



Teacher Resource

# Mabo Day

## Focus Questions

Discuss the BTN story as a class and record the main points of the discussion. Students will then respond to the following:

1. Where is Mer Island located? Find using Google Maps.
2. Why did Eddie Mabo take the government to court in the 1980s?
3. What does terra nullius mean?
4. What decision did the High Court make in 1992 about Mer Island?
5. What is native title?

## Activity: Personal Response

Discuss the BTN Mabo Day story as a class. Students will then complete one or more of the following incomplete sentences:

- Eddie Mabo was an important Australian because...
- It was interesting to learn...
- These are five words that I would use to describe Eddie Mabo.
- This story made me feel...
- It is important to remember Eddie Mabo because ...

## Activity: Class Discussion

Discuss the BTN Mabo Day story using the following discussion starters.

- Where is Mer Island? Locate on a map.
- Who was Eddie Mabo?
- What was Eddie Mabo fighting for?
- What does the term 'terra nullius' mean?
- What is native title?
- What is Mabo Day the anniversary of?
- Why was Mabo an important case?



### EPISODE 15

31<sup>st</sup> May 2022

### KEY LEARNING

Students will learn more about the life and work of Eddie Mabo.

### CURRICULUM

#### History – Year 3

Days and weeks celebrated or commemorated in Australia (including Australia Day, Anzac Day, and National Sorry Day) and the importance of symbols and emblems.

#### Civics and Citizenship – Year 4

The differences between 'rules' and 'laws', why laws are important and how they affect the lives of people, including experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

#### HASS – Year 6

Experiences of Australian democracy and citizenship, including the status and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, migrants, women and children.

## Activity: Glossary

Students will brainstorm a list of key words that relate to the BTN Mabo Day story. Here are some words to get them started.

MABO DAY	NATIVE TITLE	TERRA NULLIUS
CROWN LAND	FIRST NATIONS	HIGH COURT OF AUSTRALIA

## Activity: Mabo Day Research

Discuss the information raised in the BTN Mabo Day story. What questions were raised in the discussion and what are the gaps in students' knowledge? The following KWLH organiser provides students with a framework to explore their knowledge on this topic.

What do I <u>know</u> ?	What do I <u>want</u> to know?	What have I <u>learnt</u> ?	<u>How</u> will I find out?

Students will develop their own question/s to research or choose one or more of the questions below.

- What is terra nullius and why do you think the British Government declared Australia to be terra nullius?
- What was the Mabo decision?
- What is native title?
- Why is native title important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples?
- How did the Meriam people challenge terra nullius?
- Mabo wasn't just fighting for the Meriam people. Why was Mabo an important case for Australian Indigenous people?
- Investigate Mer Island in more detail and create a profile of the island. Use the following questions to guide research:
  - Where is Mer Island?
  - Mer Island is also known as...
  - How big is the island?
  - Describe the landscape of the island.
  - What language do the people of Mer Island speak?
  - Interesting facts about Mer Island.

Watch the BTN [Native Title](#) story. What does it tell us about the strong connection Indigenous Australians have to the land and the importance of the Mabo decision?



## Activity: Who was Eddie Koiki Mabo?

Students will develop a biography of Eddie Mabo. Clarify with students what a biography is and what information is included in a biography. What does it tell us about a person? The biography activity sheet at the end of this activity will help students to structure their biography. Students can use the following questions to guide their research.

- Where was Eddie Mabo from?
- When was he born? Describe his family life growing up.
- What were some of Eddie Mabo's achievements? Choose one to explore in more detail.
- How do we recognise his achievements?
- What were some of the challenges he faced?
- What do you admire about Eddie Mabo?
- How did he make an impact on others' lives?
- Imagine you could sit down and talk to Eddie Mabo. What questions would you ask him about his life and work?



[Source of image: Wikipedia](#)

### **Further Investigations**

- Create a timeline of important events in Eddie Mabo's life.
- What are some of the key events in their life? Write a summary for one key event, which answers the 5 W's – Who, What, Where, When and Why?
- Create a portrait of Eddie Mabo. Explore and experiment with different techniques and media to produce a portrait. Around the sketch brainstorm and record important things that Eddie Mabo did in his life.
- Write a letter to Eddie Mabo thanking him for his achievements.
- Make a Did You Know for other students.



[Watch this interview](#) with Eddie's daughter Gail Mabo to learn more about the Mabo case.

## Activity: Recognise and Celebrate Indigenous Culture

Discuss with students, ways they could recognise and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture in their class or school. Some ideas are:



Have you held a Welcome to or Acknowledgement of Country at your school? Find out what the difference is between the two and why they are important in showing respect to and understanding First Nations people. Visit [Reconciliation Australia](#) for more info. [Read this ABC article](#) to find out why an Acknowledgement of Country is important (and advice on how to give one).



Celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who've made a difference and inspired others. Choose an Indigenous woman who inspires you and research in more detail. Share your findings with the class. Watch this BTN [NAIDOC Indigenous Women](#) story to learn more.



Recognition can make you feel valued, respected and that you belong. What does recognition mean to you? Create a presentation explaining what it means to you to be 'recognised'. Constitutional recognition is something a lot of Indigenous people in Australia have been campaigning for, for a long time. But what exactly is it and why is it such a big deal? Watch BTN's [Explainer on Constitutional Recognition](#) to learn more.



Find out if there are any dreaming trails in your area that explain the creation theories of the traditional owners of the land. Meet Rookie Reporter Tyrone in this [BTN story](#) to tell you what the river means to his people - the Ngarrindjeri.



In Australia many places are known by their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander names. Indigenous communities share the stories behind place names of their country in the [This Place](#) series. Do you know the meaning of the place names where you live? Students can explore the place names where they live using the [Gambay interactive map](#)



Learn First Languages through song. The [Marrin Gamu song](#) was created to introduce people to the diversity of Australia's first languages. The song incorporates words from several different Indigenous language groups within Australia. [Follow these instructions](#) to get involved in creating and sharing your song.

## Useful Websites

- [Mabo Legacy](#) – BTN
- [Mabo Day](#) – BTN
- [What is Mabo Day and why is it significant?](#) – ABC News
- [Commemorating Mabo Day](#) – Reconciliation Australia
- [Eddie Koiki Mabo](#) - AIATSIS

# BIOGRAPHY

Name

Born

Family



A white rectangular box with a green grass-like border and two small gold dots, intended for writing the subject's name.

A white rectangular box with a torn top edge, intended for writing the subject's birth date.

A yellow notepad with a hole-punch on the left side and a torn bottom edge, intended for writing about the subject's family.



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