



Teacher Resource

# Pearl Gibbs

## Women's History Month

### 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. Summarise the BTN story. Share your summary with another student.
2. Which protest did Pearl Gibbs help to organise in 1938?
3. What was the result of the 1967 Referendum?
4. What will Pearl Gibbs be remembered for?
5. If you could meet Pearl Gibbs and ask her a question, what would it be?

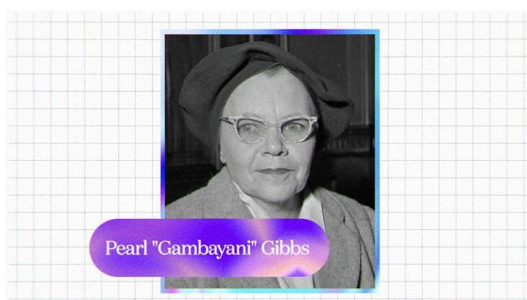
### Activity: Brainstorming

Before watching the BTN Pearl Gibbs story, students will brainstorm a list of significant Australian women. This activity can be done as a class or in smaller groups. The list can include famous Australian women or there might be an important woman in the students' lives that has achieved something significant.

### Activity: Personal Response

Respond to the BTN Pearl Gibbs story as a class. Students will complete one or more of the following incomplete sentences:

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



#### EPISODE 6

11 March 2025

#### KEY LEARNING

Students will recognise and celebrate Australian women who have made significant positive changes in society.

#### CURRICULUM

##### 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 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.

##### History – Year 6

The contribution of individuals and groups to the development of Australian society since Federation.

##### HASS – Year 7

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

**This document contains the names and images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people now deceased. It also contains links to sites that may use images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people now deceased.**

## Activity: Vocabulary

Students will brainstorm a list of key words that relate to the BTN Pearl Gibbs story. Below are some words to get them started. As a class discuss the meaning of each word/terminology and how it relates to Pearl Gibbs and her story.

First Nations peoples

Mourning Protest

Activist

1967 Referendum

Advocacy

Equality

Indigenous Rights

Constitution

### Further Investigation

- Students will add to their glossary by downloading the transcript for the BTN Pearl Gibbs story and highlight all the words that relate to the topic.
- What is advocacy? Ask students to give an example of when Pearl Gibbs was an advocate on Indigenous issues.

## Activity: Timeline Poster

Students will research the life and achievements of Pearl Gibbs. Students will create a timeline poster and prepare an oral presentation summarising key events in Pearl Gibbs' life and her contributions to society.

### Timeline Poster

Your students' task is to create a timeline poster, responding to the following areas of research.

#### Research

- Early Life - Information about your significant person's parents. When/where was your significant person born? What type of education did your significant person receive?
- Family - Personal information; Was your significant person married? Did they have children?
- Legacy - What event and/or action led to them becoming a significant person in Australia's History? What did they do that had an impact on the lives of others?
- 'Where are they now?' If your significant person has died, you can outline where they are buried. If they are still alive you can outline what their life looks like now.
- 2 x 'Interesting Facts' and 2 x 'Did You Know?'
- A minimum of 6 and a maximum of 10 photos with captions.
- Include a bibliography on the back of your poster.

### Oral Presentation

Students will prepare a short oral presentation, speaking in 'first person'. They will speak about their life, their family, character, the decisions they made and why, and their impact and influence on society.

## Activity: Who inspires you?

### Class Discussion

Start the lesson by asking students which women past or present inspire them. It could be women they know in their family, the wider community or someone well-known.

- Which woman in your life do you look up to? Why?
- Which woman in your life inspires you?
- Think about a time a woman in your life helped you solve a problem. What was the problem, and how did she help you solve it?
- Think of a list of women trailblazers.
- What have people that are trailblazers got in common? Think of a list of traits.



## Activity: Research Project

In this activity students will recognise and celebrate Australian women who have made significant positive changes in society and understand the importance of their contributions. Ask students to brainstorm and list the names of individuals they know or have heard of who have made significant positive changes in society. Encourage them to think about different areas such as civil rights, environmental conservation, science, and more.

Start a class discussion using the following questions:

- Can you think of women, past or present, who have made a positive change in society? Think of people that inspire you or are your role models.
- What qualities make this person special?
- How did their actions make a difference?
- What are some common characteristics and actions of people that are changemakers?
- Who inspires you? Why?

Direct your students to the [BTN](#) website to find stories of trailblazing Australian women who've made an extraordinary contribution to society, including:

- [Dame Nellie Melba](#) – Opera Singer
- [Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue](#) – Indigenous rights advocate
- [Elizabeth Kenny](#) – Nurse who developed treatment for Polio
- [Nancy Bird Walton](#) – Aviation pioneer
- [Dorothy Hill](#) – Scientist
- [Edith Cowan](#) – Social reformer and politician
- [Faith Bandler](#) – Civil rights activist
- [Evonne Goolagong Cawley](#) – Tennis legend

Or visit the [ABC Fierce Girls](#) website to learn more about Australian women who dare to do things differently. From athletes to aviators, scientists to spies. From the deep blue sea to the dark, black skies. Students will choose one trailblazing Australian woman they find inspiring and research and record information about the person. Some possible areas of research include:

- When and where were they born? Describe their family life growing up.
- What are some of their achievements? Choose one to explore in more detail.
- What inspired or motivated them?
- What are some of their values?
- What were some challenges they faced?
- How did they make an impact on people's lives?
- What do you admire about them?

Students will use a range of primary and secondary sources during their research including biographies, articles, letters, speeches, artworks, photographs, and news stories. To extend learning in this activity students will choose one of the following projects to complete.

### Biography

Create a biography about the person, which includes a timeline of important events in their 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?

### Creative Writing

Who inspires you?

Write an original story (approx. 500-800 words) about an Australian girl, boy, woman or man you admire most.

They could be someone famous already, or someone you think the world should know more about!

### Portrait

Plan and create a portrait of the person or group. Think about the expressions, symbolism, and colours that reflect the person, their values, and their impact. Explore and experiment with different techniques and mediums to produce a portrait.

Present your portrait to the class, introducing who the person is, the impact they had and then explain your portrait and what each of the elements in the portrait mean. Organise a class exhibition of your artworks to share with the school and local community.

### Podcast

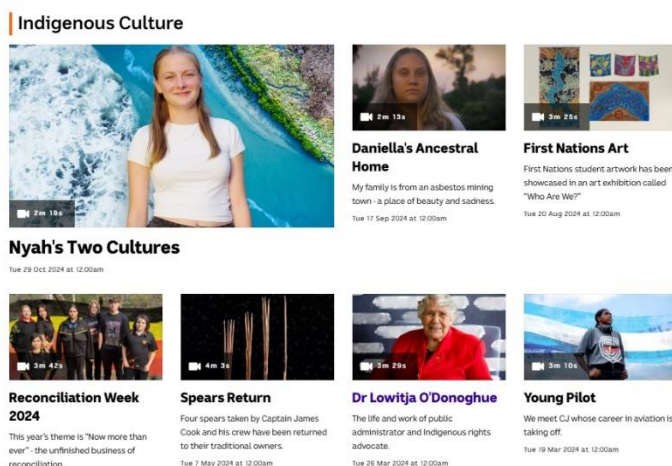
Write stories about people doing inspirational things in your community. Create a podcast using [PodOmatic](#), [Buzzsprout](#) to share your stories with the school community.

## Activity: BTN Stories

Visit BTN's collection of stories which focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' culture and issues.

After watching any one of the BTN videos ask students to respond to the discussion questions (to find the discussion questions and teacher resources go to the related BTN Classroom Episode and download the Episode Package).

[Collection of BTN stories about Indigenous culture](#)



## Activity: International Women's Day

The theme for International Women's Day 2025 is "For ALL Women and Girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment."

How does your school honour and celebrate the achievements of women and girls?

March Forward for Gender Equality in Your School this International Women's Day – [How your school can get involved](#).



March Forward for Gender Equality in Your School this International Women's Day  
(Source: [UN Women Australia](#))

## Useful Websites

- [Pearl Mary Gibbs Aboriginal rights activist \(1901–1983\)](#) – NSW Government (Blue Plaques program)
- [Indigenous Australians' right to vote](#) – National Museum Australia
- ['Our vote = our future' \(Digital Classroom\)](#) – National Museum Australia
- [The 1938 Day of Mourning](#) – AIATSIS