



Teacher Resource

Cathy Freeman- 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. Where was Cathy Freeman born? Find on a map.
2. What year did Cathy Freeman become the first Indigenous Commonwealth gold medallist?
3. Which Olympic Games did Cathy Freeman win the 400 m gold?
 - a. Atlanta 1996
 - b. Sydney 2000
 - c. Athens 2004
4. What flags did Cathy Freeman carry on her victory lap?
5. Why do you think Cathy Freeman is an important Australian?

Activity: Personal Response

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

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



EPISODE 6

12th March 2024

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.

Activity: Visual Literacy

In this activity students will examine, analyse and query a range of images featuring Cathy Freeman during the 2000 Olympic Games. Encourage students to provide detailed and thoughtful responses based on their analysis of the photos. Students will gain an understanding of the significance of Cathy Freeman's gold medal win as a symbol of national unity and reconciliation in Australia.

Students will choose one of the photographs below (alternatively, students can find an image themselves to analyse). Students will then respond to the following:

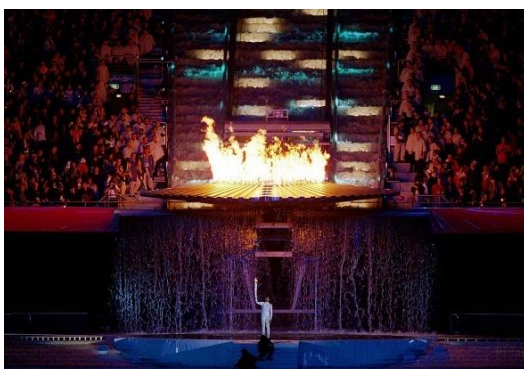
- What do you see in this image?
- What significant moment or event does the image relate to?
- When and where was the photo taken?
- What do you think is happening?
- If there are people in the image, who do you think they are?
- How do you think they might be feeling?
- How does the image make you feel?
- What question/s would you like to ask the people in the image?
- Create a caption for each image.



[Image Source](#) (IOC)



[Image source](#) (NMA)



[Image source](#) (NMA)



[Image source](#) (NMA)

Activity: Symbol of Reconciliation

Students will analyse how Cathy Freeman's victory became a symbol of hope, unity, and reconciliation for the nation. Choose one or more of the following activities to complete individually, in small groups or as a whole class.

- Discuss as a class, the symbolism of Cathy Freeman's win.
- Students will analyse the images (in the Visual Literacy activity above) and identify symbols that represent hope, unity, and reconciliation. For example, Cathy Freeman lighting the Olympic cauldron at the opening ceremony, carrying both flags for her victory lap, wearing a green and gold bodysuit, and red, yellow, and black shoes.
- Why was Cathy Freeman chosen to light the Olympic flame?
- What impact did Cathy Freeman have on Australian society?
- Can you think of other examples where sports have played a role in promoting unity and reconciliation? Explain using your own words.
- In 2000 the Olympic torch was carried by 13,400 torchbearers. After Olympic champion Herb Elliott carried the torch into the stadium, the last six torchbearers were famous Australian women Olympians. Cathy Freeman was the final torchbearer and had the honour of lighting the Olympic cauldron. Analyse the importance of the torchbearers at the Sydney Olympics.
- Students will create an artwork that symbolises unity and reconciliation inspired by Cathy Freeman's win.

Activity: Watch the Race

As a class watch Cathy Freeman as she wins the women's 400 metre race at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games.

Watch the Race

[Video](#) – without commentary

[Video](#) – with commentary (scroll down)

Class discussion

Use the following questions to start a class discussion.

- What do you see?
- What do you hear?
- What is happening in the video?
- How did the video make you feel?

Add your own commentary

Individually or in pairs, students will try and have a go at commentating Cathy Freeman's race using their own words. Students will write a script and then read it whilst watching the race. In this activity students will need to demonstrate good communication skills, knowledge of sports terminology, and the ability to engage and captivate an audience.



Olympics - Cathy Freeman Wins 400 m Gold
Sydney 2000 Olympics - [YouTube video](#) (IOC)

Activity: First Nations Sportswomen

In this activity students will learn more about significant First Nations sportswomen, their accomplishments, and their impact on sport in Australia. Students will choose one sportswoman they find inspiring and would like to learn more about. Students may want to explore the ABC's Fierce Girls, a podcast that tells the stories of some of Australia's most extraordinary women, including many significant sportswomen.

ABC Fierce Girls



[Nova Peris \(ABC\)](#)



[Faith Thomas \(ABC\)](#)



[Ash Barty \(ABC\)](#)



[Evonne Goolagong Cawley \(ABC\)](#)



[Cathy Freeman \(ABC\)](#)



[Allira Jennings \(ABC\)](#)

Further Investigation

- Create a timeline of important events in her life.
- What are some of the key events in her life? Write a summary for one key event, which answers the 5 W's – Who, What, Where, When and Why?
- How do primary sources (for example photos, letters, diaries, and official documents) help us understand what might have happened at a place in time? Find 1 or 2 primary sources that help you learn more about the person's life.
- Make a Did You Know for other students.
- Plan and create a portrait of the person. 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 have had and then explain your portrait and what each of the elements in the portrait mean.

Activity: International Women's Day

International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the economic, political, and social achievements of women past, present and future. How does your school honour and celebrate the achievements of women all around the world? Go to the [UN International Women's Day](#) website for more information.



(UN)

Activity: Choose a project

Students choose one of the following projects to work on and then present their work to a partner, small group, or the class.

Celebrate IWD

As a class celebrate the achievements of sports women in Australia. Go to the [UN International Women's Day](#) website for more information.

Letter writing

What significant Australian sportswoman inspires you? Write a letter thanking her for her achievements and the impact she has had on Australia and sport.

Athletics

Do you enjoy running? Practise running a 50 metre, 100 metre or 400 metre run. Organise a race with your classmates.

Quiz

Create a quiz about Cathy Freeman! Use a range of question types (true or false, multiple choice, fill in the blank, matching the pair). Test your classmates' knowledge.

Useful Websites

- [Cathy Freeman — the girl who ran fast](#) – ABC Fierce Girls
- [Cathy Freeman: Digital Classroom](#) – National Museum Australia
- [Fierce Girls: Cathy Freeman](#) (with animation) – ABC Education
- [Cathy Freeman](#) – AIATSIS
- [Cathy Freeman's Golden Run](#) – ABC News