

To understand our Present and plan for our Future, we must put our Past into an honest and balanced perspective - Beyond Fear, Denial, Guilt and Blame.

This indigenous perspectives truth telling program focuses on

- What was life like for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people prior to invasion.
- What was the nature and consequence of interactions between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and European settlers.
- What can our role look like in writing the ongoing story into the future – pathways to reconciliation.

It is closely aligned with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Culture Cross Curriculum priority and HASS achievement standards of the Australian Curriculum.

To ensure robust cultural integrity, cultural sensitivity and appropriate content, program development has been undertaken with high levels of collaboration. Local Ngunnawal Elders, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Advisory Group, wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and professional organisations have been consulted and workshopped ideas with us over the course of nearly 2 years.

Acknowledging the truth telling themes, students will all be informed that it is ok to feel strong emotions about the stories (we'd be more worried if they didn't). Visiting teachers will be well-briefed as to the nature of content pre-visit and how to support individual students. Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students will be briefed by Birrigai staff or IEO staff from the visiting school and options identified for all students if content is distressing to them.



*New Day by Sally Morgan, of the Palku and Nyamal peoples of the Pilbara*

The program is an immersive experience broken into 3 parts with a smoking ceremony and 'Grounding on Country' activity to begin the day as a sensory Acknowledgement of Country. Following is a brief explanation of each part.

# Deep Time - The story before colonisation

Care for Country by  
Gubbi-Gubbi Artist  
Maggie-Jean Douglas



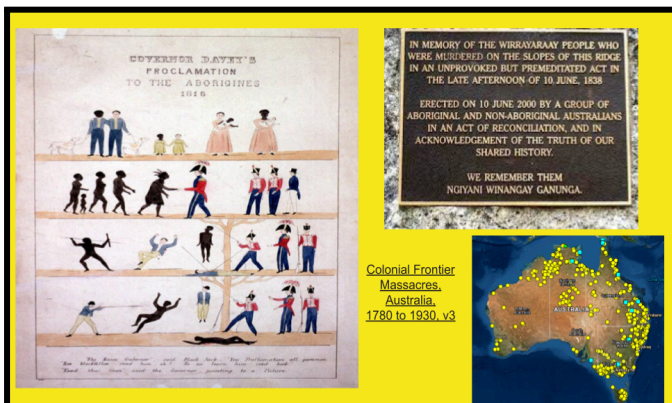
- This has a pre-colonisation focus and is a fully immersive session where students have the opportunity to explore values and ways of life practised for many thousands of years.
- Students will be allocated a First Nation's Country on the program site and work as a community to complete a range of tasks necessary for survival. These are authentic tasks related to hunting and gathering food, building shelter, making fire, cooking on fire, creating bush medicines, making and shaping tools. A Birrigai teacher will work with students
- Aboriginal traditional values of Sharing, Caring and Respect for the Land, for the People and for the Environment are a strong focus.
- 4 students will take on the roles of Elders for each Nation and have responsibilities for protocols and sharing knowledge. It is our preference that any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students in your cohorts are given these roles.



# 1788 - INVASION



- The program moves indoors for an interactive workshop to explore the nature and consequence of colonisation on First Nations Peoples, their ways of life, culture and Country since colonisation.
- The events and issues that have impacted and continue to impact upon Indigenous Australians in today's society are explored age appropriately. This includes historic displacement from land, implications of disease, removal of children from families, prohibition of language, controlled mission life; massacres, incarceration and theft of artefacts and massacre of land.
- Time is allocated at the end of Part 2 for students to debrief and talk through how they are feeling.



# Reconciliation - bringing into harmony what has been broken or disrupted (Goreng Goreng man Grant Sarra)



Action by Jessica Johnson descendant of the Warumungu/Wombaya people north of Tennant Creek

- The focus moves to the now and what our role can be in writing the 'story' moving forwards - Reconciliation as a process to work toward a harmonious future.
- SELS (social and emotional learning) is threaded through part 2 and 3 with strong emphasis on the message we are all special, unique and belong.
- Students self-select from a range of reflective and future action activities including creative writing and artwork.



**GROUND** *in* **TRUTH**  
WALK TOGETHER WITH COURAGE