

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
HISTORIES AND CULTURES

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
learners first

FROM GUMNUTS TO BUTTONS

YEAR 3

The
Orb

FROM GUMNUTS TO BUTTONS

NINE NATIONS

Learners investigate the nine Tasmanian Aboriginal Nations. They examine population numbers and model data to estimate how many people lived in Tasmania prior to colonisation and how these numbers were affected by contact with Europeans. Learners use graphic design techniques to symbolise the nine Tasmanian Aboriginal nations.

CROSS CURRICULUM PRIORITY

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures

Organising idea 7

The broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies encompass a diversity of nations across Australia.

ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS

Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS)

Students identify individuals, events and aspects of the past that have significance in the present. They identify and describe aspects of their community that have changed and remained the same over time.

Visual Art

Students discuss how they and others use visual conventions in artworks.

Students collaborate to plan and make artworks that are inspired by artworks they experience. They use visual conventions, techniques and processes to communicate their ideas.

Mathematics

Students interpret and compare data displays.

CONTENT DESCRIPTORS

Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS)

The representation of Australia as states and territories and as Countries/Places of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples; and major places in Australia, both natural and human (ACHASSK066).

Visual Art

Explore ideas and artworks from different cultures and times, including artwork by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, to use as inspiration for their own representations (ACAVAM110).

Mathematics

Collect data, organise into categories and create displays using lists, tables, picture graphs and simple column graphs, with and without the use of digital technologies (ACMSP069).

GENERAL CAPABILITIES

Intercultural Understanding

Recognising culture and developing respect

Investigate culture and cultural identity

Level 3 – identify and describe variability within and across cultural groups

Critical and Creative Thinking

Generate ideas, possibilities and actions

Imagine possibilities and connect ideas

Level 3 – expand on known ideas to create new and imaginative combinations

Learning Goals

Learners will:

- » identify the nine Tasmanian Aboriginal nations
- » describe the social groupings of Tasmanian Aboriginal in Tasmania prior to colonisation
- » develop imagery to symbolise each of the nine nations.

Learning Sequence

Activating and Engaging

Symbols and Images

Lay the map *From Gumnuts to Buttons* on the floor. Ask students to sit in circle around the map.

Discuss with learners the nine language regions/nations shown on the *From Gumnuts to Buttons* map. List these nations on the board.

Use the *From Gumnuts to Buttons* maps booklet to identify hunting grounds/grasslands, food gathering areas and main roads/pathways used by people from the nine nations.

Land Links

Discuss with learners:

- » The seasons and how Tasmanian Aboriginal people moved in response to the changes in weather.
- » How Tasmanian Aboriginal population people navigated the environment.
- » How this impacted on food, shelter and patterns of movement across country.

Exploring and Discovering*Learning Maps*

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

Deconstruct–Reconstruct

Discuss with learners the social groupings of Tasmania's Aboriginal people:

- » Families of 11 or 12 people
- » Eight closely related families forming a band of 50 to 100 people
- » Bands that lived near each other and spoke the same language formed a tribe or nation

Re-visit the *From Gumnuts to Buttons* experience with learners and make an estimate of how many people each button or gumnut represents.

Explore, with learners the statistics regarding the population of Aboriginal people and white people.

- » When did the numbers change from more aboriginal people to more white people in Tasmania?
- » After that time how did the numbers change?
- » How does putting a number to groups of people make the story more powerful?
- » How does this reflect the importance of statistics in telling the stories of our history?
- » What effect did the presence of Europeans have on the nine Aboriginal nations?

Have learners, in small groups, research some key features of the nine Tasmanian Aboriginal Nations including:

- » Broad geographical boundaries
- » Land features/landmarks
- » Key people
- » Foods/resources for trading.

Non-verbal

Discuss the importance of totems to Tasmanian Aboriginal people, as an important part of their belief system.

With learners brainstorm/research some of the animals, places and objects that may have been important totems/symbols for Aboriginal people.

Invite a speaker from the Aboriginal Sharers of Knowledge (ASK) program to introduce students to Tasmanian Aboriginal petroglyphs.

- » What might these rock carvings symbolise?
- » What are the common design elements of these symbols?
- » Why are these images circle based?

Synthesising and Applying*Symbols and Images*

Ask learners, in small groups, to devise their own circle-based symbols based on the totems they thought of earlier, one for each of the nine nations in Tasmania.

Encourage learners to explore positive and negative space in their designs. From these designs, ask students to create a simple two colour stencil for printing onto fabric or paper. Display student work in the general school community.

Success Criteria*Learners:*

- » Identify key features of the nine Tasmanian Aboriginal Nations
- » Describe the ways in which Aboriginal Tasmanians lived prior to colonisation
- » Represent the nine Tasmanian Aboriginal nations through artwork.

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
- » *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.

- » Department of Education and the Arts, 1989, *Living with the Land, Book 1: Invasion*, Department of Education and the Arts, Tasmania. This resource has a clear and detailed description of Tasmanian Aboriginal social groupings and movements between nations and also shows a range of Tasmanian Aboriginal symbols.

Glossary

Graphic design

The art or profession of visual communication that combines images, words, and ideas to convey information to an audience, especially to produce a specific effect. **[D]**

Symbolise

To represent something. **[C]**

Social grouping

Two or more people who interact with one another, share similar characteristics, and collectively have a sense of unity. **[W]**

Colonisation

The action or process of settling among and establishing control over the indigenous people of an area. **[O]**

Imagery

In Art, visual images or pictures. **[W]**

Land features

A recognizable, naturally formed feature on the Earth's surface. Landforms have a characteristic shape and can include such large features as plains, plateaus, mountains, and valleys, as well as smaller features such as hills, eskers, and canyons. **[G]**

Landmark

An object or feature of a landscape or town that is easily seen and recognized from a distance, especially one that enables someone to establish their location. **[O]**

Petroglyphs

A carving or inscription on rock. **[MW]**

- [C]** [Cambridge Dictionary](#)
- [D]** [Dictionary.com](#)
- [G]** General understanding
- [MW]** Merriam Webster
- [O]** [Oxford Online Dictionary](#)



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