

CURRICULUM INFORMATION

PHASE OF DEVELOPMENT

Early Childhood	Middle Childhood	Early Adolescence	Late Adolescence
	✓	✓	

MAJOR LEARNING AREAS

The Arts	English	H & PE	LOTE	Mathematics	Science	S & E	T & E
✓ ✓	✓		✓			✓	

VALUES

Pursuit of knowledge & commitment to achievement of potential	Self acceptance & respect of self	Respect & concern for others & their rights	Social & civic responsibility	Environmental responsibility
✓	✓		✓	✓

DISTRICT

This lesson has been developed by teachers in the following district:
Goldfields

TOPIC INFORMATION

PURPOSE

To provide students with an opportunity to learn how traditional Aboriginal people used dot paintings and other art forms to express feelings, history, and Dreaming stories of their culture.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Students:

- recognise the importance of contributions made by Aboriginal artists;
- consider popular traditional and contemporary arts, including those from other times and places;
- understand how Aboriginal arts contribute to the arts in Australian society; and
- recognise how imagery and importance of the land is represented by a Goldfields artist who uses traditional Aboriginal elements in contemporary paintings or dances.

The Arts

3. Arts Responses; 4. Arts in Society

S&E

1. Investigation, Communication and Participation; 4. Culture

English

6. Speaking; 7. Viewing; 9. Writing





KEY BACKGROUND POINTS

Explain to your students how Aboriginal people did not have a written language like many other cultures so much of their history was recorded as artworks.

Dot painting skills / methodology need to be covered as part of this process if not already done. For example, use a paintbrush handle to make dots, and explain how other symbols are also incorporated into many dot paintings. Most communities have a local cultural centre which is a valuable source of local information.

The symbols in **Learning Guide 1: Goldfields symbols in Aboriginal artworks** are some of those used by Aboriginal artists in Goldfields district artworks. Although these symbols are in the public realm, discuss the fact that the symbols are created by these peoples and should not be used by others without permission. They represent (and other named items):

Wongutha (Wongi) names	English names
marlu	kangaroo
wana	digging stick
yilpa	goanna
wirra	dish

Ask a Wongi speaker to pronounce the names for your students so they may learn local language names as well as English names.

This activity is ideally suited to cultural comparisons.

When students recognise skills, intricacies and rationale of dot painting, they can compare this art form with other painting genres (e.g. Chinese painting, 19th Century European art, modern Australian (western) art). They may discuss similarities and differences in reasons for producing each kind of artwork, and the skills, precision, and perseverance required. Extension activities can be based around comparisons of similarities and differences in styles of painting.

We recommend you also highlight Aboriginal artists who paint in styles other than dot painting so that Aboriginal painting is not seen in too restrictive a light.

CULTURAL & PROTOCOL CONSIDERATIONS

Check with Elders from your local community, school Aboriginal staff including AIEOs, and the Aboriginal Education team at the DEO, about copyright, and cultural protocol issues, including appropriate symbols and colours to use. Advice should also be sought about appropriate themes and topics of paintings and particularly whether certain things should not be used (e. g. weapons, or particular local land features).

RESOURCES

Medium	Author, producer, developer etc	Title	Source
examples of art styles		general art books	libraries, internet.
website	Australian Aboriginal Arts	Australian Aboriginal Arts	www.aboriginearts.com
CD-ROM	DUIT Multimedia	<i>Moorditj</i> – Australian Indigenous Cultural Expression (features 111 artists from around Australia)	DUIT Multimedia, University of Western Australia; Goldfields District Education Office Resource Centre

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

TEACHING RESOURCES

- class collection of dot painting pictures (ensure that some include some other symbols) with the stories each tells – gathered from local people if possible (include other types of paintings if desired but they need to have a story that inspired them)
- student copies of **Learning Guide 1: Goldfields symbols in Aboriginal artworks**
- *Moorditj* CD-ROM
- data projector and screen for class viewing
- art materials, e. g. paints, brushes and paper





LESSON STEPS

The following ideas will take more than one lesson. The lessons allow students to view, explore and discuss dot paintings, plot a story-line for which they construct their own painting, and write or orally present their story, demonstrating how it is told in their painting.

You may choose to do the lessons in a series over a number of days, or to devote a day to the topic. Please adapt the ideas to suit your students' requirements.

Preparation:

- **Plan** your lessons in consultation with your AIEO, Aboriginal staff members, your art teacher, and/or the Aboriginal Education team at the DEO. They can help you with information and resources.
- **Ask** your AIEO, Aboriginal staff members and/or the Aboriginal Education team at the DEO to help organise a visit by a local Aboriginal community member who has knowledge of local traditional art, particularly dot painting, and is willing to talk to your students about how and why it was created.
- **Discuss** with your visitor how your lesson will run and the input you'd like from them, asking them for their ideas as well, and whether they would be happy to answer students' questions.
- **Discuss** with students how to behave and show respect to your visitor.
- **Organise** students to welcome and thank your visitor.
- **Read KEY BACKGROUND POINTS** section above, and **gather** background information about local traditional art, particularly dot painting. *Moorditj* CD-ROM has a wealth of information about a variety of artworks and art forms, complete with stories that inspired each one, from all around Australia.
- **Organise** a class collection of photographs/books of Aboriginal art, particularly dot paintings and the stories they tell. Encouraging students to contribute, and collect paintings from local people.
- **Read and research** background information about Aboriginal art generally, but focus on dot paintings. Find out for instance their history, their meanings, symbols used in Aboriginal art and who may use the symbols (some are in the public domain – anyone can use those – and others are only to be used by the people who created them).
- **View** *Moorditj* CD-ROM and select appropriate artists to share with your students. Three paintings by Western Desert artist, Pantjiti Mary McLean, featured on *Moorditj*, are particularly relevant to students in the Goldfields District. As the stories behind the paintings are also provided they are an excellent introduction into this topic.
- **Organise** teaching resources.

Implementation

Whole class

- **Show and discuss** with students various dot paintings from class collection (e. g. What kind of painting is this? Who did it? What kind of other symbols did the artist use? ...)
- **Examine and discuss** symbols used, and their interpretations.
- **Distribute** student copies of **Learning Guide 1: Goldfields symbols in Aboriginal artworks**.
- **Focus** on the local symbols and discuss names and how they are formed.
- **Discuss** the purpose of dot paintings – they tell a story/historical record of an event ... traditionally Aboriginal people used dot paintings and other art forms to express feelings, history, and Dreaming stories of their culture.
- **Introduce** *Moorditj* and **show** students selected artworks (e. g. the paintings by Pantjiti Mary McLean, and others from other regions, comparing the symbols and colours used).
- **Discuss** symbols and colours used in the paintings and encourage students to interpret them before reading background information provided about each painting and the artist.

Working in small groups

- **Distribute** a sample dot painting to each group.

Ask students to:

- discuss the symbols used and their interpretations of their group's painting;
- rotate paintings until each group has discussed each painting;
- share interpretations after all groups have seen all paintings; and
- read/share story supplied with painting.





Working individually

Encourage students to:

- **think** of a personal story or event in their lives that they could create a painting about;
- **experiment** to create symbols of their own for particular things they want to show in their story; and
- **draft** their own painting/drawing/artwork that shows their story or event.

Working with a partner

- **Ask** students to share draft artwork, symbols and stories.
- **Encourage** them to discuss personal stories and whether they are told clearly in the draft painting.

Working individually

- **Ask** students to check that their draft artworks tell their stories and that they have chosen appropriate symbols.
- **Explain** that they may make new drafts if they want to.

Then they may:

- **complete** final artwork.

Whole class

When artworks are complete:

- **revise and discuss** previous lessons; and
- **share** artworks.

Working in pairs

- **Ask** students to re-tell personal stories orally, to partners.
- **Write** a recount of their own story (draft).
- **Prepare** a published copy to accompany their paintings, following class writing procedure.

Whole class

Create a class recording matrix on board or chart, with 2 columns headed: *Artwork* and *Written* record; and 4 rows headed: *words, story, symbols, media used*.

- **Reflect on, and discuss**, information needed for artwork and retelling formats.
- **Enter** appropriate responses in each cell.
- **Discuss** purpose of each format, aiming for children to recognise that both formats tell a story.

Extension activities

Base these around comparisons of similarities and differences in styles of painting in different cultures, as suggested in the KEY BACKGROUND POINTS section above.

ASSESSMENT

Suggestions include:

- Create checklist of story elements covered in pictorial representation.
- Create for students, self-assessment rubric of story elements to complete for both painting and written recount (similar to the class recording matrix on board or chart, with 2 columns headed: *Artwork* and *Written* record; and 4 rows headed: *words, story, symbols, media used*).
- Were students able to identify different ways of representing aspects of stories?
- How did students participate in group activity using recording matrix on board?
- You may also create a rubric/matrix of other criteria to use for self-assessment, group, or whole class assessment.

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LEARNING GUIDE 1: Goldfields symbols in Aboriginal artworks

Student's name: _____ Date: _____

The symbols below are some of those used by Aboriginal artists in Goldfields district artworks. They were created by these people and should not be used by others without permission.



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