

Koorie perspectives in Curriculum Bulletin: April- May 2018

This edition of the Koorie Perspectives in Curriculum Bulletin features:

- Seasons and Calendars
- Anzac Day & Aboriginal service men and women
- National Sorry Day
- The 1967 Referendum
- National Reconciliation Week

Focused on Aboriginal Histories and Cultures, the aim of the Koorie Perspectives Bulletin is to highlight Victorian Koorie voices, stories, achievements, leadership and connections, and suggest a range of activities and resources around key dates for starters. Of course any of these topics can be taught throughout the school year and we encourage you to use these [bulletins](#) and VAEAI's [Koorie Education Calendar](#) for ongoing planning and ideas.

In this bulletin, you will find Victorian Curriculum links to Content Descriptions. Select the code and it will take you directly to the Victorian Curriculum site with additional elaborations.

We know that Aboriginal people are the best equipped and the most appropriate people to teach Indigenous knowledge. Therefore, wherever possible you should seek to involve your local Koorie community in education programs that involve Aboriginal perspectives. For some guidance about working with your local Koorie community to enrich your

teaching program, see VAEAI's [Protocols for Koorie Education in Primary and Secondary Schools](#).

For a summary of key **Learning Areas and Content Descriptions** directly related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures within the Victorian Curriculum F-10, select the link for an UPDATED 2018 copy of the VCAA's: [Learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures](#).

April

With the weather finally starting to cool off in many parts of Victoria, this is an ideal time to explore Koorie seasons in your region, like the 6-8 seasons of the Wurundjeri and learn about how seasonal change is signalled through plants, animals and other signs, such as in the night sky.

From April-June for example, if you can get away from town and city lights, look out for the giant Emu sitting on his eggs in the Milky Way, signalling the time to collect emu eggs.



Emu formation in the Milky Way signalling the time to collect emu eggs (April-June)

Where possible, invite knowledgeable Koorie cultural educators into the classroom to discuss further.

Learn about significant foods, animals and plants for Victorian Koories such as the staple murrnong (yam daisy) for the Kulin, eel farming practices of the Gunditjmara, and possum skin cloaks for warmth, comfort and much more.



[Watch the video](#) with Boon Wurrung Elder Aunty Carolyn Briggs who discusses how to gather and hunt for food with respect to seasons and ongoing life, and discuss traditional sustainable practices with your students. With your students and based on research, redesign an alternative seasonal calendar for your region, highlighting key changes in the natural environment - be creative in naming.

Victorian Curriculum:

[VCGGK137](#) Land and resource management strategies used by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples to achieve food security over time: Geography 9-10: Biomes and food security

Phenology is the science of the timing of natural cycles. Discuss with students how rising temperatures and shifting weather patterns due to climate change might cause these cycles to move. Record changes in wildlife or plants on [Climate Watch](#), a resource where you can help scientists understand what's happening with the behaviours of common species of birds, insects and plants. Go nature spotting using the Koorie seasons calendar as a guide

for the wildlife and plants you might see. Museum Victoria has a succinct guide on the flora and fauna found in the Kulin nation.

If your school environment allows, consider raising some frogs from tadpoles in the classroom and document their lifecycle; when it's time to return them to their original water source do so with care and ceremony.



Diagram of the Frog Life Cycle

Go nature spotting using the Koorie seasons calendar as a guide for the wildlife and plants you might see. Museum Victoria has a succinct [guide](#) on the flora and fauna found in the Kulin nation.

Find out more about Indigenous seasons in other Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities, including the Victorian Gariwerd Grampians region, using the Bureau of Meteorology's [Indigenous Weather Knowledge](#) website.

Victorian Curriculum:

[VCGGK067](#) Weather and seasons and the ways in which different cultural groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, describe them: Geography F-2

[VCMMG118](#) Name and order months and seasons: Mathematics L2

[VCHHK060](#) How the present, past and future are signified by terms indicating and describing time: History F-2

[VCCSU058](#) Different living things have different life cycles and depend on each other and the environment to survive: Science 3-4

"Aboriginal ancestral narratives aren't just about the land – they're also about the Sun, the Moon and the stars. Indigenous people have a very holistic understanding of the universe. It doesn't just stop at the horizon."

Stephen Gilchrist, Indigenous art curator at Melbourne's National Gallery of Victoria.

Focus some learnings around the night sky. The sky was and remains a stellar calendar indicating when the seasons are shifting and when certain foods are available. For example within the spread of the Milky Way an emu is visible – not a constellation as such but a clear emu shape formed in the blend of star and black matter. At different times of the year this Emu in the Sky is oriented, so it appears to be either running or sitting down. When the emu is 'sitting', it's time to collect their eggs.

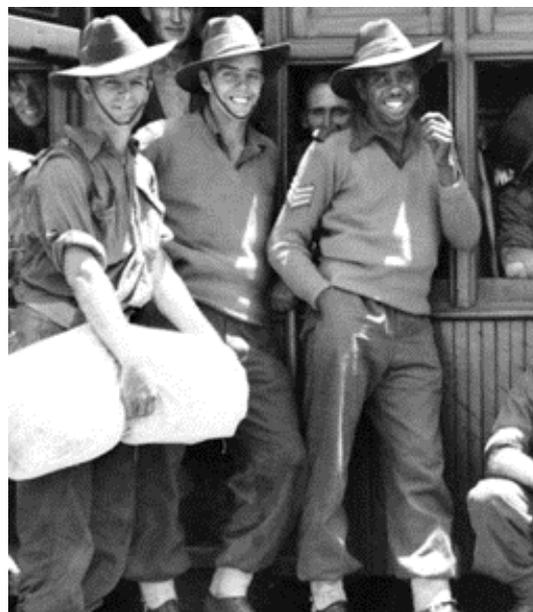
Did you know that in late 2017, the International Astronomical Union (IAU) approved 86 new names for stars drawn from those used by other cultures - namely Australian Aboriginal, Chinese, Coptic, Hindu, Mayan, Polynesian, and South African? **Four Aboriginal Australian star names** were added to the IAU stellar name catalogue, including the Wardaman names Larawag, Ginan, and Wurren, and significantly from Victoria, the Boorong name Unurgunite for the star (Sigma) Canis Majoris (an ancestral figure who fights the Moon), representing some of the most ancient star names in the IAU catalogue.

See: <https://www.iau.org/news/pressreleases/detail/iau1707/>

<https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/article/2018/01/15/stories-behind-aboriginal-star-names-now-recognised-worlds-astronomical-body>

ANZAC Day on the 25th April is

a prime time to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services to this nation. Over 1000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders fought for Australia in World War I despite profound barriers to enlisting.



Did you know that Victorian Gunditjmara man Reg Saunders was the first Aboriginal person to be commissioned as an officer in the Australian Army?

"When my uncle came back from serving in Korea he couldn't even get a beer in a pub let alone a pension, and he wasn't permitted to become a citizen until 1968"

John Kinsella, nephew of Australia's most famous Aboriginal soldier, Captain Reg Saunders MBE.

Explore Indigenous Australians' war service.

The [Australian War Memorial](#) site has a variety of online resources (see below), as well as the [Department of Veteran Affairs](#) (DVA). Using the Australian War Memorial's online

databases, [investigate](#) the war service of Aboriginal servicemen and women.

Download DVA's [Indigenous Service](#) publications for primary and secondary schools for background and suggested inquiry activities. Search 'Indigenous Service'.

[Contact](#) the Australian War Museum to borrow **Memorial Box 03: Too Dark for the Light Horse**. This site also takes you to online resources and Australian Curriculum links.

Bush TV's [Untold Stories](#) about WW1 Aboriginal service men and research the lives of Victorian Koories such as Brabuwooloon private Harry Thorpe. *Why were there such barriers and how did some overcome them?*

Watch a range of videos such as Living Black's [Unidentified Soldier](#), [Indigenous Servicemen through the Years](#) and ABC Message Stick's [ANZAC](#), and discuss issues of equality, identity, recognition and life after service raised.

Explore the [AIATSI](#) dedicated site – Indigenous Australians at War.



*Group portrait of Aboriginal women and girls knitting socks, jumpers and balaclavas for the war effort at Cummeragunja Government Mission, NSW (opposite Barmah, Vic) on the Murray River. Identified, left to right, back row: Merle Morgan, June Morgan, Weeny Charles, Amy Briggs, Valda McGee, Edna Walker, Sheila Charles, Joan Charles, Elsie Cooper, Midge Walsh, Florry Walker. Front row: Joyce Atkinson, Clare Charles, Alma Charles, Ada Cooper, Nelly Davis?, Elizabeth Morgan, Lauraine Charles, Greta Cooper, Violet Charles, Wynnie Walker, Hilda Walker, Georgina Atkinson, Lydia Morgan, Reta Cooper, Maggie Weston. **Australian War Memorial: P01562.001.***

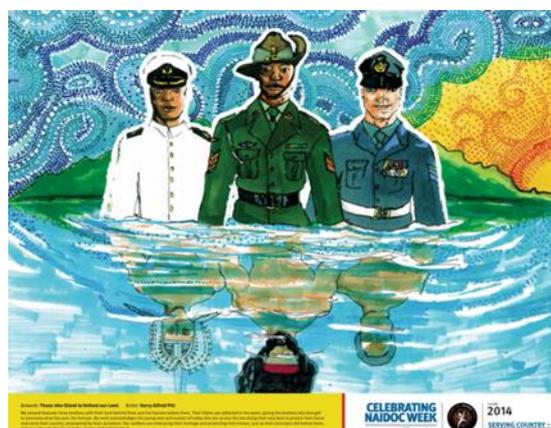
Consider participating in the **Shrine of Remembrance** [Poster Competition](#) highlighting the participation of Aboriginal service men and women as a class or whole-school activity.

The 2018 theme is *Helping and Healing*, and the panel is looking for original artworks inspired by the work of the Medical Corps., volunteers, service personnel on peacekeeping missions and individual stories or experiences that reflect the theme of Helping and Healing. The winning poster will become the official Remembrance Day 2018 poster for the Shrine of Remembrance and will appear on banners and posters around the City of Melbourne. Schools awarded prizes to the winning and highly commended artworks receive a selection of books from the Department of Veterans' Affairs, a personalised visit to the Shrine and are invited to place a flower in the Field of Poppies whilst attending the Official Remembrance Day Service on 11 November. Winning entries and highly commended artworks will be displayed in an exhibition at the Shrine to coincide with Remembrance Day 2018.

Entry closes, September 2018 (date TBC).

See more at: <http://www.shrine.org.au/Education/Poster-Competition>

Schools and individuals might be interested in attending the annual [Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service](#) held at the Shrine of Remembrance on the **31st May, from 11am-2 pm**, with the laying of a wreath on the forecourt.



NAIDOC 2014 poster see

<http://www.naidoc.org.au/poster-gallery>

May



National Sorry Day on the 26th May, is a day of commemoration and remembrance for the Stolen Generations - the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children forcibly removed from their families, communities and cultures between the 1800s and the 1970s. The *first* Sorry Day was held in Sydney on 26 May 1998, and has been commemorated nationally on 26 May each year since, with thousands of Australians from all walks of life participating in memorial services, commemorative meetings, survival celebrations and community gatherings, in honour of the Stolen Generations. National Sorry Day was born out of a key recommendation made by the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families in the *Bringing Them Home Report* that was tabled in Federal Parliament on 26 May 1997.

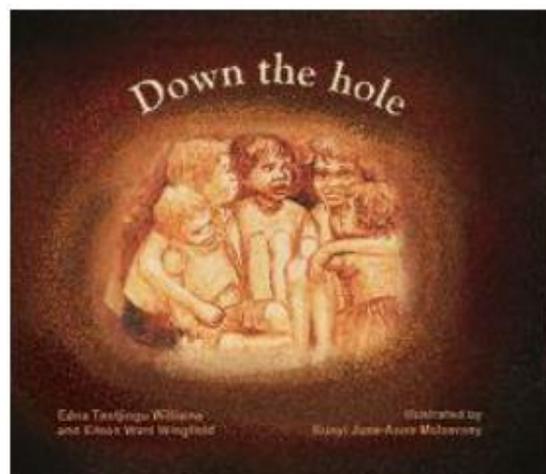
Over time, state and territory governments issued apologies for the laws, policies and practices which had governed forcible removal. However, at that time (1998), the Australian Government, refused to make a formal National Apology in the Australian Parliament and instead offered a motion of reconciliation.

Download the National Sorry Day Committee's excellent resource [Learning about the Stolen Generation: the NSDC's school resource*](#) for great classroom and whole-of-school activities.

With students explore the deeply personal [Stolen Generations Testimonies](#) site featuring

the stories of those taken from their homes and communities and information about the subsequent Inquiry.

Organise a school National Sorry Day event, such as an assembly, ceremony, concert, or oral history/ story sessions.



The illustrated children's book '[Down the Hole](#)' by Edna Tantjingu Williams, tells a true and different story about a group of children in Cooper Pedy, and how when the government came to take the fair-skinned Aboriginal children away, they didn't always find them ... For a paper attesting to the power of stories such as *Down the Hole* in "positioning child readers both to understand the dislocation and pain caused by government policies such as those which enforced the removal of the Stolen generations in Australia, and to appreciate the tactics of resistance by which children evaded or subverted institutional power", read '[They went Home: racialised spaces in contemporary picture books](#)'.

With secondary students, a number of plays and songs powerfully tell the stories of the Stolen Generations. Victorian singer Mati-mati singer Kutcha Edwards is both a member of the Generations and sings these stories. Archie Roach's music also starting with [They took the Children Away](#).

The acclaimed plays *Stolen* and *Yibiyung* include teacher notes also. [Stolen](#) by Jane Harrison tells of five young Aboriginal children forcibly removed from their parents, brought up in a repressive children's home and trained for domestic service and other menial jobs. Segregated from society from their earliest years, not all of them successfully manage their lives when released into the outside world. [Yibiyung](#) is a Western Australian Noongar story of the play writer's nan who was forcibly removed and story uncovered through archived government records.

** Developed by the National Sorry Day Committee in 2013, the Learning about the Stolen Generations resource provides accurate and concise background information about the Stolen Generations as well as a set of age-appropriate useful classroom exercises and ideas for commemorating both National Sorry Day and the Anniversary of the Apology. In previous years schools were encouraged to register with the NSDC, join their schools program and download Learning about the Stolen Generations from their website. However, since last year, this is no longer available online. Given the value of this resource to schools and the NSDC's original aims, VAEAI has temporarily made this resource directly available on our resources site. To download a copy, click [here](#).*

With secondary students, explore the excellent National Museum Australia site [Collaborating for Indigenous Rights](#) and teaching [resources](#) and work through the activities with your students.

AIATSIS holds over [500 Sorry Books](#); 461 these have been placed on the [UN Australian Memory of the World Register](#). The **Sorry Books** were a response to the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families, which released its findings in 1997. A key recommendation of the Bringing Them Home Report was the need for official

acknowledgement of, and apology for, the forcible removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. The Sorry Books are a powerful record of the personal responses of Australians to the unfolding history of the Stolen Generations. They are a "people's apology" for past wrongs to Indigenous Australians, a public expression of regret, compassion, and hope. The Sorry Books campaign was launched in Sydney on Australia Day, 26 January 1998. Over the following four months, around 1000 Sorry Books were circulated around Australia by ANT, Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation, and networks of volunteers. Many organisations and individuals also made up their own Books.

Victorian Curriculum:

[VCHHK076](#) Significance of days and weeks celebrated or commemorated in Australia and the importance of symbols and emblems, including Australia Day, ANZAC Day, Harmony Week, National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC week and National Sorry Day: History 3-4: Community, remembrance and celebrations.

[VCHHK094](#) The different experiences and perspectives of Australian democracy and citizenship, including the status and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, migrants, women, and children: History 5-6: Australia as a nation.

[VCHHK154](#) Significance of the following events in changing society: 1962 right to vote federally, 1967 Referendum, Reconciliation, Mabo decision, Bringing Them Home Report (the Stolen Generations), the Apology and the different perspectives of these events: History 9-10: Rights and freedoms (1945 – the present).

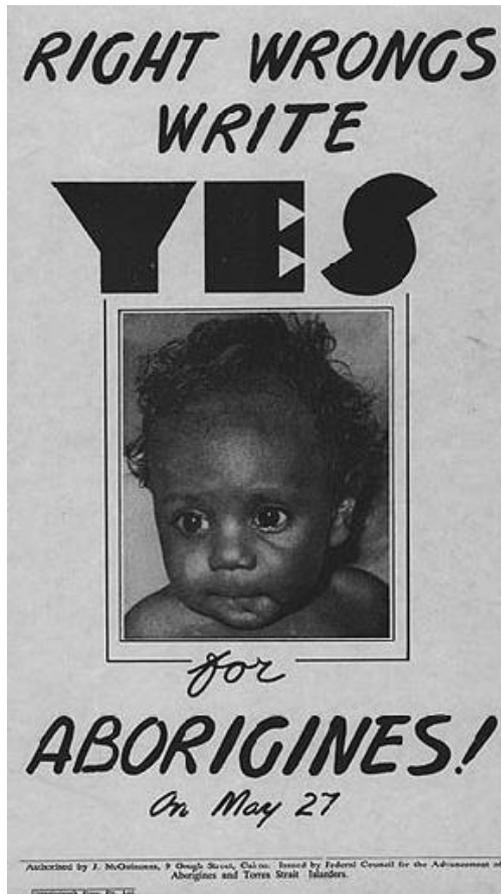
[VCCCG031](#) Explain the Australian government's roles and responsibilities at a global level, including provision of foreign aid, peacekeeping and the United Nations: Civics & Citizenship 9-10: Government and Democracy.

[VCDSTS044](#) Investigate the ways in which designed solutions evolve locally, nationally, regionally and globally through the creativity, innovation and enterprise of individuals and groups: Design and Technology 7-8: Technologies and Society.

Personal and Social Capabilities (various Content Descriptions) -

For Levels 9 and 10, the curriculum focuses on analysing factors that influence respectful relationships in a range of diverse settings and the importance of empathy and respect for diversity in creating a cohesive society. Students are provided with opportunities to engage in activities that promote initiative, independence, interdependence and leadership. They evaluate their contribution to group tasks and suggest improvements to enable achievement of a team goal. Students explore the nature of conflict in a range of personal, local, national and global contexts. They evaluate a variety of strategies to prevent or resolve conflict.

Anniversary of the 1967 Referendum



On 27 May 1967, the Australian Government held a referendum.

This was a momentous turning point in Australian history. **More than 90 per cent** of Australian voters chose 'Yes' to count Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the census and give the Australian Government the power to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The purpose of the **1967 Referendum** was to make two changes to the Australian Constitution. These changes enabled the Commonwealth Government to:

(i) Make laws for all of the Australian people by amending s51 of the Constitution (previously people of the 'Aboriginal race in any state' were excluded) and;

(ii) Take account of Aboriginal people in determining the population of Australia by repealing s127 of the constitution (formerly, Indigenous peoples had been haphazardly included in the census but not counted for the purposes of Commonwealth funding grants to the states or territories)

From 1967, Aboriginal people were counted in the census and included in base figures for Commonwealth funding granted to the states and territories on a per capita basis.

Contrary to popular thinking the 1967 Referendum did NOT

- give Aboriginal peoples the right to vote
- give Aboriginal peoples citizenship rights
- give Aboriginal peoples the right to be counted in the census.

Did you know that from 1947 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People were counted in the official Commonwealth census but were first classified as Polynesians, then as Pacific Islanders? Prior to this, Torres Strait Islander people were regarded as 'aboriginal natives' and were excluded from population figures if they were of more than 50 per cent Torres Strait Islander heritage. See:

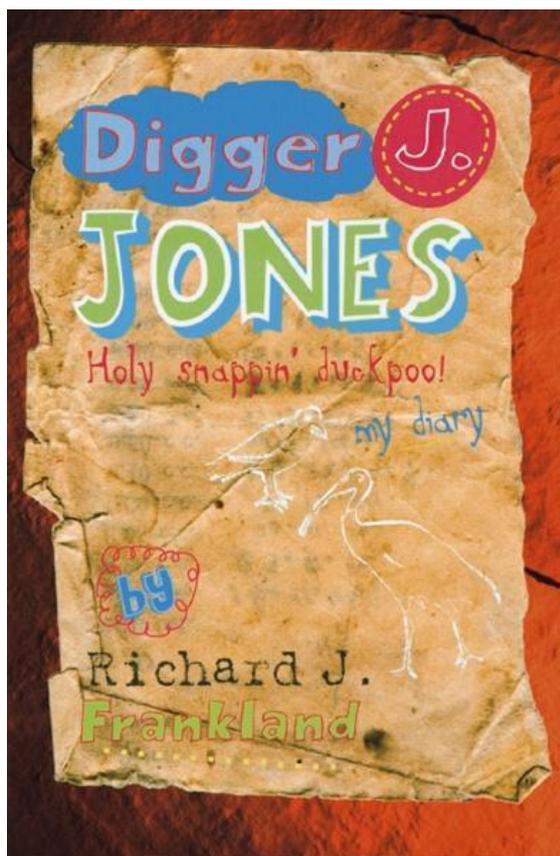
<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/myths-persist-about-the-1967-referendum>
<http://abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/2071.0Feature+Article2July+2011>

Download the revised [VCAA 1967 Referendum sample history unit](#). The unit is a series of six activities and a historical inquiry assessment task which could form part of a unit of learning on 'Rights and freedoms (1945-the present)', at Levels 9 and 10. The unit also contains a section 'Background reading on the 1967 Referendum', which teachers should consult before beginning the teaching and learning activities.

The NSW-AECG has also produced a set of [teaching and learning activities](#) about the 1967 Referendum or Reconciliation Australia with [fact sheet](#) for background and activities.

With secondary students explore the excellent '67 [Referendum site](#) **Collaborating for Indigenous Rights** and [teaching resources](#) and incorporate suggested activities into your lessons.

With older students study the highly readable novel *Digger J. Jones* by prominent Gunditjmara author Richard Franklin. [Teaching notes](#) offer a range of class discussion points. Told in diary form, *Digger J. Jones* tells the story of Digger - an Aboriginal boy caught up in the events of the 1960s and the lead up the 1967 Referendum which officially counted Aboriginal people in Australia as citizens in the eyes of the Federal Government.



With upper primary school students set up a school [referendum](#) around issues relevant to your school or local community and involve students in electoral processes as a prelude to discussions about the 1967 Referendum.

[Watch](#) the short video with Faith Bandler, former Secretary of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders talking about why it was so important to have a referendum and discuss with students.

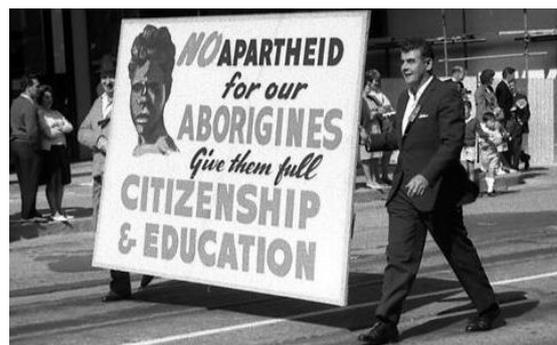
With your students [watch](#) *Vote Yes for Aborigines* (2007) directed by Yorta Yorta woman Frances Peters-Little about the 1967 referendum and the campaign for Aboriginal citizenship rights that led up to it. [Download](#) the teachers' study guide to *Vote Yes for Aborigines* and design some lessons and activities suitable for your students.

Investigate the role of the Victorian [Aborigines Advancement League](#) in the '67 referendum.



Bill Onus's protest banner in the 1940s.

With senior students download the [Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Constitution - school learning guide \(2014\)](#), work through the activities and discuss the case for recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our Constitution.



Victorian Curriculum:

[VCHHK094](#) The different experiences and perspectives of Australian democracy and citizenship, including the status and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, migrants, women, and children: *History 5-6*

[VCCCG021](#) Describe the process of constitutional change through a referendum: *Civics and Citizenship 7-8*

[VCCCG030](#) Analysing how citizens' political choices are shaped, including the influence of the media: *Civics and Citizenship 9-10*

[VCHHC121](#) Sequence significant events in chronological order to support analysis of the causes and effects of these events and identify the changes they brought about: *History 9-10*

[VCHHC123](#) Analyse and corroborate sources and evaluate their accuracy, usefulness and reliability: *History 9-10*

[VCHHC124](#) Analyse the different perspectives of people in the past and evaluate how these perspectives are influenced by significant events, ideas, location, beliefs and values: *History 9-10*

[VCHHC125](#) Evaluate different historical interpretations and contested debates: *History 9-10*

[VCHHC126](#) Identify and evaluate patterns of continuity and change in the development of the modern world and Australia: *History 9-10*

[VCHHC127](#) Analyse the long-term causes, short term triggers and the intended and unintended effects of significant events and developments: *History 9-10*

[VCHHC128](#) Evaluate the historical significance of an event, idea, individual or place: *History 9-10*

[VCHHK151](#) Significance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including Australia's involvement in the development of the declaration: *History 9-10*

[VCHHK152](#) Causes of the struggle of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for rights and freedoms before 1965: *History 9-10*

[VCHHK153](#) Effects of the US civil rights movement and its influence on Australia: *History 9-10*

[VCHHK154](#) Significance of the following events in changing society: 1962 right to vote federally, 1967 Referendum, Reconciliation, Mabo decision, Bringing Them Home Report (the Stolen Generations), the Apology and the different perspectives of these events: *History 9-10*

[VCHHK155](#) Effects of methods used by civil rights activists to achieve change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the role of one individual or group in the struggle: *History 9-10*

[VCHHK156](#) Continuity and change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in securing and achieving civil rights and freedoms in Australia: *History 9-10*



National Reconciliation Week 27 May - 3 June

Don't Keep History a Mystery is the 2018 National Reconciliation Week theme.

Did you know that **National Reconciliation Week** starts with the anniversary of the 1967 Referendum and ends on the anniversary of the Mabo victory, which led to the Australian Government recognising native title and acknowledging Indigenous Australians as the original occupants of Australia?

National Reconciliation Week celebrates the relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and all other Australians. Every year, the week is held between the same dates, 27 May to 3 June. The dates draw attention to significant historical events. The 27 May marks the day in 1967 when the referendum was passed for the Australian Government to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and to allow them to be recognised in the census. The 3rd of June marks the day in 1992

that led the Australian Government to recognise native title and acknowledge Indigenous Australians as the original occupants of Australia.

If your school does not already have one, consider developing a [Reconciliation Action Plan](#) and include activities linking National Sorry Day and reconciliation Action Week, so that colleagues and students see how these days are inter-connected. Include students, colleagues and your [LAECG](#) where possible in its development.

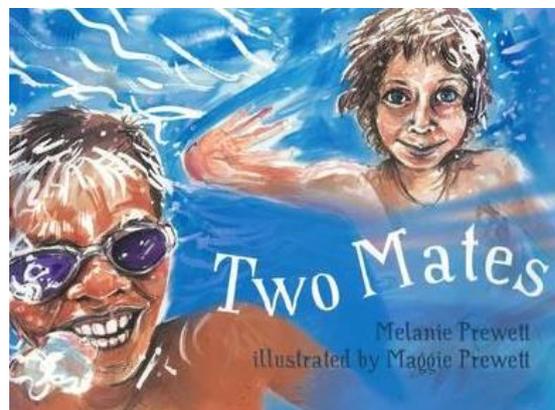
To find out more about Reconciliation Action Plans ([RAPs](#)), and about planning events to celebrate National Reconciliation Week, contact [Reconciliation Australia](#). The site has a number of updated resources.



With younger students read stories to encourage thinking about reconciliation such as the Broome-set [Two Mates](#) by Melanie Prewett (teaching [resources](#) available).

With local Koorie community members and colleagues organise a week of cultural activities such as performances, films, stories,

workshops. Focus on the contribution that Aboriginal people have and continue to make to Australian society, and work with students to complete a variety of tasks that explore what reconciliation means for young Australians.



Victorian Curriculum:

[VCHHK076](#) Significance of days and weeks celebrated or commemorated in Australia and the importance of symbols and emblems, including Australia Day, ANZAC Day, Harmony Week, National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC week and National Sorry Day: *History 3- 4*

[VCCCC027](#) Examine how national identity can shape a sense of belonging and examine different perspectives about Australia's national identity, including **Aboriginal** and Torres Strait Islander peoples' perspectives: *Civics and Citizenship 7-8*

[VCHHK154](#) Significance of the following events in changing society: 1962 right to vote federally, 1967 Referendum, Reconciliation, Mabo decision, Bringing Them Home Report (the Stolen Generations), the Apology and the different perspectives of these events: *History 9-10*





And a final word ...

We are always seeking to improve this bulletin and to make it useful, relevant and highly readable. We invite you to email through suggestions including how you as educators incorporate Aboriginal perspectives, especially Victorian ones in your teaching and curriculum.

Produced by the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI), April 2018.

Any enquiries, feedback and suggestions are welcomed, by contacting VAEAI on (03) 94810800 or emailing vaso@vaeai.org.au.

For more Koorie Perspectives, see the VAEAI [Koorie Education Calendar](#).