPONSE TO DANCE WRITTEN REVIEW (60–70 MINUTES)

Students view Bangarra Dance Theatre's *Mathinna*, investigating and evaluating the method of dance and performance to share stories. Students compile their responses and opinions in a written review.

ACTIVITY 2: CRITICAL ANALYSIS MIND MAP (60–70 MINUTES)

Students critically analyse *Sorry Day* by Coral Vass and Dub Leffler. Students create a mind map and multi-modal presentation on the historical, social and cultural value of the book.

ACTIVITY 3: ARTWORK COMPARISON (60–70 MINUTES)

Students compare two contemporary artworks, Tony Albert's *Sorry* and Bindi Cole's *I Forgive You*. Students use critical thinking and analytical skills to compare and contrast the artworks' aesthetic, historical, social and cultural impacts.

ACTIVITY 4: POETRY WRITING AND PERFORMING (60–70 MINUTES)

Students analyse poems from *Us Taken-Away Kids* and slam poetry performed by Steven Oliver. In pairs, students write and perform their own spoken word poems reflecting on their learning about the Stolen Generations.

Checklist for preparing your classroom

- Liaise with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resource centres, for example the [Dandiiri Community Library](#), to source age-appropriate texts on a range of topics including culture and country, dreaming stories, Stolen Generations stories, reconciliation, the National Apology to the Stolen Generations and NAIDOC Week as well as texts for your own reference.



- For your own background knowledge:

Read

- [Bringing them Home 20 Years On report](#)
- [Reconciliation Australia's fact sheet on the Apology to the Stolen Generations](#)
- [The Little Red Yellow Black Book](#)
- [The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies \(AIATSIS\) website](#) for more information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history

Watch

- [The Story of The Healing Foundation](#)
 - [Intergenerational Trauma Animation](#)
 - [Telling Our Stories – Our Stolen Generations \(Faye Clayton\)](#)
 - [Reconciliation in Australia – Our History, Our Story, Our Future](#)
 - [Deadly Questions](#)
- Send a note or newsletter home to parents so they can facilitate and support discussion at home.
 - Prepare a wall of the classroom to hang student work on and use as a reference. You might include the [AIATSIS map of Indigenous Australia](#) that can be purchased from AIATSIS Aboriginal Studies Press. You could also have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags, images of books the class will be reading, images of prominent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people etc.



Activity 1: Written response to dance (60–70 minutes)

Curriculum links

- Analyse and explain the use of symbols, icons and myth in still and moving images and how these augment meaning. ([ACELA1560](#))
- Interpret and compare how representations of people and culture in literary texts are drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts. ([ACELT1633](#))
- Analyse how the construction and interpretation of texts, including media texts, can be influenced by cultural perspectives and other texts. ([ACELY1739](#))
- Create imaginative, informative and persuasive texts that present a point of view and advance or illustrate arguments, including texts that integrate visual, print and/or audio features. ([ACELY1746](#))

Resources

- [Telling the Story: Mathinna](#) (2008)
- [Mathinna Bangarra Dance Theatre Education Resource](#)
- [Excerpts from Mathinna](#)
- [Mathinna – Study Guide](#)
- Worksheets and stimulus questions (Worksheets 1, 2 and 3)

Lesson

INTRODUCTION

- Introduce students to the story of Mathinna. Display the website [Telling the Story: Mathinna](#) and read through the story with students.
- Facilitate a whole class discussion exploring students' understanding of:
 - contemporary Indigenous artists
 - dance and theatre as a form of storytelling
 - how the story of Mathinna fits into students' current knowledge of the Stolen Generations.
- Students complete worksheet: Before viewing (Worksheet 1).

INVESTIGATION

- Watch video: [Mathinna Bangarra Dance Theatre Education Resource](#).
- Students complete worksheet: After viewing (Worksheet 2).
- Facilitate whole class discussion as students share answers on both worksheets:
 - prompt students to consider the impact of dance theatre as a method of storytelling.
- Students plan and draft a written review in response to *Mathinna* as a production of contemporary storytelling. Recommended resources:
 - completed worksheets (Worksheet 1 and 2)
 - stimulus questions (Worksheet 3)
 - [Mathinna – Sydney Morning Herald review](#)
 - [Mathinna Sees Stolen Childhood Told in Dance](#).
- Students include images and quotes (from dancers, directors or Mathinna's letter) to support their writing.
- Students swap reviews with peers to edit and provide feedback on each other's work.

CONCLUSION

- Students refine and print review for publishing.
- Reviews may be published to the wider school community at teacher's discretion (school library, newsletter, website etc.).



Activity 2: Critical analysis mind map (60–70 minutes)



Curriculum links

- Interpret and compare how representations of people and culture in literary texts are drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts. ([ACELT1633](#))
- Reflect on, discuss and explore notions of literary value and how and why such notions vary according to context. ([ACELT1634](#))
- Explore and reflect on personal understanding of the world and significant human experience gained from interpreting various representations of life matters in texts. ([ACELT1635](#))
- Use interaction skills to present and discuss an idea and to influence and engage an audience by selecting persuasive language, varying voice tone, pitch, and pace, and using elements such as music and sound effects. ([ACELY1811](#))

Resources

- For your own background knowledge, read [Sorry Day teachers' notes](#).
- Book: *Sorry Day* by Coral Vass and Dub Leffler.
- [Video: Sorry Day](#) by Coral Vass and Dub Leffler.

Lesson

INTRODUCTION

- As a whole class, read through the book *Sorry Day* by Coral Vass and Dub Leffler.
- Watch video: *Sorry Day* by Coral Vass and Dub Leffler.
- Facilitate whole class discussion of the book, including:
 - significance of the cultural backgrounds of the author and illustrator
 - analysis of the tandem storyline and characters of the book
 - analysis of the language and aesthetic features of the book
 - evaluation of the historical, social and cultural value of the book.

INVESTIGATION

- In pairs, students create a mind map and multi-modal presentation on the historical, social and cultural value of the book. Mind maps should include:
 - quotes and images from the book
 - quotes from the author and/or illustrator
 - quotes and/or images from the National Apology
 - statistics and information about the Stolen Generations
 - a clear expression of the student's opinion of the historical, social and cultural value of the book.
- Recommended platforms include:
 - PowerPoint, SlideShow, Keynote, Prezi, video, whiteboard presentation.

CONCLUSION

- Students deliver multi-modal presentations to teacher and peers.
- Presentations may be published to the wider school community at teacher's discretion (school library, newsletter, website, etc.).

Activity 3: Artwork comparison (60–70 minutes)

Curriculum links

- Analyse and explain the use of symbols, icons and myth in still and moving images and how these augment meaning. ([ACELA1560](#))
- Interpret, analyse and evaluate how different perspectives of issue, event, situation, individuals or groups are constructed to serve specific purposes in texts. ([ACELY1742](#))
- Use comprehension strategies to interpret and analyse texts, comparing and evaluating representations of an event, issue, situation or character in different texts. ([ACELY1744](#))
- Create imaginative, informative and persuasive texts that present a point of view and advance or illustrate arguments, including texts that integrate visual, print and/or audio features. ([ACELY1746](#))

Resources

For your own background knowledge read

- [Tony Albert – Visible – Teacher Notes](#)
- [Sorry \(2008\) by Tony Albert – artwork overview](#)
- [I Forgive You \(2012\) – Bindi Cole](#)
- [Bindi Cole – Contemporary Australia: Women – GOMA](#)
- [Tony Albert discusses Sorry, created for the National Apology in 2008](#)

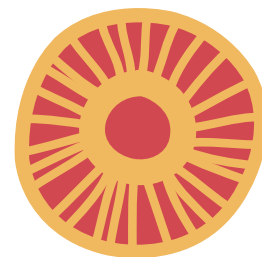
Lesson

INTRODUCTION

- Display Tony Albert's *Sorry* to students via projector (use both links to show original and inverse installations).
- Facilitate whole class discussion about the artwork, including:
 - the media and materials used to make the artwork
 - student assumptions of the historical, social and cultural context of the artwork.
- Display Bindi Cole's *I Forgive You* to students via projector.
- Facilitate whole class discussion about the artwork, including:
 - the media and materials used to make the artwork
 - students' first impressions of the historical, social and cultural context of the artwork.

INVESTIGATION

- Watch video: Tony Albert discusses *Sorry* created for the National Apology in 2008
- Facilitate whole class discussion, prompting students to consider:
 - the significance of the artist's cultural background
 - the political context of the artwork in relation to the National Apology
 - the artwork's first iteration as 'SORRY' and second iteration as 'YRROS', and how the artwork has changed over time.
- Watch video: Bindi Cole – Contemporary Australia: Women – GOMA
- Facilitate whole class discussion, prompting students to consider:
 - the significance of the artist's cultural background
 - the political context of the artwork in relation to the National Apology



- the artist's idea of forgiveness being empowering and freeing to both parties.
- Students write an analytical research essay comparing the two artworks. Essays should include:
 - research gathered from credible sources such as QAG/GOMA, ABC, Eyeline, ArtGuide etc.
 - descriptions of the artworks, media and materials
 - quotes from the artists speaking about their artistic practice
 - evaluation of how the artwork functions as a visual text to represent the artist's perspective
 - analysis of the artworks' historical, social, cultural and political value
 - images of the artworks.

CONCLUSION

- Students print and publish reviews.
- Reviews may be published to the wider school community at teacher's discretion (school library, newsletter, website, etc.).



Activity 4: Poetry writing and performing (60–70 minutes)

Curriculum links

- Analyse how the construction and interpretation of texts, including media texts, can be influenced by cultural perspectives and other texts. ([ACELY1739](#))
- Listen to spoken texts constructed for different purposes, for example to entertain and to persuade, and analyse how language features of these texts position listeners to respond in particular ways. ([ACELY1740](#))
- Experiment with the ways that language features, image and sound can be adapted in literary texts, for example the effects of stereotypical characters and settings, the playfulness of humour and pun and the use of hyperlink. ([ACELT1638](#))
- Use interaction skills to present and discuss an idea and to influence and engage an audience by selecting persuasive language, varying voice tone, pitch, and pace, and using elements such as music and sound effects. ([ACELY1811](#))

Resources

- [Us Taken Away Kids – Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission](#)
- [Video: Steven Oliver – Australian Poetry Slam 2014](#)
- [Video: Steven Oliver – Hate He Said](#)
- [Video: Steven Oliver – Real \[0:35-4:35\]](#)

Lesson

INTRODUCTION

- Read *Sacred Mothers* by Yveane Fallon from *Us Taken Away Kids* aloud to class
- Facilitate whole class discussion and whiteboard notes to analyse the poem. Students use prior knowledge of:
 - poetry genre and associated language conventions
 - personal accounts from members of the Stolen Generations.
- In pairs, students analyse a different poem from *Us Taken Away Kids*.

INVESTIGATION

- Students watch three videos: Steven Oliver – Australian Poetry Slam 2014, Steven Oliver – *Hate He Said*, Steven Oliver – *Real*
- In between each video, facilitate short wholeclass discussion, including:
 - the historical, social, cultural and political context of the poems
 - the cultural background and identity of the writer/performer
 - how performance alters and enhances the impact of poetry.
- In pairs, students write their own poem to be performed as a spoken word piece:
 - students are to write only from their own perspective
 - students must express their opinion on the Stolen Generations and National Apology in a culturally safe manner.
 - students must incorporate performative techniques such as persuasive language, imagery, gesture, body language, tone, pace and pitch.

CONCLUSION

- Students present their spoken-word performances to the class.
- Poems may be shared with the wider school community at teacher's discretion (performed at assembly, text or recording published in school library, newsletter, website, etc.).

Continuing the work

Once you have completed these set lessons you might like to continue or follow up with some other activities. You could:

- Create a class action plan for how the students could help their school learn more about the Stolen Generations.
- Join the [Narragunnawali community](#) (and develop a [Reconciliation Action Plan](#) for your school) to access a variety of curriculum resources about reconciliation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions.
- Create a [yarning circle](#) in the classroom to share feelings and news.
- Start each day/week with an [Acknowledgement of Country](#) or display a written statement in the classroom.
- Research more about [Indigenous Australian languages](#).
- Send books from the classroom library home for students to discuss with parents and carers.
- Invite parents and carers to an open day style session, where children can show their work.
- Seek further information or [incursions](#) from Elders, Stolen Generations members or community members.
- Hold [National Reconciliation Week](#) or [NAIDOC Week](#) celebrations in your school or attend events in your local community.
- Develop a booklist for your classroom. When choosing books for your classroom, investigate if the author and illustrator are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and consider this as part of your selection. For more book suggestions and support in choosing texts or to source other materials, please contact a local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander library, for example [Dandiiri Community Library](#), or the [The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies](#).



Worksheet 1: *Mathinna* response questions – Year 9

1. Who is Mathinna and what do we know about her?

2. Where in Tasmania are Port Davey, Flinders Island, Hobart and Oyster Cove?

3. Who were Mathinna's parents and where were they from?

4. Who was George Augustus Robinson and what did he have to do with the history of the Aboriginal people in Tasmania?

5. Who are Sir John and Lady Jane Franklin?

6. What was life like for the early European colony in Hobart Town? For the free settlers, for the convicts, for the Aboriginal people?

7. Who are the Aboriginal people/s who live in Tasmania?

8. What is a cultural advisor?

9. Who are the dancers of Bangarra? Where do they come from?

10. Where is the company Bangarra based?

Worksheet 2: *Mathinna* response questions – Year 9

1. In Section 1, Father – what is the prop that this dancer holds? What is the significance of this object?

2. Describe the dancer's costume and stage makeup.

3. In Section 2, Nursery – what are the objects on the stage and what type of room do they represent?

4. What are the dancers' costumes? What are their cultural and historical contexts?

5. What is the sequence of events in Section 2 and how do the dancers interact with the props?

6. What is the content of the voice over? What is the source?

7. Why does the dancer Elma Kris look so different in Sections 2 and 3? What has happened to her character?

8. Describe the props in Section 3 – Moonshine. What might they represent?

9. Mathinna removes her dress. What is the significance of this use of a costume?

10. The production *Mathinna* describes a girl's journey between two cultures. Why might the choreographer have chosen to develop the dance based on the story of the Aboriginal girl Mathinna?



Worksheet 3: Mathinna stimulus questions – Year 9

Use these questions to direct your research and writing when planning your written response to *Mathinna*

- What long term impacts of imperialism on Aboriginal lives are described in *Mathinna*?
- What influence did John and Jane Franklin have on the colony of Hobart?
- What living conditions are represented (European, Aboriginal)?
- Which examples of technological development are shown in the dance?
- What political and philosophical ideas led to the deportation of Aborigines to Flinders Island and the ‘adoption’ of Mathinna by the Franklins?
- What factors may have caused Mathinna’s death at such a young age?

