

Our Healing. Our Future.



**HealingFoundation**  
Strong Spirit • Strong Culture • Strong People

## CLASSROOM ACTIVITY SHEET:

# Year 4

September 2023

### Overview

This Year 4 unit is designed to give students an introduction to the presence and significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the Stolen Generations. The unit is designed to align with National Sorry Day (26 May), National Reconciliation Week (27 May–3 June) or NAIDOC Week (July) but it can be delivered at any time of the year.

The following four activities can be done in one day as a block or they can be broken up over a week, month or term. They are designed to be done as a whole class, so the teacher can guide and support students. However, during some of the small group and individual activities, the teacher may like to ensure that teacher aides or other adults are available to support students.

Each of these activities is linked to Year 4 Australian Curriculum Content Descriptions, as well as the Australian Curriculum Cross-curriculum Priority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures.

These activities are designed to be a starting point for teachers to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into the classroom. For more activities as well as organisations to contact for support and information see the 'Continuing the work' section.

#### ACTIVITY 1: LITERATURE INTRODUCTION AND RESPONSE TO ILLUSTRATION (40–60 MINUTES)

Teacher leads students in a guided reading session. Students respond to questions about the text and closely analyse an illustration.

#### ACTIVITY 2: TIMELINE ACTIVITY (40–60 MINUTES)

Students complete a timeline of significant dates in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and compare to their own personal timeline.

#### ACTIVITY 3: LISTENING TO STORIES (40–60 MINUTES)

Students work in groups to listen and respond to personal stories told by Stolen Generations survivors.

#### ACTIVITY 4: SHARING LEARNING AND PERSUASIVE LETTER WRITING (30–40 MINUTES)

Students reflect on and share their learning by writing a letter to a family member, friend or member of the school community to urge them to watch the stories of Stolen Generations survivors.



Scan the  
QR code to  
access links  
to resources

## Checklist for preparing your classroom

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- 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 initial suggestions, see the booklist at the end of this document.
- For your own background knowledge:

## Read

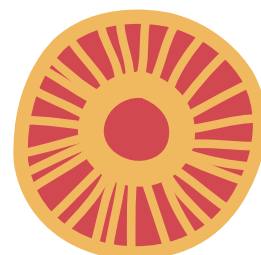
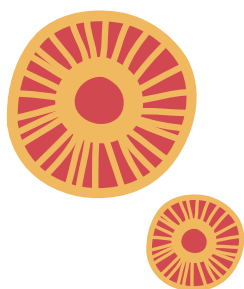
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- [The Healing Foundation's fact sheet on the Apology to the Stolen Generations](#)
- [The Little Red Yellow Black Book](#)
- [The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies \(AIATSIS\)](#) website for more information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and history

## Watch

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- [The Story of The Healing Foundation](#)
  - [Intergenerational Trauma Animation](#)
- 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. For example it could include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags, images of books the class will be reading, images of prominent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people etc.
  - Make a [flower wall for your display](#). This could also be done as a separate Art activity. The five-petal Native Cotton, Desert Rose, or Native Hibiscus, was originally chosen by members of the Kimberley Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation, and later endorsed by the National Sorry Day Committee, to symbolise the Stolen Generations. It was chosen because it is found across Australia and it is a survivor. Its colour denotes compassion and spiritual healing.
  - Create a word wall of new words related to this topic. Initial words could be reconciliation, Aboriginal, culture, sorry, Country, Torres Strait Islander. As you work through the activities, you can add extra words.



# Activity 1: Literature introduction and response to illustration (40–60 minutes)

## Curriculum links

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### ENGLISH

- Describe the effects of text structures and language features in literary texts when responding to and sharing opinions. [AC9E4LE02](#)
- Discuss how authors and illustrators make stories engaging by the way they develop character, setting and plot tensions. [AC9E4LE03](#)

## Resources

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- Book for this session: *The Rabbits* by John Marsden and Shaun Tan.
- Perspectives table (**Appendix 1**) enlarged on Smart Board to fill out, printed on A3 paper or drawn on butchers' paper.
- Pens/sharopies.
- Responding to Illustration worksheet (**Worksheet 1**).
- Colour print out or projection of the page 'And stole our children' from *The Rabbits*.



## Lesson

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### INTRODUCTION

- Briefly introduce the unit and facilitate a discussion about what students currently know about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and history and the Stolen Generations. This is also a good point to explain appropriate terms we will be using during this unit.
- Read *The Rabbits* by John Marsden and Shaun Tan.
- Explain the book as an *allegory* for the arrival of Europeans in Australia and their impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the environment.
- Facilitate a class discussion. You might ask:
  - What did you like about the story?
  - What did you learn from the story?
  - Are there any words in the story that are new to you?
  - Use a sentence to describe how the book made you feel.
  - How does the book use illustration to help us feel something? Is there a particular illustration that made you feel something?
  - Do you recognise any parts of the book as a part of Australian history?

### PERSPECTIVE ACTIVITY

- Check for student understanding of relevant terms: perspective, colonisation, European, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Add these to the word wall.
- Introduce the task. Show students an enlarged version of the Perspectives worksheet (**Appendix 1**).
- Ask students for one word suggestions of the perspective of both the 'Rabbits' and the 'We'. To prompt discussion you could turn to specific pages of the book and ask:
  - How would the We feel in this part of the story?
  - How would the Rabbits feel in this part of the story?

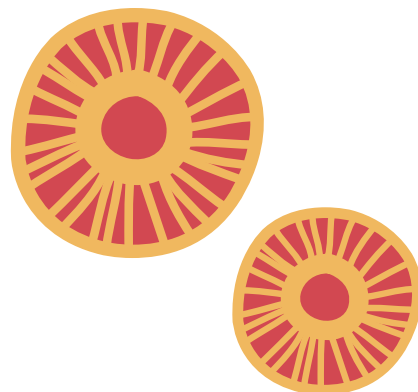


## RESPONDING TO ILLUSTRATION WORKSHEET

- Turn to the page in the book that says 'And stole our children.' If possible, project a large colour version of this page.
- Hand out Response to Illustration worksheet (**Worksheet 1**).
- Explain to students that this worksheet is asking for their own personal responses and viewpoints. Students complete this worksheet individually.

## CONCLUSION

- Once worksheet is completed, facilitate a class discussion to share thoughts and feelings.



Get the Links



## Activity 2: Timeline activity (40–60 minutes)

### Curriculum links

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#### HASS

Locate, collect and record information and data from a range of sources, including annotated timelines and maps. [AC9HS4S02](#)

### Resources

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- Suggested book for this session: *Sorry Day* by Coral Vass and Dubb Leffler.
- [The Story of The Healing Foundation video](#).
- Other suggested videos for this session (both of these videos contain significant dates and would also work for the timeline activity. If you are unable to play videos, there are also full transcripts of these segments on the website).
  - [BTN Apology 10th Anniversary](#).
  - [BTN Stolen Generations](#).
- Timeline worksheet (**Worksheet 2**).
- Whole class timeline. You might wish to project a digital copy of **Worksheet 2** on the Smart Board to complete as a class, or you could draw a large version of the timeline on butchers' paper and stick it to the board for this activity.

### Lesson

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#### LITERACY INTRODUCTION

- Read a text from the classroom library and discuss.

#### CREATION OF TIMELINE

- Introduce students to the activity: *We are going to watch a video about some of the history of the Stolen Generations. You may have seen this video before, but when you watch it this time you need to listen for the significant dates mentioned. We are going to use these dates to start shaping a timeline of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history.*
- Play [The Story of The Healing Foundation](#) video.
- Draw a large version of the timeline on the board.
- Hand out the Timeline worksheet (**Worksheet 2**).
- Ask students what significant dates they heard during the video. They should be able to name these dates and some may be able to tell you the event (note: some dates are part of a stylistic choice of the animation rather than pertinent to the timeline):
  - 60 000 BP (Before Present) First Nations peoples and cultures present in Australia.
  - 1788 Arrival of first Europeans.
  - 2008 National Apology to the Stolen Generations.
- As students tell you the dates they have seen, explain and fill in the event on the timeline. Students should copy these events to their own timeline as well.
- Use the Answers Sheet (**Worksheet 2b**) to read out significant events in random order. Do not give students the associated dates. Using their own judgment and information they already have on the timeline, students work as a class to match the event to the year. Students may be surprised by how recent some of the events are.

## PERSONAL TIMELINE

- To contextualise the dates, ask students to fill out the 'Your Timeline' side. *Some of these events happened a long time ago but some are quite recent. To get a better idea of that, on the 'Your Timeline' side, you are going to record some significant events related to you and your family. Estimate where your birth year would be on the timeline and add it in. Check the other side of the timeline and see what was happening around the year you were born.* You could also ask students to add in:
  - The year they started school.
  - The year their brothers and sisters were born.
  - The year their parents or grandparents were born.

This activity could also become homework as students could work with a parent or carer to add significant events.

## CONCLUSION

- Once timelines are completed, the class can discuss some significant personal events and add them to the class timeline (e.g. you will end up with nearly all students having the same birth year and so this can be easily added).
- Facilitate a discussion about what students have learned so far about the Stolen Generations. To prompt discussion ask students:
  - Have you been surprised by anything you have learnt so far?
  - Why do you think it is important for us to learn about this?
  - What are some other ways we could learn about the Stolen Generations?



Get the Links



## Activity 3: Listening to stories (40–60 minutes)

### Curriculum links

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#### ENGLISH

- Listen for key points and information to carry out tasks and contribute to discussions, acknowledging another opinion, linking a response to the topic, and sharing and extending ideas and information. [AC9E4LY02](#)

#### HASS

- Locate, collect and record information and data from a range of sources, including annotated timelines and maps. [AC9HS4S02](#)
- Analyse information and data, and identify perspectives. [AC9HS4S04](#)

### Resources

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- Suggested book: *Tell Me Why* by Robyn Templeton and Sarah Jackson.
- Listening to Stories worksheet (**Worksheet 3**).
- Three stations with iPads or computers with internet access and headphones (optional):
  - [Station 1: Florence Onus](#).
  - [Station 2: Fay Clayton-Mosely](#).
  - [Station 3: Michael Welsh](#) (please note: language warning).

### Lesson

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#### INTRODUCTION

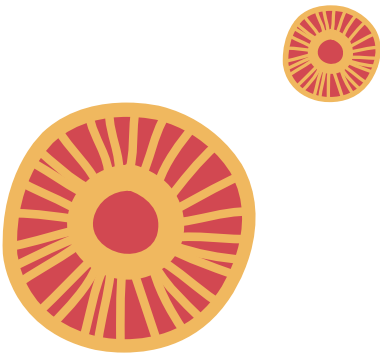
- Read a text from the classroom library and discuss.

#### LISTENING AND RESPONDING TO STORIES

- Introduce the activity: *In the last activity, we discussed how recent some of the events of the Stolen Generations really are. Many Stolen Generations survivors are still alive today and still feel the impact of their removal. Today we are going to listen to the stories of four Stolen Generations survivors. These stories are sometimes difficult to hear, and it is ok to feel sad or angry when you listen. As you listen, also consider this question:*
  - Why is it important to hear the stories of Stolen Generations survivors?
- Show students the worksheet and explain the questions in more detail.
- Break students into four groups and assign each group to one station. Ask groups to appoint a speaker who will share information with the rest of the class.
- In groups, students listen to the story, discuss and then each student will fill out their worksheet individually. Each group will only listen to one story, no rotation.
- Bring the class back together for a viewing of each video. At the end of each video, the speaker from that group presents the group's response to the story.

## CONCLUSION

- Class discusses similarities in the stories. To prompt discussion you might ask:
  - How did these stories relate to the books we have been reading?
  - Was there a common idea or message in these stories?
  - What important message did you take from these stories?
  - How did watching the stories make you feel?
  - How old do you think these speakers are? What does this tell you about the history of the Stolen Generations?
  - Why do you think it is important to hear these stories?
- Students need to keep these sheets somewhere safe to use in the next activity.
- Add extra words to your classroom word wall.



Get the Links





## Activity 4: Sharing learning and persuasive letter writing (30–40 minutes)

### Curriculum links

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#### ENGLISH

- Plan, create, edit and publish written and multimodal imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, using visual features, relevant linked ideas, complex sentences, appropriate tense, synonyms and antonyms, correct spelling of multisyllabic words and simple punctuation. [AC9E4LY06](#)

#### HASS

- Propose actions or responses to an issue or challenge that consider possible effects of actions. [AC9HS4S06](#)

### Resources

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- Completed Listening to Stories worksheets for reference (**Worksheet 3**).
- Completed timeline for reference.
- Lesson plan for teaching persuasive letter writing, if you require it.
- Planning your Letter worksheet (**Worksheet 4**).

### Lesson

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#### INTRODUCTION

- Introduce students to the task. They are going to reflect on what they have been learning by writing a persuasive letter to a family member, friend or someone in the school community telling them why they think it is important they watch videos of the stories of Stolen Generations survivors.
- Remind students of the conventions of a persuasive letter: repetition, rhetorical questions, emotive language. Model persuasive letter writing if your class requires it.

#### PERSUASIVE TEXT

- Students use their completed Listening to Stories worksheet (**Worksheet 3**) and the Planning your Letter worksheet (**Worksheet 4**) to help them write their letters.
- Once they have written a first draft, they can create a good copy.

#### CONCLUSION

- Students share their letter with a partner or with the class.
- To legitimise the activity, students should deliver the letter to the intended recipient.

#### Get the Links



## Continuing the work

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

### 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.
- 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](#).
- Introduce children to language through ICTV's '[Our Bedtime Stories](#)' and research more about [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages](#).

### IDEAS

- Share your outcomes and experience with The Healing Foundation at [resources@healingfoundation.org.au](mailto: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 your own classroom artwork with elements that symbolise the values of your class (e.g. friendship, working hard, taking risks, being kind, good listening etc.).
- 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.
- In guided reading time, include stories by, about and full of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- 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.



## Books to read: Year 4

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Here is a preliminary list of suggested books for your classroom, chosen with the guidance of Vanessa Kerley, teacher librarian at the Dandiiri Schools and Community Library.

For more book suggestions and support in choosing texts or to source other materials, please contact Dandiiri Community Library or the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.

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.

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### RELEVANT TO THE STOLEN GENERATIONS

*Tell Me Why* by Robyn Templeton and Sarah Jackson

*Sorry Sorry* by Anne Kerr and Marda Pitt

*Sorry Day* by Coral Vass and Dub Leffler

*Stories for Simon* by Lisa Miranda Sarzin and Lauren Briggs

*Bush Games and Knucklebones* by Doris Kartinyeri and Kunyi June Anne McInerney

*The Rabbits* by John Marsden and Shaun Tan



## ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURES AND STORIES

*Munyourarn: Look And Learn – an Aboriginal Elder's Story* by Vi McDermott and Leah King-Smith

*Fair Skin Black Fella* by Renee Fogorty

*Look See, Look At Me!* By Leonie Norrington and Dee Huxley

*The Lizard Gang* by Kirra Sommerville and Grace Fielding

*A is for Auntie* by Elaine Russell

*The Sand Symbols* by Nola Turner-Jensen and Carmel Skelton

*Same, But a Little Bit Diff'rent* by Kylie Dunstan

*No Way Yirrikipayi* by Alison Lester and the Children from the Milikapiti community

*Mad Magpie* by Gregg Dreise

*Mrs White and the Red Desert* by Josie Boyle

*Kick With My Left Foot* by Paul Seden and Karen Briggs

*Shake a Leg* by Boori Monty Pryor and Jan Ormerod

*How Frogmouth Found Her Home* by Ambelin Kwaymullina

*Caterpillar and Butterfly* by Ambelin Kwaymullina

*Yirruwa Yirrilikenuma-langwa When We go Walkabout* by Alfred Lalara and Rhoda Lalara

*My Country* by Ezekiel Kwaymullina and Sally Morgan

*The Lost Girl* by Ambelin Kwaymullina and Leanne Tobin

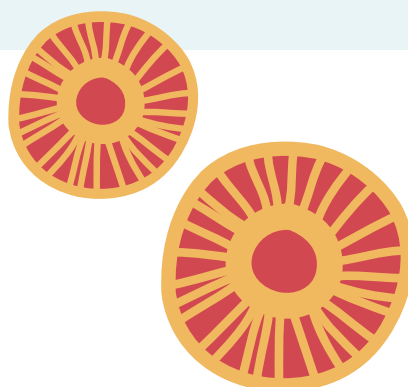
*Our Island* by the Children of Gununa with Alison Lester and Elizabeth Honey

*Welcome to Country* by Aunty Joy Murphy and Lisa Kennedy

*ABC Dreaming* by Warren Brim

*Shapes of Australia* by Bronwyn Bancroft

*Big Rain Coming* by Katrina Germein and Bronwyn Bancroft



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](http://www.healingfoundation.org.au/schools) or scan the QR code.



Appendix 1: Perspectives in *The Rabbits*

We	The Rabbits

# Worksheet 1: Response to illustration

**Book:** *The Rabbits* by John Marsden and Shaun Tan

## ELEMENTS OF ILLUSTRATION

How does the author use colour, composition (where things are in the illustration), focus (where the illustrator wants you to look) and symbolism to convey meaning in this illustration?

Colour: \_\_\_\_\_

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Composition: \_\_\_\_\_

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Focus: \_\_\_\_\_

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Symbolism: \_\_\_\_\_

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## REFLECTING AND QUESTIONING

What are your reactions to this illustration? What does it make you think, feel, wonder?

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## MAKING CONNECTIONS

Explain any connections you have made to the text (to self, to world, to other texts).

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# Worksheet 2: Timeline

YOUR EVENTS

WORLD EVENTS

70,000 BP

1788

1869

1918

1937

1969

1997

2000

2001

2004

2008



## Worksheet 2b: Timeline answers

Note: Students do not have to write all of this information, you may wish to just do keywords for each event.

### YOUR EVENTS

### WORLD EVENTS

**70,000 BP**

**1788** Arrival of first Europeans

**1869** *The Aboriginal Protection Act (Vic)* establishes an Aboriginal Protection Board in Victoria, giving the Governor the power to order the removal of any child from their family to a reformatory or industrial school.

**1918** The Northern Territory Aboriginals Ordinance (Commonwealth) gives the Chief Protector power to assume custody of any Aboriginal or 'half-caste' children if it is deemed 'necessary' or 'desirable'.

**1937** The first Commonwealth/State conference on 'native welfare' adopts assimilation as the national policy.

**1969** By 1969, all states have repealed the legislation allowing for the removal of Aboriginal children under the policy of 'protection'. In the following years, Aboriginal and Islander Child Care Agencies are set up to contest removal applications and provide alternatives to the removal of Indigenous children from their families.

**1997** The Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission (HREOC) presents *Bringing Them Home*, its report on the findings of the *National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families* to the Commonwealth Government. The report made 54 recommendations, including a formal government apology, monetary compensation and other reparations to Stolen Generations survivors.

**2000** Over 250,000 people participate in the Corroboree 2000 'Sorry' Walk across Sydney Harbour Bridge on 28 May. Similar walks are held in the other state and territory capitals.

**2001** Pope John Paul II issues a formal apology on behalf of the Vatican to the affected Aboriginal families for the actions of Catholic authorities or organisations in connection with the Stolen Generations.

**2004** The Commonwealth Government establishes a memorial to the Stolen Generations at Reconciliation Place in Canberra.

**2008** Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, on behalf of the Australian Parliament, makes a historic national apology to the Stolen Generations.

## Worksheet 3: Listening to stories

Listen to the story of a Stolen Generations survivor. Discuss with your group and then answer these questions.

What were some major events in the Elder's history?

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How does the Elder describe their experience of being removed from their family?

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Were other people impacted by their removal? Who?

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How is the Elder healing themselves?

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What does the Elder think needs to happen in the future to help Stolen Generations survivors and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples?

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## Worksheet 4: Planning your letter

### GREETING

Introduce the video and speaker (who, what, where, when). Tell the reader what you would like them to do.

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### REASON THEY SHOULD LISTEN TO THE STORIES

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### REASON THEY SHOULD LISTEN TO THE STORIES

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### REASON THEY SHOULD LISTEN TO THE STORIES

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### CONCLUSION AND CALL TO ACTION

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### SIGN OFF

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