

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER  
HISTORIES AND CULTURES

DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION  
*learners first*

# FROM GUMNUTS TO BUTTONS

YEAR 5

The  
**Orb**

FROM GUMNUTS TO BUTTONS

# METAPHOR AND SYMBOLISM

Learners explore concepts of symbolism, metaphor, simile and personification and use these devices to develop a story of their own.

## CROSS CURRICULUM PRIORITY

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures

*Organising idea 6*

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples live in Australia as first peoples of Country or Place and demonstrate resilience in responding to historic and contemporary impacts of colonisation.

## ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS

### Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS)

Students describe the significance of people and events/developments in bringing about change. They identify the causes and effects of change on particular communities and describe aspects of the past that have remained the same. They describe the experiences of different people in the past.

### English

Students understand how language features, images and vocabulary influence interpretations of characters, settings and events.

Students use language features to show how ideas can be extended.

## CONTENT DESCRIPTORS

### History

The nature of convict or colonial presence, including the factors that influenced patterns of development, aspects of the daily life of the inhabitants (including Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Peoples) and how the environment changed (ACHASSKI07).

The impact of a significant development or event on an Australian colony (ACHASSKI08).

### English

Understand, interpret and experiment with sound devices and imagery, including simile, metaphor and personification, in narratives, shape poetry, songs, anthems and odes (ACELTI611).

Recognise that ideas in literary texts can be conveyed from different viewpoints, which can lead to different kinds of interpretations and responses (ACELTI610).

Create literary texts that experiment with structures, ideas and stylistic features of selected authors (ACELTI798).

## GENERAL CAPABILITIES

### Literacy

*Composing texts through speaking, writing and creating*

Compose spoken written visual and multimodal learning area texts

Level 4 – compose and edit learning area texts

### Intercultural Understanding

*Interacting and empathising with others*

Explain perspectives that differ to expand their understanding of an issue

Level 4 – Consider and develop multiple perspectives

## Learning Goals

*Learners will:*

- » describe the impact of European colonisation in Tasmania
- » identify different ways in which the story of colonisation has been told
- » understand the use of metaphor and symbolism in telling a story.

## Learning Sequence

### Activating and Engaging

*Symbols and Images*

Ask learners to discuss:

- » What is a metaphor?

Write a metaphor on the board like the following example: “My car is a bomb”.

Tell learners that metaphors compare two unlike things by saying they’re the same.

Ask learners to identify the two things being compared (i.e. 'car' and 'bomb') and explain how they are similar.

Ask learners to give you two nouns (like an animal and a person) and write them on the board. Have learners list their similarities or how they are alike and write the list on the board.

Then have learners create a metaphor or sentence that compares the two.

Discuss with learners other figures of speech e.g. simile, hyperbole, personification.

### Exploring and Discovering

#### Learning Maps

Complete the *From Gumnuts to Buttons* experience, using the resource book to guide the process.

Discuss with learners the use of symbolism, language and images to tell the story of Tasmania's Aboriginal people and their contact with Europeans e.g.

- » cloth floor mat
- » gumnuts
- » buttons
- » boats
- » flags.

Ask learners:

- » What does each object represent?
- » How are symbols used to tell this story?

#### Story Sharing

As a class read *The Rabbits* by John Marsden and Shaun Tan. Discuss the metaphor of the rabbits in this story. Ask learners:

- » Does this story sound familiar?
- » What do you think *The Rabbits* is a metaphor for?

Ask students what they really think this story is about i.e. European settlement in Australia. Organise learners into groups of two or three and allocate a particular page and illustration for them to analyse.

Ask learners:

- » What can you see in your picture?
- » Discuss the link between the illustrations and the text?
- » Do any objects or characters in your illustration have a symbolic meaning?
- » How does this picture make you feel?

Discuss similarities between the story of *The Rabbits* and the actual history of Tasmania's Aboriginal people as told through *From Gumnuts to Buttons*.

- » Why do we tell these stories?
- » Why are metaphors useful for explaining events of the past?
- » What are these stories metaphors for?
- » Which of the two stories is the most powerful metaphor?
- » What are the real issues that underlie such stories?

### Synthesising and Applying

#### Deconstruct–Reconstruct

Have learners create a concept map about *The Rabbits*.

As a class, brainstorm some key words key words to assist with the concept mapping process e.g.

- » family
- » loss
- » displacement
- » dispossession
- » place
- » kinship
- » languages
- » knowledge
- » environment
- » oral history
- » *The Stolen Generations*
- » *The Dreaming*
- » song, dance, storytelling, ceremony

#### Non-linear

Ask learners to:

- » select one of these as the topic for writing a story using the device of metaphor, simile or personification
- » identify the key concepts of the story
- » explain briefly why they chose a particular concept.

### Success Criteria

Learners:

- » recount key aspects of the contact between European and Aboriginal people in Tasmania
- » describe and use key literary devices
- » create a short story using language conventions of metaphor, simile and personification.

## 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
- » *From Gumnuts to Buttons [kit]: a walk through Tasmanian history from an Aboriginal perspective 2nd edition*, Aboriginal Education Services, Tasmania

### NOTE TO TEACHER:

The *From Gumnuts to Buttons* resource was distributed to all schools. It is stored in a large 'paint-like' tin and all the items needed for conducting the activity are stored in this container.

Please ask your librarian/library technician if you can't locate this resource.

Inviting parents to participate would add value to experience and provide opportunities for students to de-brief.

Marsden J, 1998, *The Rabbits*, Lothian Books, Port Melbourne, VIC

## Glossary

### Metaphor

An imaginative way of describing something by referring to something else which is the same in a particular way. C

### Simile

An expression which describes a person or thing as being similar to someone or something else. C

### Hyperbole

Exaggerated statements or claims not meant to be taken literally. O

### Personification

The attribution of a personal nature or human characteristics to something non-human. O

### Analyse

To study or examine something in detail, in order to discover more about it. C

### Concept map

A type of graphic organizer used to organize and represent knowledge of a subject; a diagram that depicts suggested relationships between concepts. I

### Mind map

A diagram in which information is represented visually, usually with a central idea placed in the middle and associated ideas arranged around it. G

### Displacement

The situation in which people are forced to leave the place where they normally live. C

### Dispossession

The action of depriving someone of land, property, or other possessions. O

### Oral history

Information about a historical event or period that is told to you by people who experienced it. O

### Stolen generation

Aboriginal children removed from their families and placed in institutions or fostered by White families between 1910 and 1970. C

### Dreaming

Dreaming stories tell of the ancestor spirits who created the land and everything on it. These stories gave unity and purpose to Aboriginal societies in the past and are important today in maintaining their identity. O

AC	Australian Curriculum
C	<a href="#">Cambridge Dictionary</a>
G	General understanding
I	Inspiration.com
O	<a href="#">Oxford Online Dictionary</a>



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