

Teacher Resource

Aboriginal Flag Debate

Focus Questions

1. Who has been threatened with legal action over their use of the Aboriginal flag?
2. What year did Harold Thomas design the Aboriginal flag?
3. What do the colours of the Aboriginal flag represent?
4. What year did the government recognise the Aboriginal flag as an official flag of Australia?
5. The Aboriginal flag is copyrighted. What does this mean?
6. Who owns the design of the Aboriginal flag?
7. The Torres Strait Islander Flag is also copyrighted but it's not owned by one person. Who owns it?
8. Why did the Spark Health Group start an online petition?
9. What is a solution to the issue?
10. Are flags important? Why or why not?

Activity

Class discussion

Before watching the BTN *Aboriginal Flag Debate* story, hold a class discussion asking the following questions:

- What do you know about the Aboriginal flag?
- What do you know about the term 'copyright'? When have you heard the word used?



After watching the BTN story, discuss with students what they learnt about the Aboriginal flag and copyright. Here are some questions to help guide discussion:

- What are the flags of Australia?
- List some places you would see flags.
- Where can you see the Aboriginal flag in your community?
- Are flags important? Why or why not?
- What was surprising about this story?

Key Learning

Students will learn about the history and meaning of the Aboriginal flag and the copyright restrictions with it.

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.

History – Year 6

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

Define: What do I want to know?

Key questions to research

Students can choose one or more of the following questions or come up with their own:

- How and why do people use flags?
- What are the three colours on the Aboriginal flag and what is the meaning or symbolism of the colours? What does the round shape represent?
- What are the copyright restrictions on the Aboriginal flag?
- What is the history of the Aboriginal flag? (Who created it, why, when was it first flown?)
- What are some solutions to the Aboriginal flag copyright issue?

Further Investigations

- Survey friends and family about the meaning of the Aboriginal flag. What was surprising about the results?
- Should Australia have one national flag that represents all people? Develop an argument for or against the issue.

Locate: Where do I find the information?

What resources will help answer my questions? (Internet, people, resource centre, organisations, print). Discuss with students what a reliable source is.

Select: What information is important for the investigation?

Students may need support to sort through and select relevant information.

Organise: How do I make sense of the information?

Students can organise their research by creating main headings from their questions. Write each heading on a separate piece of paper. Record the information found for each question.

Present: How do we let others know about this information?

Each group needs to discuss then decide on the best way to present the information. Possibilities could include:

- A 'Did You Know' Facts sheet
- Infographic
- Oral presentation
- [Prezi](#) presentation
- Create an infographic using [Canva](#)

Evaluate: What have we learnt?

Each group reflects on what they have learnt about the Aboriginal flag during their investigation. Students will reflect on their learning and respond to the following.

- What I learned...
- What I found surprising...
- What I would do differently next time...

Activity

Learn more about the history of the Aboriginal flag. Watch the [BTN story](#) and answer the following questions:

1. Why did Vincent Lingiari lead a strike with 200 other Aboriginal people in 1966?
2. Who designed the Aboriginal flag?
3. What do the different colours in the Aboriginal flag represent?
4. In what year was the Aboriginal flag first flown?
5. Where was the Aboriginal flag first flown?
6. Why was it controversial that Cathy Freeman wore both the Australian and Aboriginal flags during her victory lap at the 1994 Commonwealth Games?
7. In what year were the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags made official?
8. What connection does the Aboriginal flag have to Anzac Hill in Alice Springs?



Activity

Create your own quiz

Students will create a quiz about the Aboriginal flag including questions about the history and meaning. Quizzes can be created to recap learning or test personal knowledge. There is also the option to connect with classrooms around the world and play kahoot in real time. [Kahoot!](#)



Useful Websites

ABC News – News licence owners of Aboriginal flag threaten football codes and clothing companies
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-06-11/new-licence-owners-of-aboriginal-flag-threaten-football-codes/11198002>

NAIDOC – The Australian Aboriginal Flag
<https://www.naidoc.org.au/about/indigenous-australian-flags>

BTN Aboriginal Flag History
<https://www.abc.net.au/btn/classroom/aboriginal-flag-history/10489214>

Australian Museum – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags
<https://australianmuseum.net.au/learn/cultures/atsi-collection/cultural-objects/indigenous-australia-flags/>