

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER  
HISTORIES AND CULTURES

# LIVING CULTURES – FIBRES

DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION  
*learners first*

YEAR 8

The  
**Orb**

**FIBRES**

# IDENTITY AND CONNECTION

Learners discuss identity and how it is formed, before exploring cultural identity and where it comes from. They will bring an item from home and give a two minute presentation to the class. Finally, learners will examine a poem that explores the interconnectedness of Country/place, people, identity and culture in a text by a Tasmanian Aboriginal author.

**CROSS CURRICULUM PRIORITY****Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures***Organising idea 3*

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have holistic belief systems and are spiritually and intellectually connected to the land, sea, sky and waterways.

*Organising idea 5*

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' way of life are uniquely expressed through ways of being, knowing, thinking and doing.

**ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS****English**

Students interpret texts and select evidence from the text to show how events, situations and people, can be represented from different viewpoints. Students make presentations and contribute actively to class and group discussions.

**Health and Physical Education**

Students evaluate strategies and resources to manage changes and transitions and investigate their impact on identities. They evaluate the impact on wellbeing of relationships and valuing diversity.

**CONTENT DESCRIPTORS****English**

Explore the interconnectedness of Country/Place, People, Identity and Culture in texts including those by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors (ACELT1806).

**Health and Physical Education**

Investigate the impact of transition and change on identities (ACPPS070).

**GENERAL CAPABILITIES****Intercultural understanding**

*Recognising culture and developing respect*

Explore and compare cultural knowledge beliefs and practices

Level 5 – analyse the dynamic nature of cultural knowledge, beliefs and practices in a range of personal, social and historical contexts

**Literacy**

*Comprehending texts through listening, reading and viewing*

Navigate, read and view learning area texts

Level 5 – navigate, read and view a variety of challenging subject-specific texts with a wide range of graphic representations

*Composing texts through speaking, writing and creating*

Deliver presentations

Level 5 – plan, research, rehearse and deliver presentations on learning area topics, sequencing selected content and multimodal elements for accuracy and their impact on the audience

**Learning Goals**

*Learners will:*

- » Know how to interpret texts to discover the author's point of view and themes.
- » Understand how identity is formed and their own personal and cultural identity.
- » Deliver an oral presentation that describes an item from home and how it helps them understand their own cultural identity.

**Learning Sequence****Activating and Engaging**

*Non-linear*

Warm up the class with a balloon activity. Throw a balloon around the room and ask students to say a word or phrase that comes to mind in relation to the word identity. Prompt students with questions and wait for responses:

- » What is identity?
- » What is identity made up of?
- » Where does identity come from?
- » What kinds of identity are there?

### Exploring and Discovering

#### *Symbols and Images*

Ask students to draw a mind map to explore their own identity. For example:

- » What are their roles at home, at school and in the community?
- » What kinds of characteristics do they have when they are in those roles?

Ask them to place these next to the roles on the mind map. Then ask them to think about cultural identity. Brainstorm ideas and write them on the board.

- » Where do they think cultural identity comes from?

#### *Community Links*

Ask students to think about the following questions before including their cultural identity on their mind map.

- » Where were you born?
- » Your parents born?
- » Your grandparents born?
- » Do you speak other languages at home?
- » What kind of food do you eat?
- » What music do you listen too?
- » Do you have any traditional celebrations or significant events?
- » What type of regular outings do you go on with your family?
- » What kind of clothes do you wear?

#### *Story Sharing*

Once students have explored aspects of their cultural identity ask them to think of an item from home that helps them understand their own culture and give a two minute presentation to the rest of the class in which they:

- » Describe the item
- » Explain how and why it helps them to understand their cultural identity
- » Students can bring their item in for presentation in the next lesson

### Synthesising and Applying

#### *Story Sharing*

View the clips from the 'Living Cultures – Fibres' section of The Orb.

#### *Deconstruct-Reconstruct*

Introduce the poem *Always Full Never Empty* written by Verna Nichols, enclosed in the resource section of this document. Hand out copies to each students and read it aloud to the class – modelled reading. Ask students to read it to themselves a few times before individually recording their first impressions such as:

- » It reminds me of...
- » I am not sure about...
- » I am puzzled by...
- » I think it might mean...
- » The poet seems to be trying to...
- » A word/line that strikes me is...because...
- » I like (or dislike) the poem because...
- » This poem made me feel...

Ask students to share their answers with the class via a discussion. Have students form groups of 3 or 4 and create their own questions to be answered as a group. Generate a short class discussion on what kinds of questions they might like to ask.

- » What is this poem about?
- » What are the main themes presented?
- » What does 'your basket is full' mean?
- » What does this say about identity and connection?
- » What do you think the author's views are?
- » What does the author mean when she writes 'will someone hear my basket whisper my story?'

Ask groups to share their questions and answers. Build on these by redirecting and clarifying to further add value and encourage higher order thinking. Ensure students have identified how texts can reflect an author's point of view and beliefs and how they can evoke emotion and develop themes and that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders peoples have a deep connection to country/place.

### Success Criteria

#### *Learners:*

- » Explore their own identity and create a mind map.
- » Present an item from their home and explain how this item links to their cultural identity.
- » Identify the themes and the author's point of view in a poem.

## Resources


- » [The Orb](#)
- » [Australian Curriculum](#)
- » [Aboriginal Sharers of Knowledge \(ASK Program\) Guidelines](#)
- » [Aboriginal Sharers of Knowledge \(ASK Program\) Application Form](#)
- » The Aboriginal Education Library: email [Aboriginal.education.library@education.tas.gov.au](mailto:Aboriginal.education.library@education.tas.gov.au) or telephone 03 6165 5480 for more resources, including the ones listed below.
- » The Eight-Way Framework of Aboriginal Pedagogy
- » Example of a mind map
- » [TMAG tayenebe resource](#)
- » Handouts of the poem *Always full never empty*
- » [tayenebe website](#)

## Glossary

### Identity

The characteristics determining who or what a person or thing is. 

### Connection

A relationship in which a person or thing is linked or associated with something else. 

 [Oxford Online Dictionary](#)

## Always full never empty

What stories can you tell us?  
 Empty basket is all some see  
 If you could talk, what's that you say?  
 You are filled with laughter, hopes,  
 Sadness, tears your makers thoughts  
 Your fibres have been shaped by hands  
 Loving hands that have caressed  
 Callused hands through hard work  
 Hands that softly stroked a baby's back  
 Hands outstretched to get it back  
 Arms that ache to hold your people  
 A hundred years have passed  
 I hear your story whispered to me  
 I am listening  
 Your basket is full  
 I smile and nod in acknowledgement  
 Yes I understand  
 In years to come  
 Will someone hear  
 My basket whisper my story?

*Verna Nichols 2009*



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