

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 opportunities for students to learn about Aboriginal people's use of milpinti (story wire) and to tell a simple story using this format.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Students:

- listen to an Aboriginal story teller using the milpinti technique;
- discuss how to use milpinti;
- tell stories using the milpinti technique; and
- experience and discuss various story telling modes, comparing them with milpinti.

KEY BACKGROUND POINTS

Milpinti (story wire) is a technique used for making 'mud maps' for story telling that has been passed down through generations of Aboriginal families. All language groups in the Goldfields use milpinti. It is a powerful tool used to share yarns, pass on stories (through generations), and to play games. Symbols used in the story telling require a type of literacy.

CULTURAL & PROTOCOL CONSIDERATIONS

Traditionally (in local Aboriginal groups) only females used milpinti to tell stories, just as only males used didgeridoos. When telling milpinti stories, women use actions and facial expressions to show feelings and bring life to the characters. Older women use it to tell stories to the younger generation to teach them about how to live together, and to pass on Dreaming stories. Young boys don't sit when story wire stories are told. Both males and females can listen to the stories.

Consult AIEOs and local Elders about males who are permitted to use milpinti in the classroom context, and to ask which stories/things are topics that males may not use. Milpinti stories should not be told at night.





RESOURCES

Medium	Author, producer, developer etc	Title	Source
series of four picture books plus a Teaching Ideas book	author: May O'Brien; Teaching Ideas author: Alwyn Evans; publisher: Fremantle Arts Centre Press	<i>The Bawoo Stories</i> individual titles are: <i>Why The Emu Can't Fly;</i> <i>How Crows Became Black;</i> <i>Barn-Barn Barlala, The Bush Trickster;</i> <i>The Kangaroos Who Wanted To Be People;</i> and <i>Teaching Ideas</i>	bookshops; publisher; school libraries; DEO Resource Centre

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

TEACHING RESOURCES

- short length of stiff wire (e. g. fencing wire or coat hanger wire) for drawing in the dirt
- sandbox or bare dirt

LESSON STEPS

You may choose to develop these ideas as a series of lessons.

Preparation:

- **Plan** your lessons in consultation with your AIEO, Aboriginal staff members, and/or the Aboriginal Education team at the DEO. They can help you with information and resources.
- **Read** some local Dreaming stories to your students and discuss what they 'teach' (e. g. May O'Brien's *Bawoo Stories*).
- **Ask** your AIEO, Aboriginal staff members and/or the Aboriginal Education team at the DEO to help organise a visit to your class by a local Aboriginal community member who is happy to use the milpinti technique to tell your students stories.
- **Discuss** with your visitor how your lessons will run and the input you'd like from them, asking for their ideas, and whether they would be happy to explain things like how storytelling is used in their culture and the milpinti technique, and also to answer students' questions.
- **Discuss** with students how to behave and show respect to your visitor.
- **Organise** students to welcome and thank your visitor.
- **Organise** an area of sand or dirt large enough for all students to see the milpinti process.

Implementation

Prior to visit – in classroom

Whole class

- **Discuss** story telling generally – across all cultures. What are children's experiences of story telling? How does it differ between countries/cultures? What are similarities?
- **Discuss** differences between story telling and reading, bringing children to understand that as story telling doesn't rely on books it is more portable and was used long before the advent of books ...
- **Discuss** local Aboriginal people's traditional use of story telling and its importance in their culture.

During story teller's visit – outside at area of sand or dirt

- **Ask** student to welcome visitor as planned.
- **Ask visitor** to talk to children about story telling in their culture.
- **Ask visitor to introduce** milpinti as a way of adding another element to story telling: pictures to go with the words when there are no other resources around (like books, white boards, posters ...)
- **Conduct** story telling session as planned.
- **Discuss** how dots and lines ... depict people and landmarks in the story, asking your visitor to explain the technique and answer students' questions (if previously agreed to).
- **Ask** students to retell the story using the story teller's pictures.





- **Repeat** the process with different stories as many times as desired.
- **Ask** student to thank visitor.

After the visit – outside

Working in small groups (4 or 5 students per group)

- **Ask** students to take turns to tell a simple short story using milpinti (e. g. possibly about something that happened at recess or lunchtime).
- **Ask** groups to discuss each other's stories and offer positive feedback and/or suggestions for improvement (e. g. Cori could draw a picture of a tree on the oval ...), but no negative feedback.
- **Ask** students to devise a short milpinti story to present co-operatively to the class. Stories should be set in a familiar context – at least until students are thoroughly comfortable with the technique.

Whole class

After group presentations and feedback session:

- **Discuss** how milpinti can make story telling more effective or meaningful.
- **Discuss** similarities/differences to other methods of story telling.
- **Discuss** ways of adapting milpinti to use inside (e. g. drawing on large sheets of paper ...).

Extension

Students tell morning news in small groups using story wire to assist. There are also many incidental times during the day when you may use the milpinti technique for story telling.

ASSESSMENT

Keep anecdotal records, and oral assessment rubric, about students':

- contributions to class and group discussions;
- attitudes shown through interactions with peers and visitor;
- ability to tell a story using the milpinti technique; and
- contribution to group storytelling presentation.

Acknowledgements / Thanks to contributors.

George Walley Noongar Elder, Mandurah, CALM Resources

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Produced by DUIT Multimedia for the Aboriginal Perspectives across the Curriculum program.

