



Teacher Resource

Welcome to Country History

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 Kurna Country? Find Kurna on a [Map of Indigenous Australia](#).
2. How long have First Nations people been doing traditional welcomes?
3. When did the tradition of welcoming non-Indigenous people to Indigenous lands start?
 - a. 1950s
 - b. 1970s
 - c. 1990s
4. What is a Welcome to Country and what does it involve?
5. Name three things you learnt watching the BTN story.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this document may contain images and names of deceased persons.

Activity: Class Discussion

After watching the BTN Welcome to Country History story hold a class discussion, using the following questions:

- What is a Welcome to Country?
- Who can perform a Welcome to Country and where would you see one?
- Have you ever seen a Welcome to Country ceremony? What were the main elements of the ceremony?
- What is the significance of a Welcome to Country?
- What is the difference between a Welcome to Country and an Acknowledgement of Country?
- Complete the following sentence. "A Welcome to Country is important because..."



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KEY LEARNING

Students will explore the connection and deep history that First Nations peoples hold with Country.

CURRICULUM

HASS – Year 3

The ways First Nations Australians in different parts of Australia are interconnected with Country/Place.

HASS – Year 3

The importance of Country/Place to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples who belong to a local area.

HASS – Year 3 and 4

Pose questions to investigate people, events, places and issues.

Locate and collect information and data from different sources, including observations.

HASS – Year 4

The diversity of First Nations Australians, their social organisation and their continuous connection to Country/Place.

HASS – Year 5 and 6

Develop appropriate questions to guide an inquiry about people, events, developments, places, systems and challenges.

Locate and collect relevant information and data from primary sources and secondary sources.

HASS – Year 7

Construct significant questions and propositions to guide investigations about people, events, developments, places,

Activity: What is Country?

In this activity students will explore the connection and deep history that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples hold with Country.

Class Discussion

Explain to students:

- The distinction between 'country' and 'Country'
- For First Nations people, *place* (often called Country) is very important.
- Country is a word that holds many different meanings for First Nations people especially given the diversity of First Nations across Australia.
- Country is a proper noun (which is why it is normally capitalised).
- Connection to Country is part of identity, culture and community.

Discuss as a class:

- What do you think the term Country can include?

Country is a term used by First Nations peoples to refer to:

- The lands, waterways, seas and skies, which are connected to people through family, culture and identity. You can look at this [AIATSIS map](#) to see the diversity of First Nations in Australia.
- Relationships with ancestors, as well as connections to animals and plants. Watch one or more of the BTN stories below to learn about First Nations people's relationships with Country.
- Knowledge systems, including songlines and Dreaming stories, which pass on culture, history and laws.

Note to teachers...

When learning about First Nations there may be unfamiliar words and terms.

Explain to your students that using respectful and inclusive language and terminology is an essential part of reconciliation and strengthening relationships between First Nations peoples and the wider Australian community. If you are unsure seek and listen to advice of your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

What Country is your school located on?

Watch

Students will watch the BTN story [Charlotte from Warakurna](#). Students will respond to the following questions before, during and after watching the video.

Before watching

- What does Country mean to First Nations peoples?
- How might Country be different from just land or a place?
- Where is Warakurna? Find on a map of Australia. Find out the language of the Warakurna people. (Learn more [about Warakurna](#) - Source: National Museum Australia).



BTN story [Charlotte from Warakurna](#)

During watching

- How does Charlotte describe her connection to her home in Warakurna?
- What examples show that Country includes more than just the land (e.g. culture, stories, language, animals, water, people)? Make a list giving examples.
- What traditions, stories or practices show Charlotte's connection Country?

After watching

- Why is it important for First Nations peoples to stay connected to their Country?
- What is one new thing you learnt about First Nations people's connection to Country?

Watch one or more of these BTN stories to learn more about First Nations people's connection to Country.



BTN story – [Nyah's Two Cultures](#)



BTN story – [River Kids](#)



BTN story – [Ngiyampaa Dictionary](#)



BTN story – [Daniella's Ancestral Home](#)



BTN story – [Emu Eggs](#)

Activity: Your Special Place

Students will reflect on their own connection to places that are meaningful to them. They will share stories about places that hold memories or special meaning. Students can use the following to help guide them during this activity.

Think about...

- A place you love to visit.
- It could be a park, a beach, grandparents, sporting ground, or somewhere in nature.
- What makes this place special?
- How do you feel when you are there?
- What memories do you have in this place?
- Who do you usually go there with?

Activity

Write a short paragraph about a place that is special to you and why you love to visit this place. Draw the place and label it. Write a short story about a memory there.

Include:


- Where the place is.
- Why it is special.
- How you feel when you are there.
- A memory you have there.
- Who you share the place with.

Share your stories

- Form small groups and share your stories with one another.
- Make a poster about your special place to put up in your school.
- Create a map of special places in your community.
- Imagine if you were commissioned by your local council to research and design a range of interpretive signs to be installed at special places in your community! The signs would teach visitors about the area's natural features, history and cultural significance. Include hand drawn illustrations and a short description. Design a walking trail map which highlights these special places.

BTN First Nations collection

Visit BTN's collection of stories which focus on First Nations.

Look for BTN stories with the pencil icon  to find supporting teacher resources all linked to the Australian Curriculum.

[BTN – First Nations Collection](#)



Useful Websites

- [Welcome to Country](#) (2025) – BTN
- [Welcome to Country](#) (2021) – BTN
- [Special: Connection to Country](#) – BTN
- [Welcome to and Acknowledgement of Country](#) – Reconciliation Australia
- [Deep Time](#) – BTN
- [Whose Country am I on?](#) – AISTSIS