

Our Healing. Our Future.



HealingFoundation
Strong Spirit • Strong Culture • Strong People

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY SHEET:

Year 11

September 2023

Overview

This Year 11 unit is designed to enhance and enrich student's knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the Stolen Generations.

The four activities may be spread over the course of a week, a month, a term or the year. They can be delivered at any time of the year but could be aligned with Sorry Day (26 May), National Reconciliation Week (27 May–3 June) or NAIDOC Week (first week of July). The lesson plans aim to allow teachers to guide and support students in their learning, incorporating individual responses, small group activities and whole-class discussions. The activities have been designed to showcase what could be done, and to guide and support students in their learning journey.

This unit is based on an inquiry approach to learning to allow students and teachers to learn side by side, questioning, exploring and consolidating their own thinking by considering all perspectives. Activities have been designed to be collaborative to allow students to share their thoughts and ideas. Group work skills have been embedded into the activities to guide this process.

All of the activities have been linked to the Year 11 English curriculum in the Australian Curriculum and Units 1 and 2 in the Senior English syllabus and Achievement Standards.

ACTIVITY 1: MOTHER

Through the work of artist Michael Cook, students can explore the visual representation of emotions that are depicted in the journey of a woman in a deserted Australian landscape. The 'mother' is always alone, her baby absent.

ACTIVITY 2: THE CHILDREN

In this activity, Archie Roach's song 'Took the Children Away' will lead students through an emotional journey while learning about the power of sharing your story.

ACTIVITY 3: SHARING PERSONAL STORIES

Sharing stories has been part of how we inspire, heal and learn as humans. Students are given time in this activity to listen deeply, understand, reflect and learn from the stories shared by survivors of the Stolen Generations.

ACTIVITY 4: THE CHILDREN CAME BACK

In this activity, students will have the opportunity to explore the resilience of spirit through song and story.



Scan the
QR code to
access links
to resources



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, stories from the Dreamtime, 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

- Fact Sheet: [Bringing them Home report](#)
- [The White Girl](#) (Chapter 1) by Tony Birch
- [Tell me why](#) (article) by Archie Roach
- [Born-again Blakfella](#) by Jack Charles. This book is available to purchase online and at various book retailers, including Big W
- The Healing Foundation's '[Preparing your classroom](#)' fact sheet
- Tips teachers can use when talking about racism ([article](#))
- Educational resources from [AIATSIS](#)
- The Healing Foundation's [Glossary of Healing Terms](#)
- [Bringing Them Home 20 years on: an action plan for healing](#) The Healing Foundation



Watch

- The Healing Foundation's [intergenerational trauma animation](#)

Wellbeing

While some of the content included in these activities can be confronting or overwhelming, it is important for all Australians to understand our full history, including the experiences of Stolen Generations survivors, their families and communities, and the impacts of past government policies that are still being felt today.

The lesson plans have been developed in close consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous teachers to ensure that content is age-appropriate, but they may cause sadness and distress to some students. This is particularly the case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Please take this into account when preparing your lessons and consider additional classroom support for certain activities.

The Healing Foundation has developed a separate fact sheet, included in this kit, to help support teachers with these classroom activities. Before running these lessons, it is important to let parents and carers know in advance that you will be working on issues related to the Stolen Generations.

It is also important to be able to manage and understand your own feelings as an educator and those of your students. Being comfortable to ask for and give support helps to reduce the fear of asking for help and is important in building a supportive culture at your school.

Before running these lessons, consider a phone call or letter to parents/carers. You could also engage the local community or Aboriginal Land Council in your activities.

Year 11

Introduction

- Why this learning is important:
 - To change the way we look at our collective history
 - To support reconciliation and an honest understanding of our past – not just one perspective
 - To become aware of past government policies that still affect many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Discuss wellbeing resources with your students and acknowledge that some of the content may be confronting and upsetting. Acknowledge that these truths do need to be heard for our nation to grow and heal together.
- Watch the [Intergenerational Trauma Animation](#) with students.



Who are the Stolen Generations?

For about a century, thousands of First Nations children were systematically taken from their families, communities and culture, many never to be returned. These children are known as Stolen Generations survivors, or Stolen Children.

In the 1860s, Victoria became the first state to pass laws authorising the removal of Aboriginal children from their families. Similar policies were later adopted by other states and territories – and by the federal government when it was established in the 1900s. The Stolen Generations were taken by the police, from their homes, and on their way to or from school. They were placed in more than 480 institutions, adopted or fostered by non-Indigenous people and often subjected to abuse. The children were denied all access to their culture, they were not allowed to speak their language and they were punished if they did. The impacts of this are still being felt today.

There are currently more than 33,000 Stolen Generations survivors in Australia. More than one third of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are their descendants. In Western Australia, more than half of the population have Stolen Generation links.

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

- Ask students to read and discuss the information presented in the [Make Healing Happen](#) report about Stolen Generations survivors.
- Ask students to work in groups of four to read, discuss and present the information in the report and their thoughts and feeling about it.



Intergenerational trauma

Trauma in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is not just experienced individually but between generations and across communities. The ripple effect is felt far and wide.

If people don't have the opportunity to heal from trauma, they may unknowingly pass it on to others through their behaviour. Their children may experience disconnection from their extended families and culture and have high levels of stress. This creates a cycle of trauma, where the impact is passed from one generation to the next. In Australia, intergenerational trauma predominantly affects the children, grandchildren and future generations of the Stolen Generations.

A report by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare found [children living in households with Stolen Generations](#) are twice as likely to experience discrimination, twice as likely to experience violence, and 1.5 times more likely to have been arrested, in comparison to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

- Research what has been done about this gross violation of human rights.
 - Refer to [Bringing Them Home 20 years on: an action plan for healing](#) The Healing Foundation.
- Groups need to address the following questions below as a guide, but could add more:
 - Who are the Stolen Generations?
 - Where are they today?
 - What are the impacts of past policies?
 - What is meant by disproportionate disadvantage?
 - What has been done to put things right?
- Explore The Healing Foundations' [projects](#).



Activity 1: Mother (80mins)

Through the work of artist Michael Cook, students can explore the visual representation of emotions that are depicted in the journey of a woman in a deserted Australian landscape.

Activities have been designed for individual use or as a whole unit of work. Activities can be sourced from across year levels and adapted.

Creating cultural safe spaces

- Recap that at any time if students need to talk about their feelings regarding the subject matter the school has support in place.
- Share perspectives and opinions in a safe and respectful way.
- Debrief at the end of every lesson.

Other subject areas that can be incorporated into this learning include History, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Visual and Performing Arts, General capabilities and Cross Curriculum Priorities.

Curriculum links

- Explaining how texts are created and for different context. [ACEEN001](#)
- Evaluating the impact of description and imagery, including figurative language and still and moving images in digital and multimodal texts. [ACEEN007](#)
- Drawing on a range of technologies in, for example, research, communication and representation of ideas. [ACEEN012](#)

Resources

- Artwork: [Mother](#) by Michael Cook. Print copies labelled with numbers 1-7.
- [Yarning Circles in the Literacy Classroom](#).

EXTRA RESOURCES/FURTHER READING

- [The Healing Journey](#) artwork by Riki Salam.
- [Perth Stolen Generations artwork](#) by Sandra Hill.
- [Sandra Hill biography](#).

Lesson

INTRODUCTION

Highlight and discuss the need for cultural safety in the classroom and access to wellbeing support for all students.

- Form a yarning circle – discuss the cultural significance and protocol of starting and ending the lesson in this way.
- Place copies of Michael Cook's artwork series *Mother* on the floor inside the circle so students can see all pieces in the series. Place a Post-it note with a number from 1-7 on top of each artwork.
- Instruct students to choose an image that resonates with them and remember the number that has been assigned to the artwork.
- While everyone in the group chooses an image, ask students to think about why they chose that image. There are no right or wrong answers. Students who pick the same image (for example, the image labelled 1) can make a smaller yarning circle to compare choices. Do this for all the different images.
- As a whole class, discuss why students chose a particular image.

INVESTIGATION

As a class, have students discuss and compare ideas behind the artwork. Write up responses on the board for reflection later.

- Give students Michael Cook's name and the title of the series.
- Have students research and investigate the artist and artwork series *Mother* in pairs.
- Students should join with another pair to share notes and findings.
- In their groups of four, students respond to this quote 'A picture speaks a thousand words', using Cook's artwork series *Mother* as stimulus.
- Students can write, draw, paint or perform a response to Cook's work. Include some time to share with the class in this or subsequent lessons.

CONCLUSION/DEBRIEF

End the session with a yarning circle, with Cook's artwork in the middle, and share ideas, thoughts and feelings.

Get the Links



Activity 2: The children (80 mins)

In this activity, Archie Roach's song 'Took the Children Away' will lead students through an emotional journey while they learn about the power of sharing your story.

Activities have been designed for individual use or as a whole unit of work. Activities can be sourced from across year levels and adapted.

Creating cultural safe spaces

- Recap that if at any time students need to talk about their feelings regarding the subject matter the school has support in place.
- Share perspectives and opinions in a safe and respectful way.
- Debrief at the end of every lesson.

Other subject areas that can be incorporated into this learning include History, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Visual and Performing Arts, General capabilities, and Cross Curriculum Priorities.

Curriculum links

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- Evaluating the impact of description and imagery, including figurative language, and still and moving images in digital and multimodal texts. [ACEEN007](#)
- Drawing on a range of technologies in, for example, research, communication and representation of ideas. [ACEEN012](#)
- Analysing the ways language features, text structures and stylistic choices shape points of view and influence audiences. [ACEEN024](#)
- The impact of language and structural choices on shaping own and others' perspectives. [ACEEN028](#)

Resources

- Video: [Aboriginal wellbeing and resilience](#) by Western Australia Department of Health.
- The Healing Foundation's interactive [map of Stolen Generations institutions](#).
- [Marlee's Mob intergenerational trauma comic](#).
- Video: Telling Our Stories – [Tony Hansen](#).
- Video: Telling Our Stories – [Eileen Cummings](#).
- Video: Telling Our Stories – [Marjorie Winphil](#).
- Video: Telling Our Stories – [Michael Welsh](#).

EXTRA RESOURCES

[Island Stories: Listening to the people of the Torres Strait](#).



Lesson

INTRODUCTION

Prior knowledge:

- Listen, reflect and discuss 'Took the Children Away' by Archie Roach.
- Ask students following questions.
 - Who is Archie Roach?
 - Why might he have written this song?
- As a class, discuss and draw out the main ideas on one side of the board for students to see.

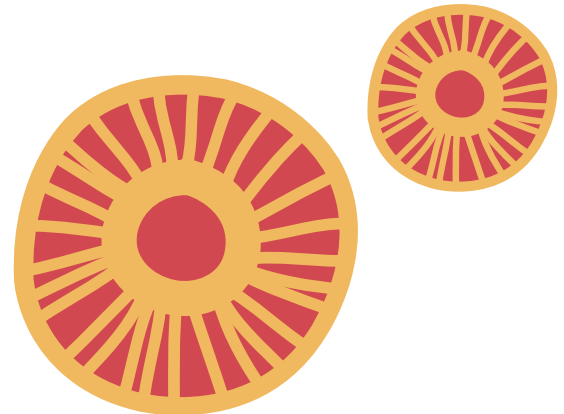


INVESTIGATION

- Split into two groups. One group will read the NITV news article, [Survivors of the Stolen Generation, still sufferers of lost Aboriginality](#) and the other will watch [Michael Welsh's video](#).
- Ask students to investigate, in pairs, the language features, text structures and stylistic choices that shape points of the text.
- Find examples of emotive language and imagery in the construction of the text.
- Ask students to explore the impact of language and structural choices that shape their own and others' perspectives after reading/listening to the text.
- Reflect and discuss.
- Ask each pair to swap with another partner from another group and share.

CONCLUSION/DEBRIEF

- Share some new knowledge you gained in this lesson.
- Explore some of the positive work that is happening through The Healing Foundations' projects.
- How could this information be shared within your school and wider community?
- Make an action plan.



Get the Links



Activity 3: Sharing story (80 mins)

Sharing stories has been part of how we inspire, heal and learn as humans. Students are given time in this activity to listen deeply, understand, reflect and learn from the stories shared by Stolen Generations survivors.

Activities have been designed for individual use or as a whole unit of work. Activities can be sourced from across year levels and adapted.

Creating cultural safe spaces

- Recap that at any time students need to talk about their feelings regarding the subject matter the school has support in place.
- Share perspectives and opinions in a safe and respectful way.
- Debrief at the end of every lesson.

Other subject areas that can be incorporated into this learning include History, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Visual and Performing Arts, General capabilities, and Cross Curriculum Priorities.

Curriculum links

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- Drawing on a range of technologies in, for example, research, communication and representation of ideas. [ACEEN012](#)

Resources

- Video: Telling Our Stories – [Geoff Cooper](#).
- Video: Telling Our Stories – [Ian Hamm](#).
- Video: Telling Our Stories – [TJ Mia](#).
- Video: Telling Our Stories – [Eileen Cummings](#).
- Artwork: [Mother](#) by Michael Cook.
- Documentary: [Lousy Little Sixpence](#).
- [Marlee's Mob](#) intergenerational trauma comic.
- [The Healing Foundation](#) videos.
- [How to structure student discussions with a walk and talk](#).

EXTRA RESOURCES/FURTHER READING

- Video: [The Secrets of Pecan Summer](#).



Lesson

INTRODUCTION

Acknowledge that everyone's story is unique and can be expressed in many ways. Ask students to form pairs.

- Each pair chooses one of the four videos of Stolen Generations survivors – Geoff Cooper, Ian Hamm, TJ Mia and Eileen Cummings.
- Ask students to watch and discuss with their partner, recording the main ideas that were discussed in the video.
- Ask students to explore, unpack and analyse their own thoughts, feelings and questions.
- Discuss in small groups.

INVESTIGATION

- Refer back to Michael's Cook's *Mother* series. Recap.
- Introduce activity to students: they will be taking the main ideas from each video to create still and moving images in digital and multimodal texts.
- Ask students how they will convey their own feelings and thoughts within the text they create.
- Direct students to investigate this idea through examples such as Michael Cook's *Mother* series, *Marlee's Mob* and *Lousy Little Sixpence*..
- Plan, create and present ideas through a comic-style computer animation. Create a visual and/or multimodal presentation.

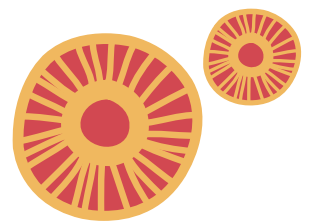
GOING FURTHER

Why is it important that we share our own stories of happiness, grief and triumph with others? What can we all learn by doing this?

- Investigate some examples (e.g. any of the Stolen Generations videos, or stories from individuals from your community).
- Key questions:
 - Social media is a way many people share their own stories. How do we make sure we respect each other's stories?
 - Why is it important not to retell other peoples' stories (unless you have permission)?

CONCLUSION/DEBRIEF

Include a walk and talk session to unpack what has been learnt so far.



Get the Links



Activity 4: The children came back (80 mins)

Students will get the opportunity to explore the resilience of spirit through song and story in this activity.

Activities have been designed for individual use or as a whole unit of work. Activities can be sourced from across year levels and adapted.

Creating cultural safe spaces

- Recap that if at any time students need to talk about their feelings regarding the subject matter the school has support in place.
- Share perspectives and opinions in a safe and respectful way.
- Debrief at the end of every lesson.

Other subject areas that can be incorporated into this learning include History, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Visual and Performing Arts, General capabilities, and Cross Curriculum Priorities.

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- Drawing on a range of technologies in, for example, research, communication and representation of ideas. [ACEEN012](#)

Resources

- [Yarning Circles in the Literacy Classroom](#).
- Lyrics to '[Took the Children Away](#)' by Archie Roach.
- Video: Telling Our Stories – [Brian Gray](#).
- Video: [Joyce Napurrula Schroeder](#).
- Video: [Briggs – 'The Children Came Back'](#) (featuring Gurumul and Dewayne Everettsmith).

EXTRA RESOURCES/FURTHER READING

- [Singing Trauma Trails](#): Songs of the Stolen Generations in Indigenous Australia.
- [Murundak – Songs of Freedom](#). The full film can be accessed via Kanopy using your school or local library to log in.



Lesson

INTRODUCTION

- Begin by forming a yarning circle and discussing the cultural significance of this protocol.
- Refer back to the lesson where we discussed Archie Roach's song 'Took the Children Away'.
- Assign, or ask students to choose, in pairs, either Brian's video or Joyce's video.
- Ask students to discuss their feelings and thoughts after watching their video.
- Ask students to write down the main ideas addressed in Brian's or Joyce's video on one side of their paper.

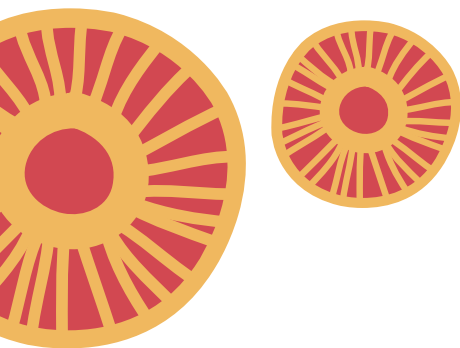
INVESTIGATION

While in their pairs, students will now discuss the ideas they have generated from watching Brian and Joyce's videos.

- Watch the music video to ['The Children Came Back'](#) by Briggs (featuring Gurrumul and Dewayne Everettsmith).
- Ask students to write down the main ideas, and their thoughts and feelings after listening to this song and watching the music video.
- Ask students to share their work with another pair and identify similarities and differences they found.
- Discuss these questions as a class:
 - What were the main messages coming through from each text?
 - What was similar?
 - What was different?
 - Are these stories and songs of resilience?
 - Why is it important to share these stories and songs?

CONCLUSION/DEBRIEF

- End the learning by forming a yarning circle and restate the cultural significance of this protocol as a way to debrief.
- Reflect on learning, what has been learnt and what students would still like to know.
- Key questions:
 - Is it important for all Australians to understand the significance of the Stolen Generations to the history of Australia? Why?
 - Why is it important to highlight the resilience of Stolen Generations survivors?



Continuing the work

CLASSROOM READY

- Watch the film [The Last Daughter](#). Keep an eye on [The Learning Circle](#) as Brenda and the team continue to develop classroom-ready resources to accompany the film.
- *The synopsis of The Last Daughter:*

"Brenda's first memories were of growing up in a loving white foster family, before she was suddenly taken away and returned to her Aboriginal family.

Decades later, she feels disconnected from both halves of her life. But the traumas of her past do not lie quietly buried. So, she goes searching for the foster family with whom she had lost all contact.

Along the way she uncovers long-buried secrets, government lies, and the possibility for deeper connections to family and culture. The Last Daughter is a documentary about Brenda's journey to unearth the truth about her past, and to reconcile the two sides of her family."

RESOURCES

- 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.
- Research more about [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages](#).
- 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 Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies](#).

IDEAS

- Share your outcomes and experience with The Healing Foundation at resources@healingfoundation.org.au
- Share the resource and how you used it amongst your networks.
- Share your students' learning journey and tag The Healing Foundation on Instagram @healingourway and on Facebook as 'Healing Foundation'.
- Create a class action plan for how students could help their school learn more about the Stolen Generations.
- 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.
- 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 survivors or community members.
- Hold [National Reconciliation Week](#) or [NAIDOC Week](#) celebrations in your school or attend events in your local community.



To access the links to resources and videos, or to check you have the most up to date version, visit www.healingfoundation.org.au/schools or scan the QR code.

