

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
HISTORIES AND CULTURES

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
learners first

LIVING CULTURES – SHELL STRINGING

YEAR 6

The
Orb

SHELL STRINGING

THE GIFT OF SHARING

Learners explore ways that workshops such as *luna tunapri*, and the *kanalaritja: An Unbroken String* exhibition can be powerful means for Tasmanian Aboriginal people to reclaim, continue and share their cultural practices. They explore how the sharing of stories communicates meaning and strengthens culture. Learners will share their own stories and present them as visual art.

CROSS CURRICULUM PRIORITY

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures

Organising idea 5

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

ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS

Visual Arts

Students explain how ideas are represented in artworks they make and view. They describe the influences of artworks and practices from different cultures, times and places on their art making.

They use visual conventions and visual arts practices to express a personal view in their artworks. They demonstrate different techniques and processes in planning and making artworks. They describe how the display of artworks enhances meaning for an audience.

CONTENT DESCRIPTORS

Visual Arts

Explore ideas and practices used by artists, including practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, to represent different views, beliefs and opinions (ACAVAM114).

Explain how visual arts conventions communicate meaning by comparing artworks from different social, cultural and historical contexts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artworks (ACAVAR117).

GENERAL CAPABILITIES

Intercultural Understanding

Recognising culture and developing respect

Explore and compare cultural knowledge, beliefs and practices

Level 4 – describe and compare the knowledge, beliefs and practices of various cultural groups in relation to a specific time, event or custom

Interacting and empathising with others

Communicate across cultures

Level 4 – identify factors that contribute to understanding in intercultural communication and discuss some strategies to avoid misunderstanding

Critical and Creative Thinking

Generating ideas, possibilities and actions

Imagine possibilities and connect ideas

Level 4 – combine ideas in a variety of ways and from a range of sources to create new possibilities

Learning Goals

Learners will:

- » Know that story sharing is a powerful practice for the continuation and reclamation of Tasmanian Aboriginal cultural practice.
- » Understand that the rebirth of shell stringing work done through workshops and exhibitions strengthens Aboriginal peoples' connection to their past present and future.
- » Explore means of communication through art and culture that convey meaning for the artist and demonstrates their views, beliefs and opinions.
- » Present their own artwork that describes and demonstrates their intercultural understanding.

Learning Sequence

Activating and Engaging

Story Sharing

View all chapters from the 'Living Cultures – Shell Stringing' section of The Orb.

Generate a class discussion and ask the students:

- » How has the *luna tunapri* workshop influenced young Aboriginal shell stringers such as Melissa and Bronwyn?
- » Is there a purpose to gathering and stringing shells?
- » How does today's practice of stringing help Bronwyn, Lola and Melissa connect with their past?

- » What role did Lola play in contributing to the *luna tunapri* workshop and the *kanalaritja* exhibition?

Have learners read *The Gift of Sharing* chapter by Julie Gough in *kanalaritja: An Unbroken String*.

Ask learners:

- » What contributed to the interruption of Aboriginal shell stringers practicing their culture in the 1790's?
- » What has been the effect of the *luna tunapri* workshop on the women in Julie's family, the Briggs-Johnson line?
- » What gift can Denise Jones offer her granddaughters as a result of the rebirth of shell necklace work?

Exploring and Discovering

Symbols and Images

View the *kanalaritja: An Unbroken String* DVD and research the information in the *kanalaritja: An Unbroken String* book to explore ways that Aboriginal shell stringers convey ideas that represent their views, beliefs and opinions.

Visit the *ningina tunapri* and *parawa parawa* exhibitions on the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, or the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery to view Shell necklaces on display and compare them with other examples of continuing culture for Tasmanian Aboriginal people

Ask learners:

- » What makes a culture strong?
- » What adversity had to be overcome for Tasmanian Aboriginal people to have continued their culture today?
- » What changes could be made to ensure that the rebirth of shell stringing is not interrupted or stopped in the future?
- » What makes story telling such a powerful means of continuing culture?

Synthesising and Applying

Non-linear

Have learners design produce and present their own visual representation to convey their understandings about cultural reclamation and continuation.

Learners present their understandings described in the success criteria through their artwork

Success Criteria

Learners:

- » Demonstrate understanding that story sharing is a powerful practice for the continuation and reclamation of Tasmanian Aboriginal cultural practice.

- » Demonstrate understanding that the re-emergence of shell stringing strengthens Aboriginal peoples' connection to their past present and future.
- » Demonstrate understanding of the power of communication through art and culture to convey artists' views, beliefs and opinions.
- » Learners present their own artwork that describes and demonstrates their intercultural understanding.

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 or telephone 03 6165 5480 for more resources, including the ones listed below.
- » The Eight-Way Framework of Aboriginal Pedagogy
- » Various, 2016, *kanalaritja: An Unbroken String*, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery
- » TMAG online resource: [kanalaritja: An Unbroken String](#)
- » Visual Resource: *Cultural Jewels [kit]: Tasmanian Aboriginal Shell Collecting and Stringing*, 2010, Department of Education Tasmania

Glossary

Shell stringing

Shell-stringing was (and remains) a painstaking process, requiring knowledge of coastal resources as well as great skill and patience. 

 National Museum Australia



State of Tasmania (Department of Education)
Published: March 2019