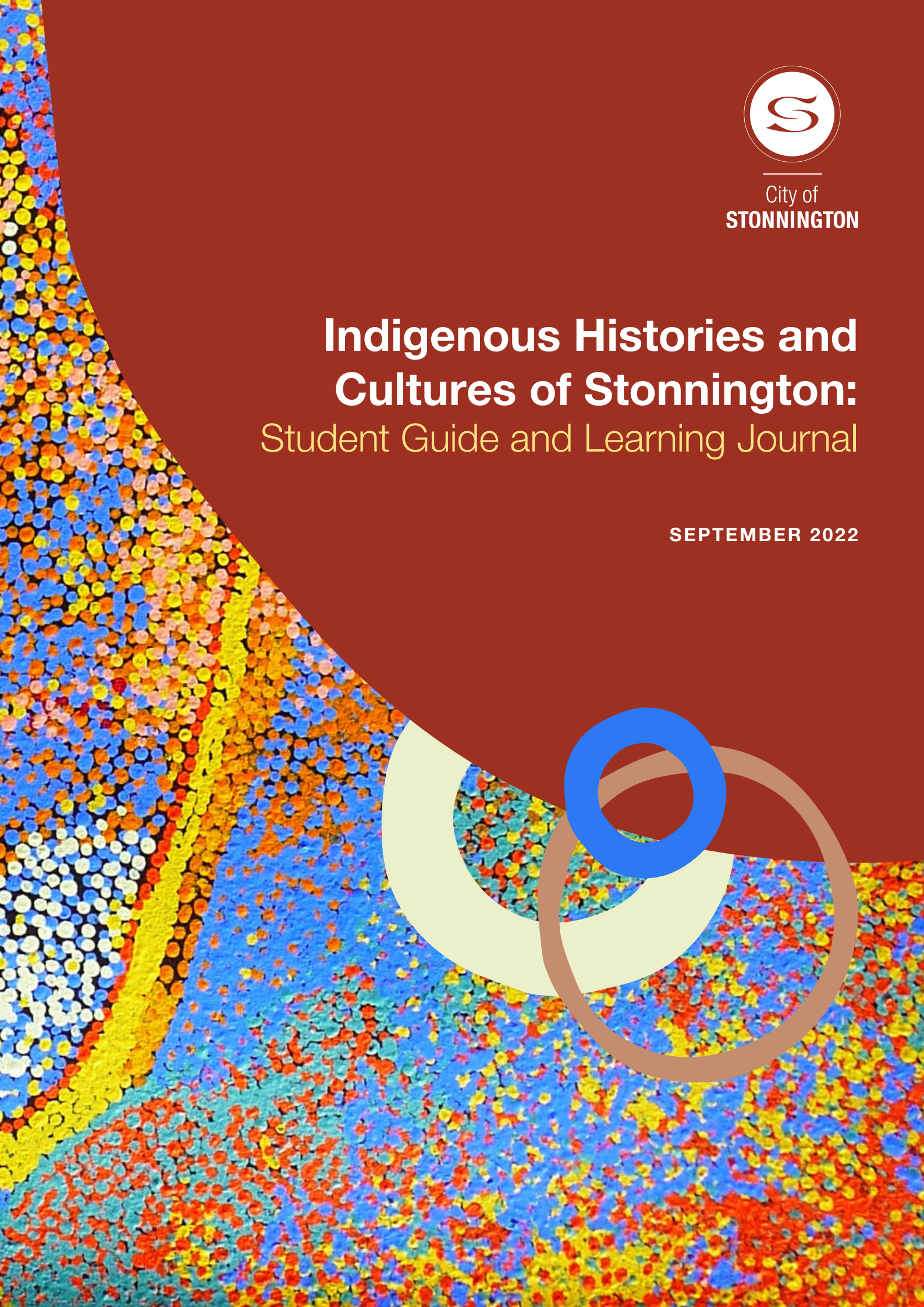




City of  
**STONNINGTON**

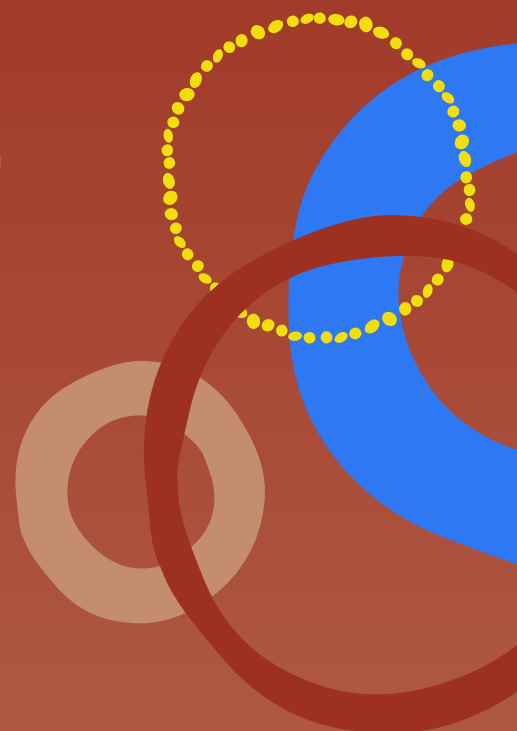
# **Indigenous Histories and Cultures of Stonnington:** Student Guide and Learning Journal

**SEPTEMBER 2022**



The City of Stonnington acknowledges we are meeting on the Traditional Lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong peoples of the East Kulin Nations and pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

We extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We acknowledge their living connection to Country, relationship with the land and all living things extending back tens of thousands of years.



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# Introduction

**As the oldest surviving culture in the world, the land we now know as Australia, has stories going back thousands of generations told through ancient songlines, song, dance and art.**

It is a shared oral history that is more recently being written since colonisation in 1978. A history of strong cultures and peoples who lived harmoniously on this land for tens of thousands of years. Also a history of invasion that created devastating impacts for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that continue to impact today.

Despite this, our cultures and connection to country still remain, as our connection to place remains strong and our land, waterways and sky country tells our stories.

This Student Guide is part of the unit on the Indigenous histories and cultures of Stonnington. It contains reference material and a Learning Journal.

The Learning Journal is designed to be a record of your learning over the eight sessions on this topic.

You will be taking part in different activities. This booklet contains the resources and information you need to complete the activities and space for you to record your thoughts, ideas, discussions and photos.

You can use it as a scrapbook and write in it or paste things in, or you can use it electronically, depending on how your teacher decides to organise the material.

Cultures of the Indigenous peoples of the area encompassed by Stonnington today.





# About this unit

**This unit of work is a bit different from other history studies because the information you are looking for was not written down by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders before colonisation. It was kept in people's memories, stories, customs and traditions. It is also contained in the land that is now beneath the buildings and streets that we walk on every day.**

A lot of history work is like being a detective or a journalist and for this unit.

History is made up of **People, Places** and **Events**.

The **People** you will be learning about are the original inhabitants of Australia, the Indigenous or First Australians made up of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clans, tribes, nations and language groups.

The **Place** you will be exploring will be your own locality – the area now known as the City of Stonnington but known by traditional custodians by their own names, for tens of thousands of years.

The **Events** will be stories, actions, meetings, happenings and journeys that occurred in this place over a long period of time, both before European settlers arrived here and after.

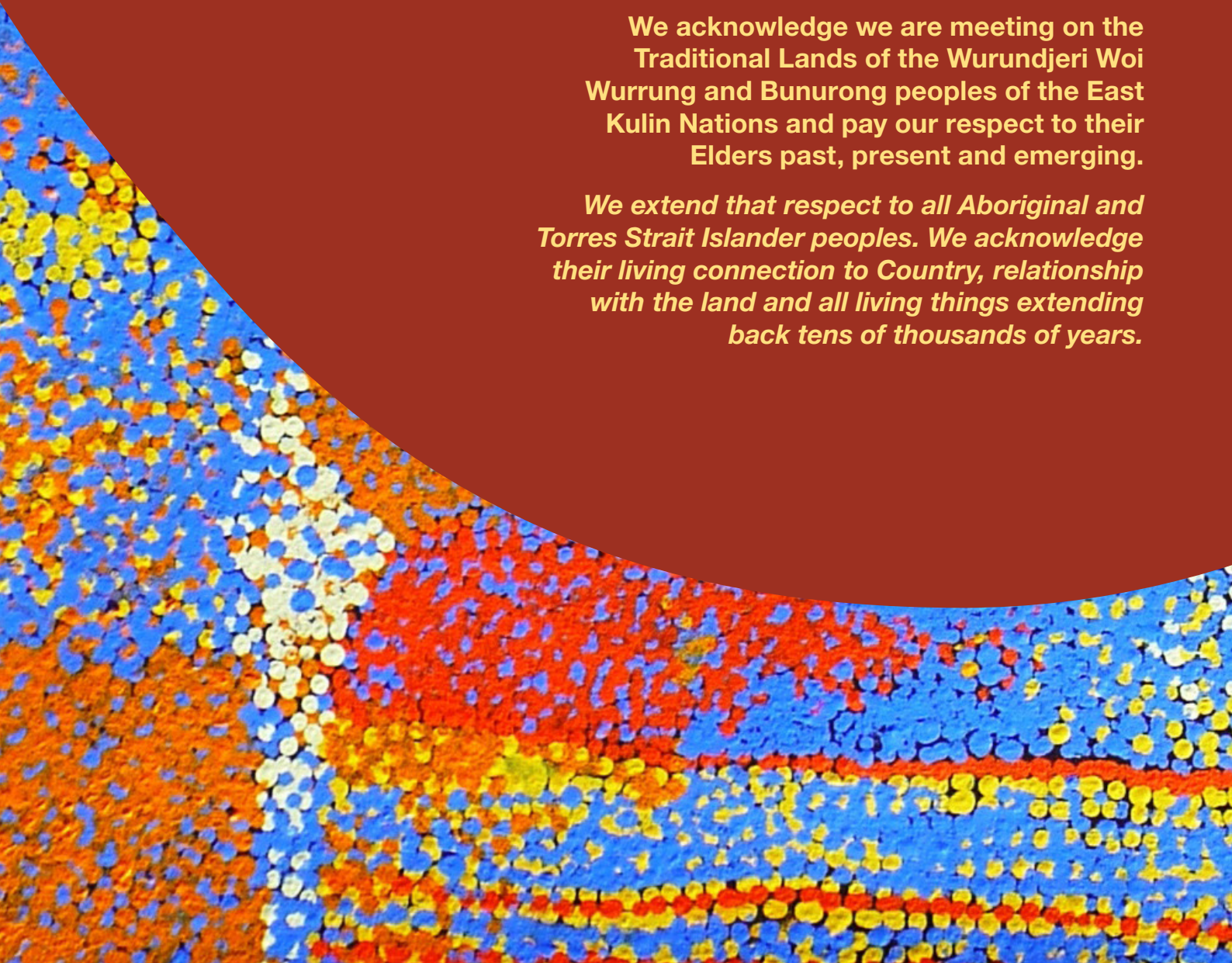
When you look at People, Places and Events together, you start to build a picture of a culture. Culture means the way people live, their chosen way of being in the world and the things they value in life.

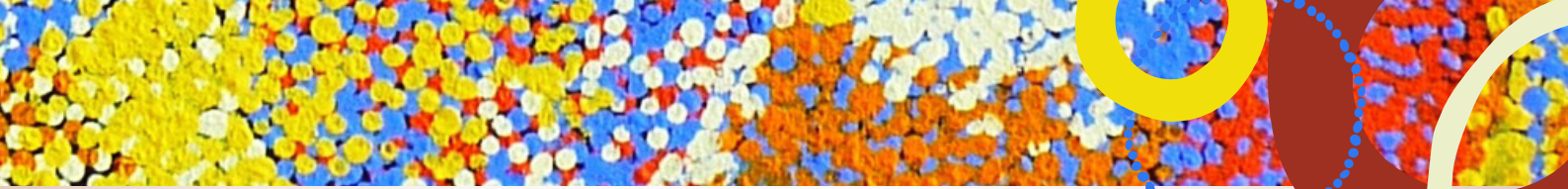
# Session 1: Connection to Country

This session is about the ancient sacred lands and waterways that you are now on. By connecting them to place and country and the significance of the local traditional custodians, lands, cultures and histories.

We acknowledge we are meeting on the Traditional Lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong peoples of the East Kulin Nations and pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

*We extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We acknowledge their living connection to Country, relationship with the land and all living things extending back tens of thousands of years.*





## ACTIVITY 1

# Welcome to Country

Read 'Welcome to Country' by Wurundjeri Elder, Aunty Joy Murphy.

Stop and write any thoughts or questions below.

Discuss the following statement from Aunty Joy Murphy and write any notes from your discussion below.

*"The most important factor in Aboriginal culture is respect and this is what the Welcome to Country is all about. In traditional times, if you wanted to enter someone else's community you needed to show them respect by asking their permission – just as you would knock on the door of a house you were visiting and wait to be invited in." Aunty Joy Murphy*

### Notes

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## ACTIVITY 2

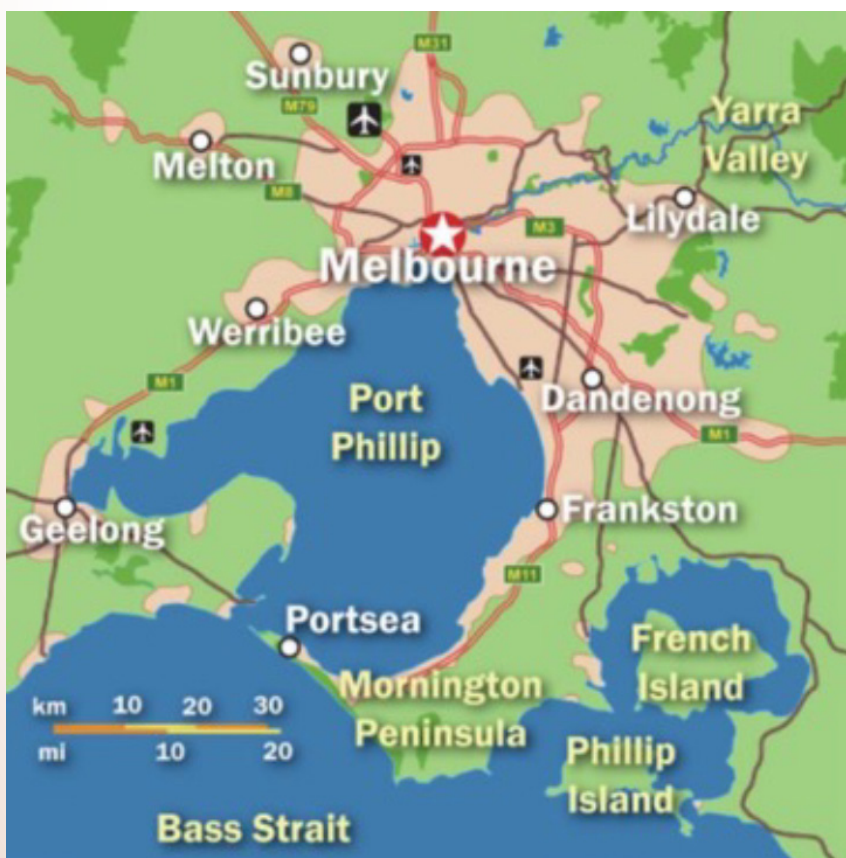
# Acknowledging Country

1. Look at the map of the Kulin Nation.
2. With your teacher, practice pronouncing the names of the clans and language groups on the lands you are on.
3. Read the below example of an acknowledgment of country.

*The City of Stonnington acknowledges we are meeting on the Traditional Lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong peoples of the East Kulin Nations and pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.*

*We extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We acknowledge their living connection to Country, relationship with the land and all living things extending back tens of thousands of years.*

4. Share your thoughts or create your own Acknowledgment of Country in your journal.



## ACTIVITY 3

# Mapping exercise

Look at the map of Melbourne and the map of Stonnington.

Can you point out where you live?

Where is your school?

Point out somewhere you have been or recognise in the City of Stonnington?

Are there any other features of the area like water, hills, swamps, coast you can see?

See map of Stonnington [here](#)





## ACTIVITY 3

# Mapping exercise cont.

## The Kulin People of Central Victoria

**L**ong, long ago in the Creation, the all-powerful *Bundjil* took the form of the eagle and created the Kulin people – their languages, their laws and their lands.

Later, *Burruwuj*, an ancestral headman, cut the *Binarung* (Yarra River) to free the country of floodwaters. This included the plain where the Kulin had hunted kangaroo and formed *Narim* (Port Phillip Bay). The *Kulin* are a federation of five distinct but strongly related communities.

They prospered in approximately two million hectares of what is now known as south central Victoria.

*The five communities are known as:*

- **Woiwurrung (Wurundjeri)** of the *Binarung* (Yarra) catchment
- **Boonerwurrung** of the bays and south coast
- **Taungurung** of the *Kathulla* catchment (Goulburn River)
- **Wathaurung** of the western plains
- **Dja Dja Wrung** of the northwest region (Loddon River).

Each of these large groups are divided into a number of smaller, land-owning communities. But all Kulin had as their defining social moiety (totem) either *Bondji*, the eagle, or *Waa*, the raven (crow). An individual's moiety, inherited from the father, dictated all behaviour, social relationships, even marriage partners. Therefore a network of alliances was created and maintained by regular meetings for trade, initiatives, celebrations and resolving differences. Songery, magic and mortarp (spit) were also fundamentals of society – though little of their deep significance was ever written down. Such knowledge was passed on by the oral tradition of the Elders.

Long before the Kulin had contact with the European world, they had established complex trading networks. In the north of **Woiwurrung** country is *Wool-woe Mooring* (Mount William) axe quarry. *Muring* (axe heads) made from this treasured green stone passed by many transactions to what is now Adelaide and New South Wales. Few of these special axes were found in Gippsland, probably because the Kulin and *Burruwuj/Kurnai* federation were not allies. *Muring* gained prestige the further they travelled. One highly crafted possum-skin cloak was required for exchange of three axes. Fine examples of craft and art can be found in *Bunjilaka* at Melbourne Museum and the Koorne Heritage Trust Cultural Centre in the city.



**Note:** All locations and spellings are indicative only.

When *nguruzaji* (white men) arrived at Port Phillip in 1835 they pushed aside the Kulin people and mission stations were built to 'look after' this now displaced society. The first reserve was located at an important meeting place beside *Binarung*, where the Royal Botanic Gardens are now situated. Later, a school for Aboriginal children was established at another important place where the *Merri Merri* creek enters *Binarung*. The nearby, modern suburb of Fitzroy continues as a focus for the Aboriginal population of Melbourne. There are still reminders in Melbourne of traditional Kulin life: a scathed tree stands in Fitzroy Gardens; rock wells and shell middens still exist along the *Narim* coast; and earth rings in north-west suburbs most likely hosted important ceremonies. All these special places are protected by State & Federal legislation.

Today Kulin people continue to live, practice and strengthen their culture in urban Melbourne and central Victoria.

**References**

Edeston, M. 1987. *The Melbourne Dreaming*. Aboriginal Studies Press.  
Prestland, G. 1994. *Aboriginal Melbourne*. McPhee Gribble.  
Brough Smyth, R. 1878. *The Aborigines of Victoria*. Melbourne.

**Further Information**

[www.yamukwiling.melb.catholic.edu.au](http://www.yamukwiling.melb.catholic.edu.au)  
[www.blackpages.com.au](http://www.blackpages.com.au)  
[www.abc.net.au/message](http://www.abc.net.au/message)

**Proudly supported by**

Parks Victoria, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria and Royal Botanic Gardens

The beautiful bark featured is of 'Bo'w'el, the River Red Gum (E. Camaldulensis)

## ACTIVITY 3

# Mapping exercise cont.

Look at the map of the Kulin nation. The map shows where Aboriginal language groups have lived for tens of thousands of years and still live today!

There are five language groups of the Kulin Nation, the traditional custodians of the lands surrounding Melbourne and the greater region.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people still live on their traditional country, or even when living off country are still connected to their traditional lands.


Record the five language groups of the Kulin Nation in your journal.

What are the names of the regions they have been given by Europeans?

Which traditional lands do you live on?

[Check out this interactive resource at Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages \(VACL\)](#)

You can click on the places and message sticks to hear language spoken.



**KULIN NATION**

### Introduction

When Europeans first settled the Port Phillip region it was already occupied by five Aboriginal language groups. These groups spoke a related language and were part of the KULIN (Koolin) nation of peoples. The people are:

- **Wathaurong** (Wath-er-rong) - The Wathaurong People
- **Woiwurrung** (Woy-wur-rung) - The Wurundjeri People
- **Taungerong** (Tung-ger-rong) - The Taungerong People
- **Dja Dja Wrung** (Jar-Jar wrung) - The Jaara People
- **Boon Wurrung** (Bun-er-rong) - The Boon Wurrung People

## ACTIVITY 3

# Mapping exercise cont.

## Victorian Aboriginal Peoples

**F**or Aboriginal people the place now known as 'Victoria' has been home since the beginning of time.

Archeological evidence reveals a connection extending beyond 40,000 years. Ancestors of today's communities witnessed volcanic eruptions of Tappok (Mt. Napier) in the west. They also hunted giant kangaroos and worried over the rising seas, which marked the end of the last Ice Age.

Today, Aboriginal concerns are about self-determination, restoring their lands and living their culture.

It is estimated that between 20,000 and 50,000 people, speaking over 30 languages, lived throughout 'Victoria' when Europeans arrived in 1835. The rapid colonisation resulted in a devastating loss of languages, traditions and lives. During this violent period of Victorian history, families were forced off their lands and on to missions. These were bitter-sweet places. They were a home and haven from the violence but also a place where there was little choice except conformity with Christianity and Western ways. Ironically, it was from these missions that well-known activists rose to fight for better conditions for their people.

Today well over 25,000 Aboriginal people live throughout Victoria, and this number is growing.

### Murray River Valley

Otchout, the mighty God carved out the Millewa (Murray River) while fleeing the spears of Toiyogul, the hunter. The rich lands of the Millewa supported hundreds of generations. Even when the river was in flood people fished and moved about in bark canoes, living on high earth mounds while feeding on the abundance of food brought by the flood waters. These mounds can still be seen today. There are also scoured trees from which slabs of bark were removed to make canoes, bowls and shelters.

Today, the people of the Murray continue the struggle for the return of their homelands at the Barmah Forest.

1 Njindadj	13 Barapbarapa	24 Boonerwung
2 Ladjildji	14 Dja Dja Wrung	25* Braitsuloong
3 Wergaia	15 Djab Wurrung	26* Braitsuloong
4 Wotjbaluk	16 Djigurd Wurrung	27* Tatunguloong
5 Jarawadjali	17 Gadubanud	28* Kraustunguloong
6 Buandid - Bunganditj	18 Wathaurung	29 Brabralung
7 Gournditch-Mara	19 Wolwurrung (Wurundjeri)	30 Way Wurru
8 Girai Wurrung	20 Taungurung	31 Dhudurra
9 Jarjari	21 Yorta Yorta	32 Ngarigu
10 Dadidadi	22 Bangerang	33 Maap (Bidawal)
11 Wadiwadi	23 Ngurai-illam Wurrung	
12 Wembawemba		

NOTE: All locations and perhaps are indicated only

\*Members of the Conceptual Federation

### Western District

Aboriginal people have lived in Gariwerd (The Grampians) since before the last Ice Age. The 'old people' left the most extensive rock art in Victoria – over 120 art sites. The red and white painted figures and hand stencils hold the secrets of activities that went on for millennia. South at Carrap (Lake Condah), people lived in semi-permanent, dome-shaped huts and harvested eels in long woven baskets fixed to stone-walled channels. Lake Condah became a mission station in 1867. People still maintain strong ties there, and at Teerak – the Framlingham station near Wheringemitch (Warrambool). Thousands of tourists visit the Brambuk Cultural Centre in Gariwerd to see contemporary art, crafts and performances and to explore bush tucker trails.

### Mailee and Wimmera

Between rich Millewa Valley and the western plains lies a desert region. A Creation Story tells how Purra, an Ancestral Kangaroo Spirit, marked the route of Barburton (Wimmera River) from Stawell north to Ngabilakulya (Lake Albury) and Gooro (Lake Hindmarsh). Weringer (Wimmeron Plain), in the middle of this desert, was an important meeting place for people throughout this region and beyond. Ebenezer Mission became a major regional focus and was deliberately built on an important place of traditional ceremony, as well as being a known massacre site.

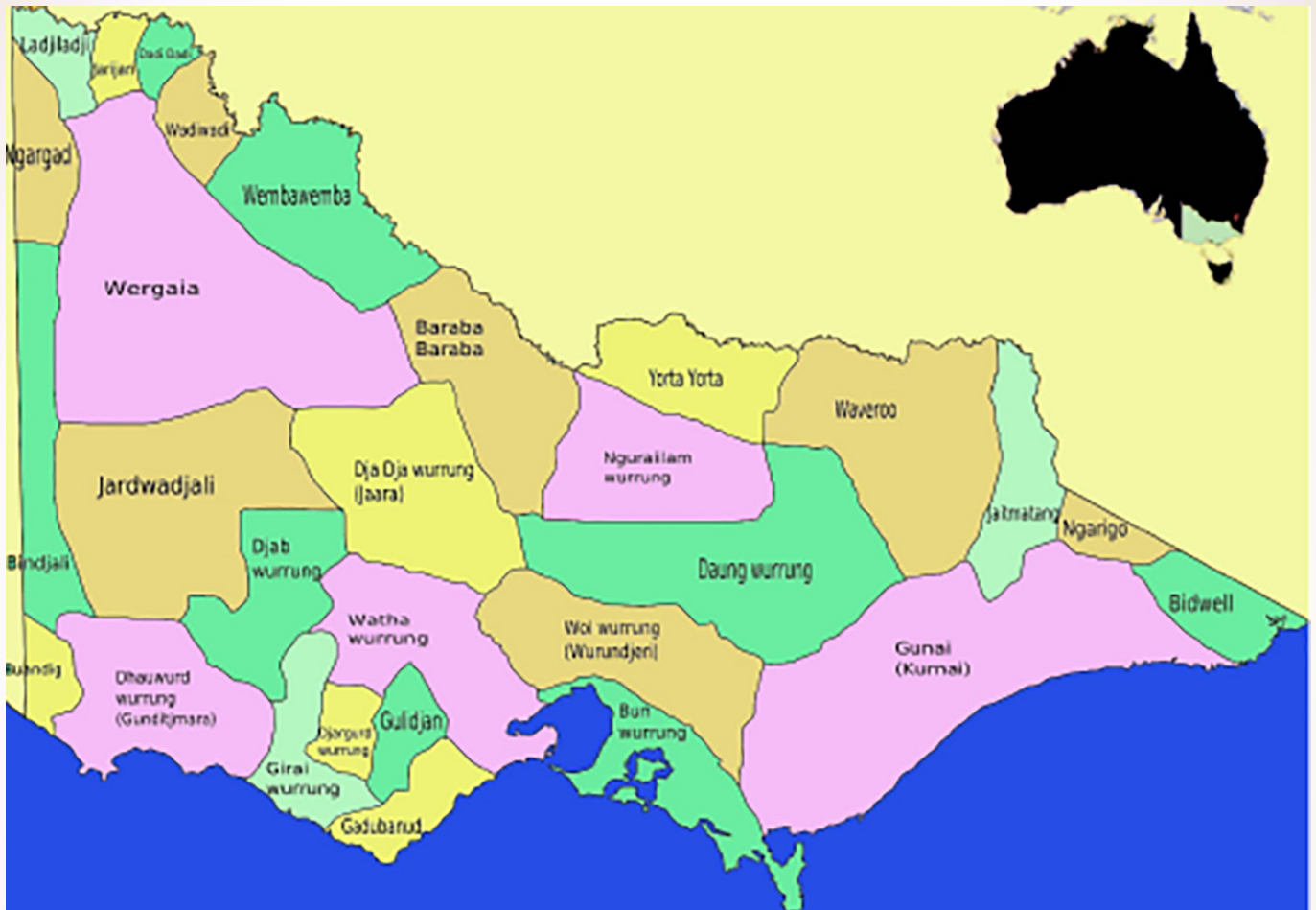
### Gippsland

Aboriginal people have lived in the mountains of Gippsland and visited the rugged coast of sacred Wammum or Yimik (Wilson's Promontory) for over 30 millennia. Some made the long annual trek to the high plains for ceremonies – timed to coincide with the harvest of the Bogong moth. The Lake Tyers mission was built in 1961 at Warrang gully, a favourite fishing place. Together with the later forest settlement of Jackson's Track, these places have been home for many Aboriginal families. Traditional skills in baskets, spears, shields, and canoe making may be found in the Krowathunkulung Keeping Place in Bairnsdale.

The knowledge that is shared is of 1847, the River and God (J. Campbell)

## ACTIVITY 3

# Mapping exercise cont.



## Notes

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## ACTIVITY 4

# Place in time

Sketch the timeline created on the class wall here:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin brown border, intended for students to sketch a timeline. The box is currently blank and occupies most of the page's vertical space.



ACTIVITY 5

# Kulin creation story

When I did the connection to country activities, I noticed:

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And I wondered:

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Session 2:  
**What do we  
want to find out  
more about?**



ACTIVITY 1

# People, places/country & culture

Journal some dot points in response to - what do I know about the Indigenous histories and cultures Indigenous to Australia?

Record your class's responses in the table under People, Country/Place and Culture.

Write down – What do I want to find out more about? Create questions under each of the headings.

People	Country/Place	Culture





ACTIVITY 1

# People, places/country & culture cont.

What I know about the Indigenous histories and cultures Indigenous to Australia?

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What I want to find out...

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ACTIVITY 2

# Exploration & research

Choose a question from the list brainstormed that you want to learn more about.

My three focus questions are...

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## ACTIVITY 2

# Exploration & research cont.

**Research** information about your chosen questions.

**Record** your answers using pictures and captions, cartoons, flowchart, headlines or a mind map – and then attach it to the timeline on the wall.

Journal your thoughts and feelings on your findings.

A list of some of the available online resources:

[Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation](#)

[Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation Placenames VACLANG](#)

[Placenames VACLANG](#)

[Welcome to country](#)

[Possum Skin cloak](#)

[Koori Culture](#)

[Art, Family, Stories, Possum Skin Cloaks and other topics](#)

[Melbourne Museum's Bunjilaka](#)

[Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages \(VACL\)](#)

[Reconciliation Australia's website](#)

[Koori Heritage Trust](#)

[Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages](#)

[Reconciliation Victoria](#)

[Museum Victoria](#)

[Culture is Life](#)





ACTIVITY 3

# Share & prepare

Share your learnings on the class timeline.

Walk around and look at your peers learning on the timeline.

Share two learnings with the class.

Based on what the class has discovered so far, what new questions arise?

Record three focus questions in your Learning Journal, paying attention to questions they might want to ask a guest speaker.

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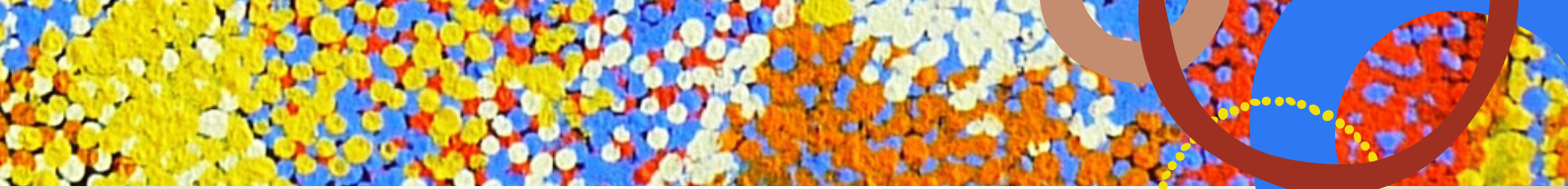
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Session 3:  
**Community**



ACTIVITY 1

# Indigenous tours, speakers and workshops

This topic on community is design to inspire your class, teachers and school to connect with your local Aboriginal community.

You will have the chance to ask some of the questions you have prepared in Session 2 and to be part of a learning conversation with an excursion and/or guest speaker.

You can record your observations and/or pictures from the event on this page and the next page:

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## ACTIVITY 2

# Yarning circles

The purpose of this activity is to practice deep listening and speaking honestly in a safe environment.

Aboriginal people share an oral history passed down through generations. Indigenous peoples globally share this connection and understanding of the importance of storytelling, and creating safe spaces for trusted relationships to speak honestly and vulnerably without judgement.

Your teacher will facilitate a yarning circle with you.

Record your experience and thoughts on the benefits of a yarning circle below:

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**Notes and photo space:**

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A large, empty rectangular box with a thin brown border, intended for a photograph.A second large, empty rectangular box with a thin brown border, identical in size and style to the one above.



# Session 4: Stories through art

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have passed down stories through art for tens of thousands of years. Indigenous dreaming stories and customs have been told orally and through art. This includes visual arts such as carving and ochre painting as well as dance and song.**

At the end of the session record any thoughts and reflections from your learning today.





## ACTIVITY 1

# Ancient Aboriginal art

View the Aboriginal Rock Art from Gariwerd (Grampians).

1. Discuss the three images of cave art. What do you see and what do you think the art is painted or carved with?

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2. Why would Aboriginal people have painted or carved in shallow rock shelters?

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3. Why might there be few examples of Aboriginal art pre colonisation remain today?

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ACTIVITY 1

# Ancient Aboriginal art cont.

4. What are other ways of storytelling and cultural expression?

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5. Journal your reflections on the significance of Indigenous art and stories to maintain culture, language and stories.

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## ACTIVITY 2

# William Barak

William Barak, was a Wurundjeri Elder who settled in at Coranderrk Aboriginal Reserve, near Healesville, in 1863. William was one of the few nineteenth-century Aboriginal artists to produce work on paper or cardboard for Europeans that communicated important aspects of Aboriginal culture.

Review Barak's eight works at [National Gallery of Victoria](https://www.nationalgallery.org.au/collection/object/103793) below

[Ceremony with a rainbow Serpent](#)

[Ceremony \(1989\)](#)

[Figures in Possum Skin Cloaks](#)

[Untitled \(ceremony\)](#)

[Untitled \(Hunting Scene\)](#)

[Group Hunting Animals](#)

[Ceremony \(1890s\)](#)

Create a timeline that includes important events in Barak's life and the history of Melbourne.

What do Barak's paintings tell us about his life and Aboriginal people at the time?

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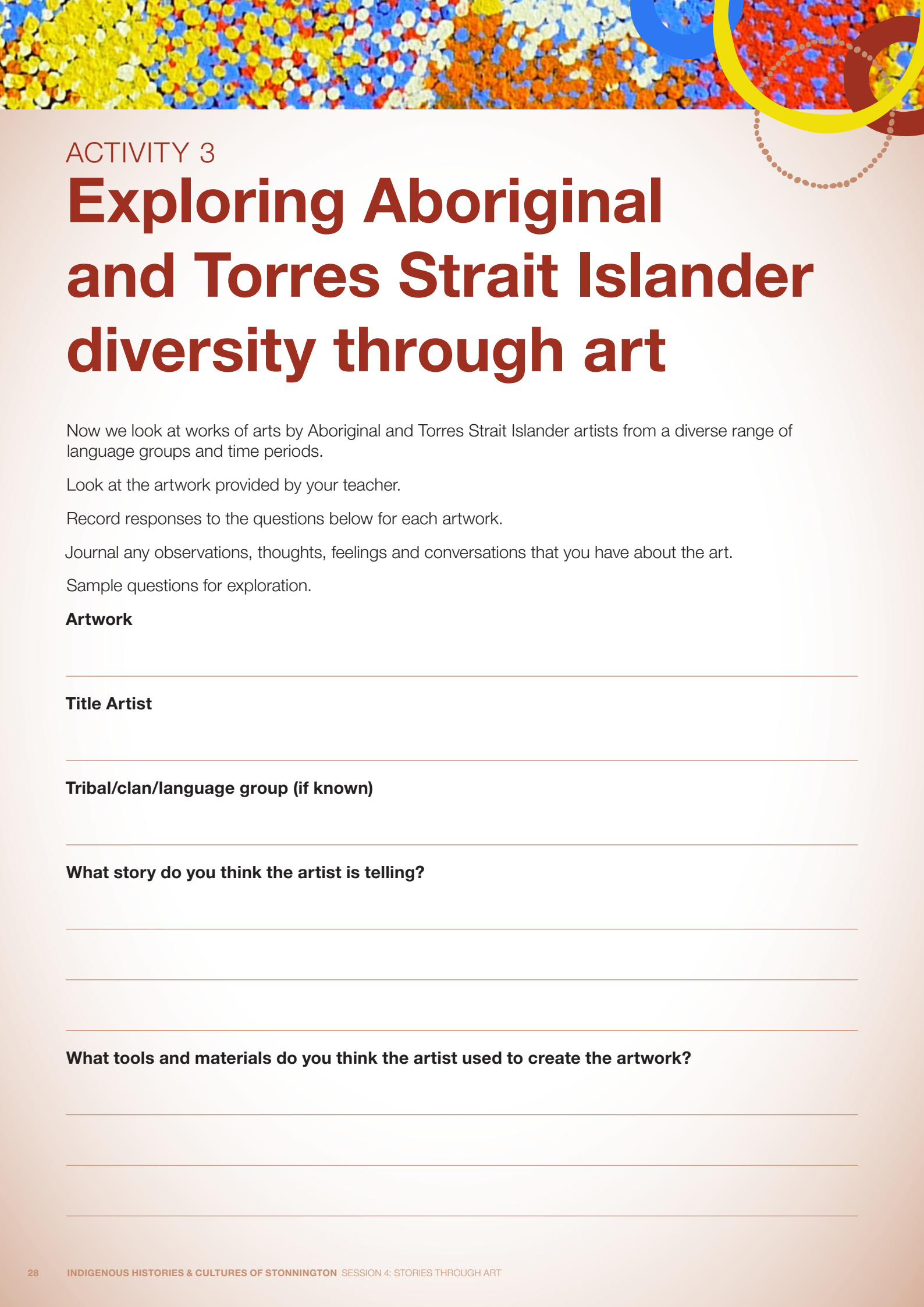
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## ACTIVITY 3

# Exploring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander diversity through art

Now we look at works of arts by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists from a diverse range of language groups and time periods.

Look at the artwork provided by your teacher.

Record responses to the questions below for each artwork.

Journal any observations, thoughts, feelings and conversations that you have about the art.

Sample questions for exploration.

### **Artwork**

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### **Title Artist**

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### **Tribal/clan/language group (if known)**

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### **What story do you think the artist is telling?**

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### **What tools and materials do you think the artist used to create the artwork?**

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ACTIVITY 3

# Exploring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander diversity through art cont.

**What part of Aboriginal culture became clearer to you today?**

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**What other questions do you have that have not yet been answered?**

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## ACTIVITY 4

# Local and modern Aboriginal art

In this activity we are exploring modern Aboriginal artists through the works of Bunurong artist, Adam Magennis.

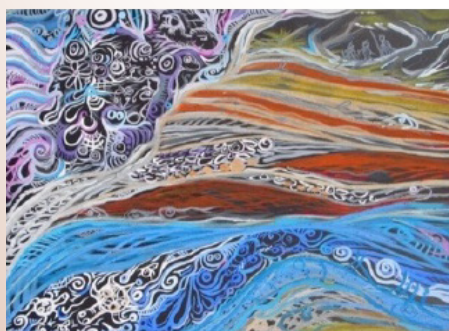
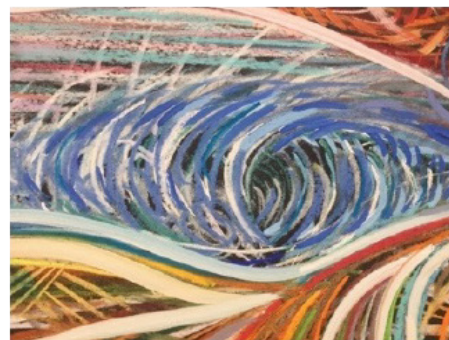
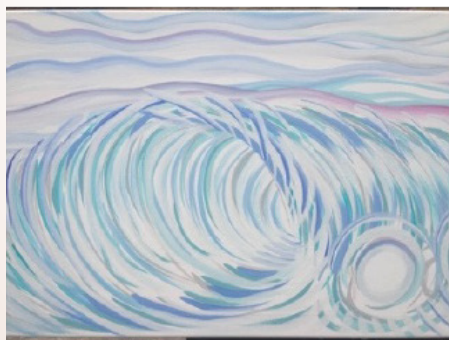
Questions to explore:

What stories do you see being portrayed in Magennis' artwork?

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ACTIVITY 4

# Local and modern Aboriginal art cont.

What are some noticeable differences from Willam Barak's paintings compared to Adam Magennis?  
How has art changed over time?

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What are some of the similarities in the two artists' work? I.e. the ability to tell Aboriginal stories and perspectives visually.

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# Session 5: Walking into the past

## **This session is based around an excursion.**

You will have a chance to visit some of the places you have been reading about.

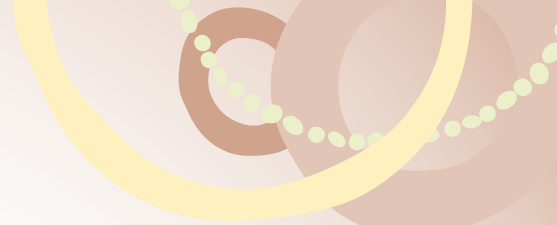
Stonnington Council has created a series of markers to show special sites of interest to do with the Indigenous history of the area. This is the Indigenous History Markers Trail and you will be able to walk or visit some of these sites.

The tables on the following pages are provided as a way of capturing any thoughts, questions or ideas you have. They will accompany any photos that you might want to take to remind you of what you have seen when you get back to school.

Your teacher will facilitate some pre-excursion mapping.

When you visit each marker you will be asked to respond to discussion questions around the significance of each site.

Your teacher will provide these question to complete the tables below.



<b>Date:</b>	<b>Marker Number:</b>
<b>Marker title:</b>	

**Key info – this marker told me:**

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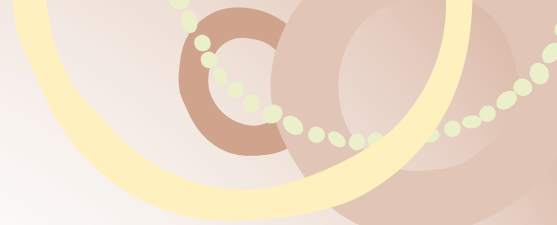
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**Activities – record your findings or questions about the activity here:**

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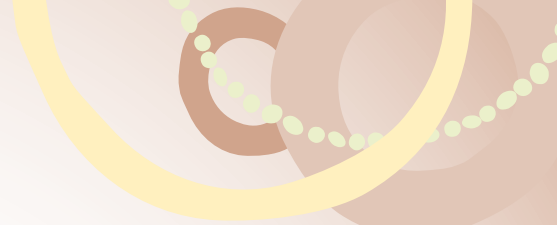
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## Photos





<b>Date:</b>	<b>Marker Number:</b>
<b>Marker title:</b>	

**Key info – this marker told me:**

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**Activities – record your findings or questions about the activity here:**

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**Notes**

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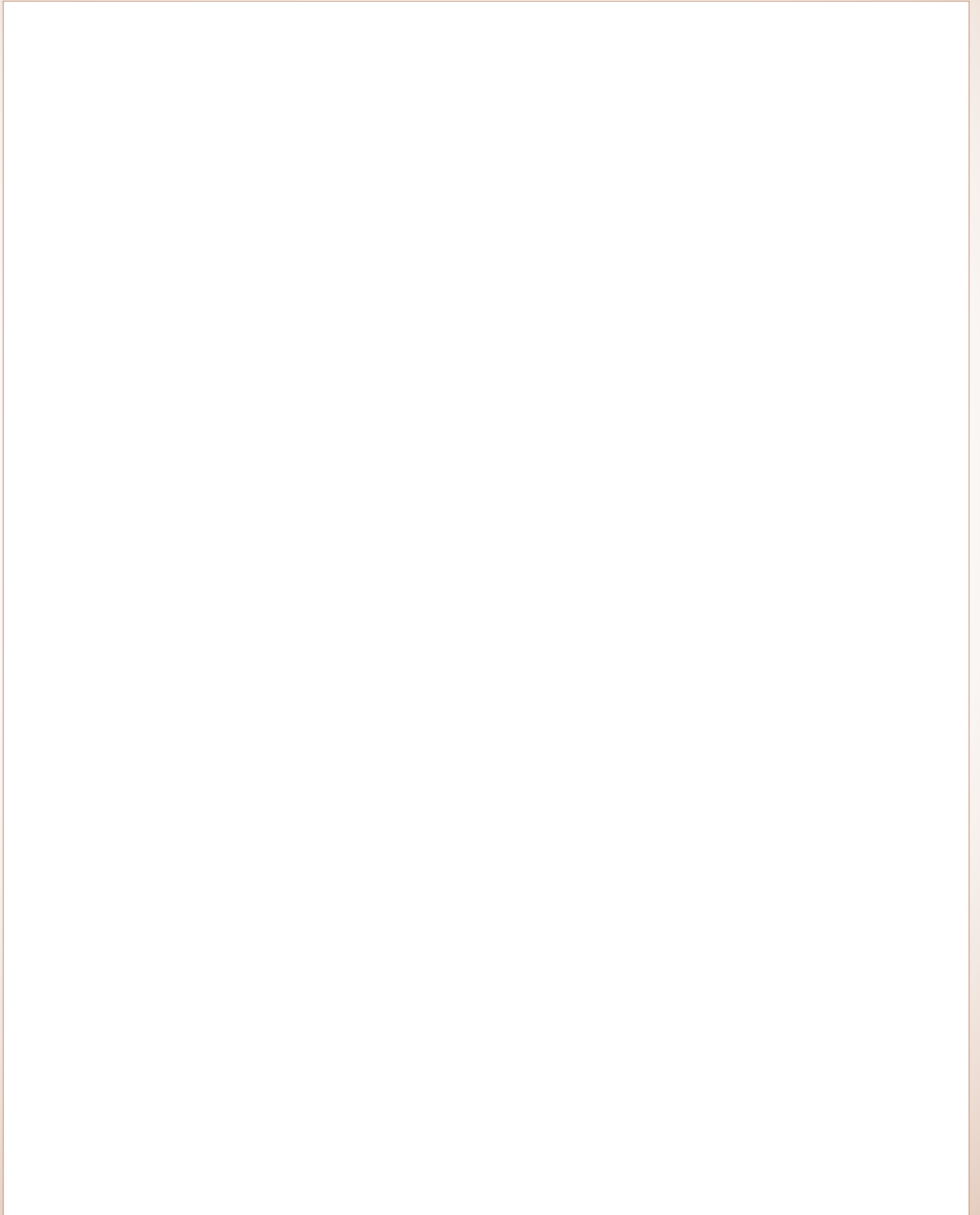
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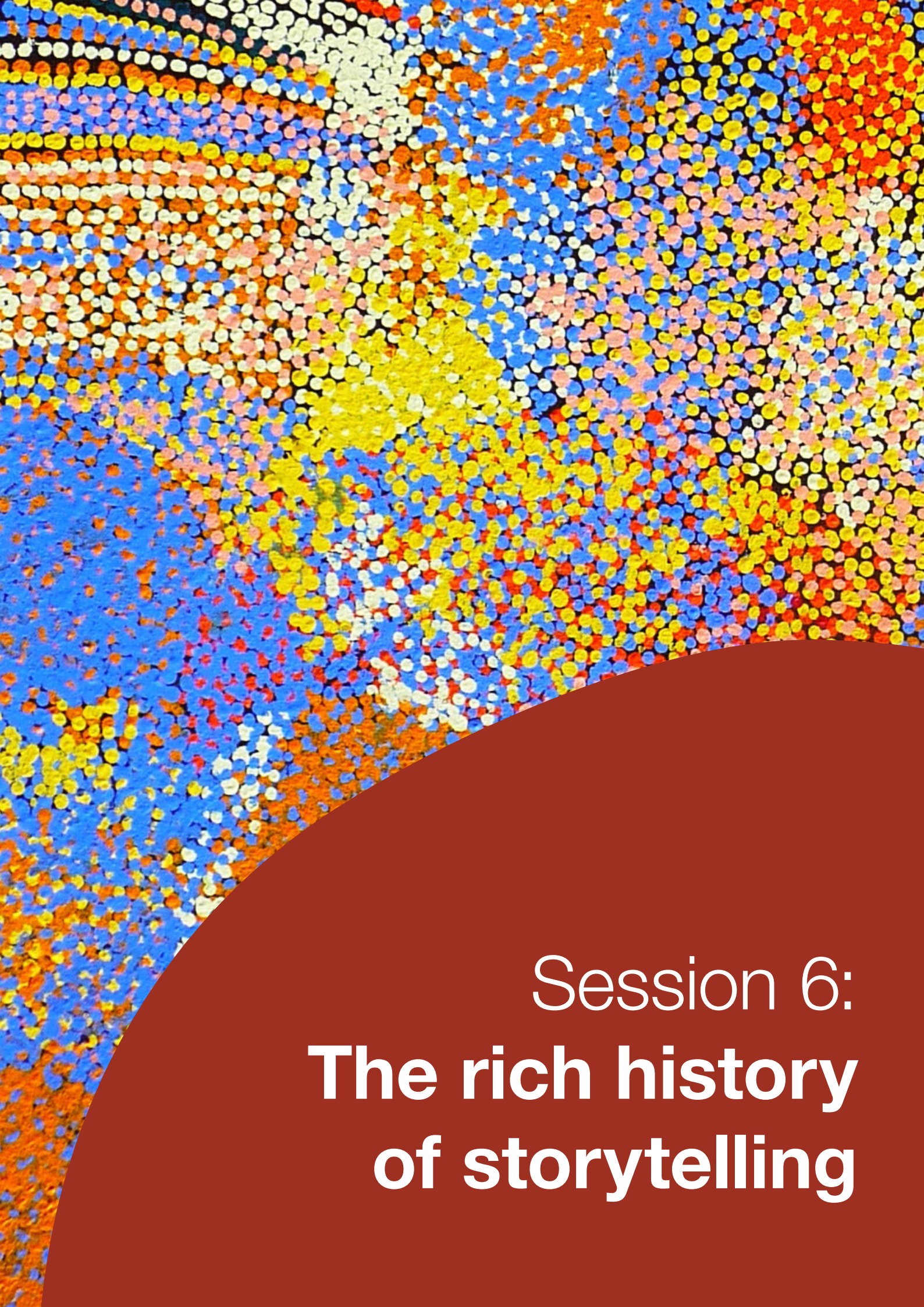
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## Photos





Session 6:  
**The rich history  
of storytelling**





ACTIVITY 1

# Creative expression of story

What was your story about?

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How did you choose to interpret this story, and how do you feel about your presentation?

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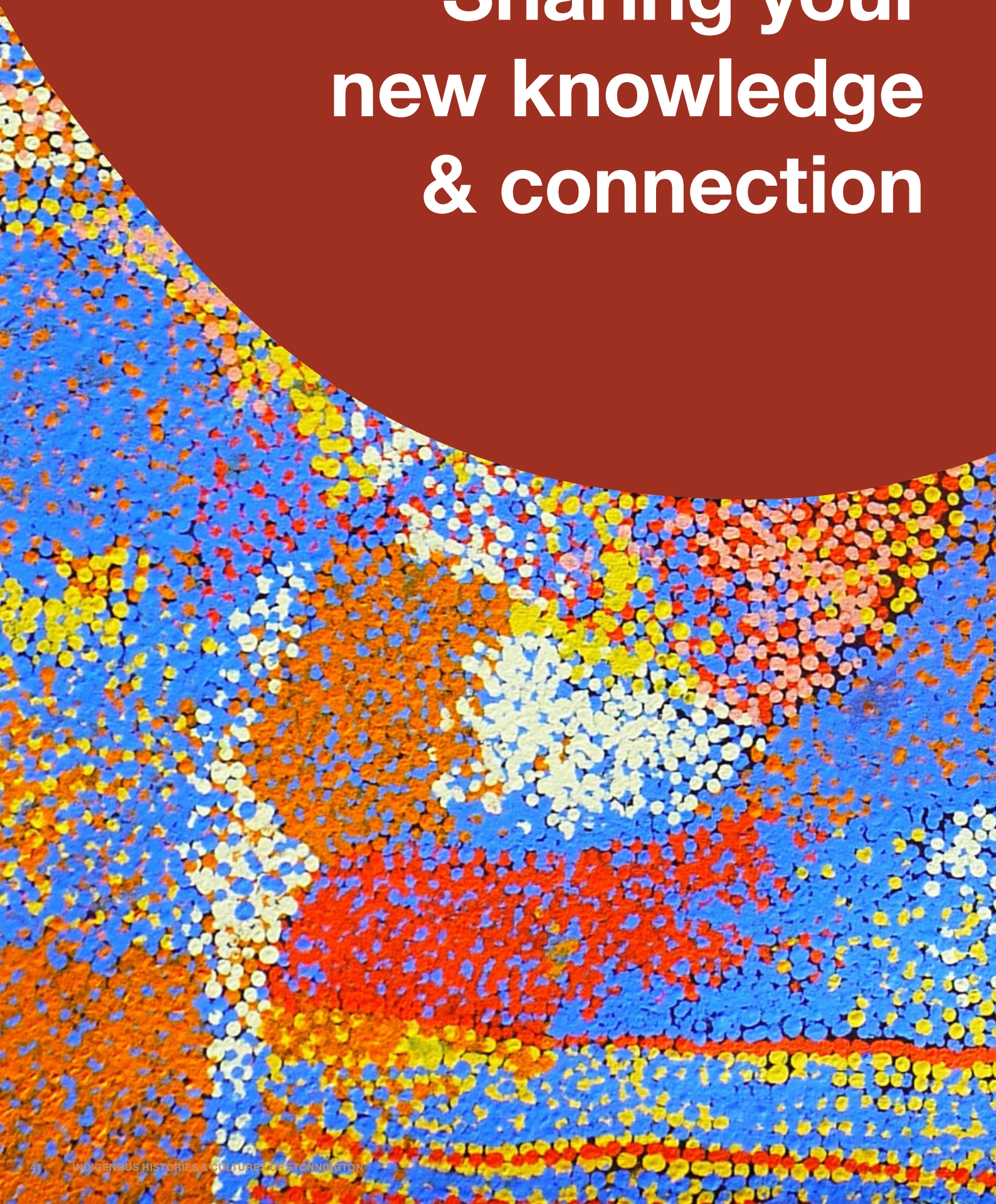
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# Session 7: **Sharing your new knowledge & connection**





## ACTIVITY 1

# Create a presentation

**This session is a time for you to work with other members of a group to create and deliver a presentation of your learnings from the unit to the class.**

Your presentation may be in any format you choose but it must meet the following guidelines:

### **The presentation:**

- » Is between 5 to 8 minutes long.
- » Introduces the audience to a new thought or idea that your group has made during this unit.
- » Demonstrates your understanding of aboriginal cultural identity, histories and cultures through an appreciation of the local area.
- » Clearly shows each group members contribution e.g. through photos, narration, script, etc.
- » Uses referencing (explains where any information was taken from).

### **The presentation could be:**

- » A formal presentation.
- » An informal presentation – discussion group.
- » A digital story.
- » A mural or large wall poster with interaction and explanation.
- » A dance/drama performance.

### **During this session you will need to:**

- » Share your learning journals with one another.
- » Decide on a key focus for your presentation.
- » Choose the format of your presentation.
- » Begin to assemble your presentation.
- » Rehearse your presentation.



## ACTIVITY 2

# Presentation

This activity is an opportunity to share and enjoy each group's presentation. Each group will present an idea or information that is new to you.

Use the space below to jot down any ideas you find interesting. You may want to use these when writing your final reflection.

### Record of other presentations

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### Reflection

**During this unit I learned something new, which was that:**

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**And I noticed that I:**

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**One thing I know that I don't know is:**

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ACTIVITY 2

# Presentation cont.

**I would like to learn more about:**

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**My greatest learning has been:**

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**I was surprised to find that:**

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**I still wonder:**

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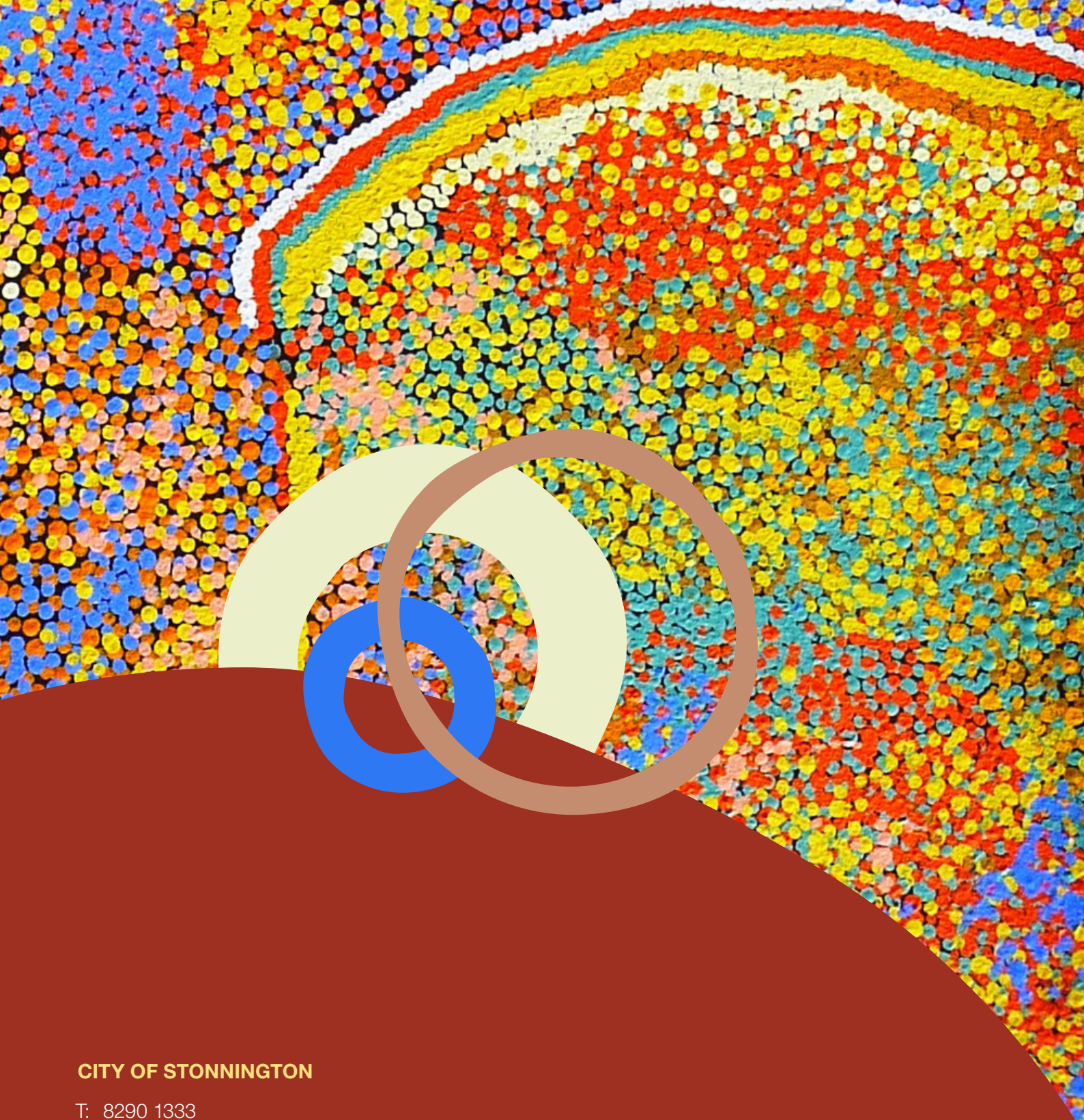
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**STONNINGTON**