



Teacher Resource

Nuclear Tests

Focus Questions

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

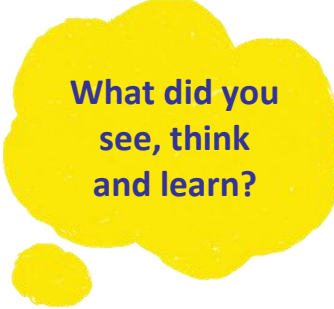
1. When was the first nuclear test?
2. Where in Australia were nuclear tests conducted in the 1950s and 1960s?
3. What is nuclear fallout and what impact can it have on people and the environment?
4. When did many countries sign an agreement to reduce the number of nuclear weapons in the world?
5. What did the US announce recently about nuclear testing?

Activity: Class Discussion

What do you see, think and learn?

After watching the BTN Nuclear Tests story, students will respond to the following questions:

- What did you SEE in this video?
- What do you THINK about what you saw in this video?
- What was SURPRISING about this story?
- Think of two QUESTIONS you have about this story.
- Why do you think BTN covered this story?



What did you see, think and learn?

Activity: Comprehension

After watching the Nuclear Tests story students can answer one or more of the following questions, for example:

- What are some keywords from the BTN story?
- What did you learn from the story? Write a summary.
- What is the purpose of this news story? To entertain, persuade, inform, explain or describe?

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KEY LEARNING

Students will explore the impact that nuclear tests have on people and the environment.

CURRICULUM

HASS – Year 4

Locate, collect and record information and data from a range of sources, including annotated timelines and maps.

Sustainable use and management of renewable and non-renewable resources, including the custodial responsibility First Nations Australians have for Country/Place.

HASS – Years 5/6

Develop questions to investigate people, events, developments, places and systems.

Propose actions or responses to issues or challenges and use criteria to assess the possible effects.

Locate, collect and organise information and data from primary and secondary sources in a range of formats.

History – Year 7

Develop historical questions about the past to inform historical inquiry.

Locate and identify primary and secondary sources to use in historical inquiry.

Identify the origin, content, context and purpose of primary and secondary sources.

Activity: Six Hat Thinking

As a class, use Edward De Bono's Six Hat Thinking to explore the issues raised in the BTN Nuclear Tests story. Make your own coloured hat cut outs and place on the floor. Students will take it in turns answering questions in relation to what they already know about the issue, what they have learned from the story and what they want to learn further about the topic. Ask students to respond to the following questions:

- How did the BTN Nuclear Tests story make you feel?
- What do you know about nuclear testing and nuclear weapons?
- What have you learnt from the story?
- Were there any positives from the story? If so, what were they?
- What are some of the negatives or challenges that you learnt from the story?
- Why is it important to learn about the issue?
- What questions were raised during this activity? Think of three questions you would like to ask about the story.
- What do you want to learn further about this topic?



Reflection

After this activity, ask students to reflect on what they have learnt. Students can include details about how their thinking on this issue has changed.

Activity: Visual literacy

In this activity students will examine the cartoon below to explore the issue of nuclear testing and its impact on the environment. Students will analyse the image and respond to the following:

- Who is the illustrator of the cartoon?
- When was the cartoon published?
- What is happening in the cartoon?
- What do you think the cartoon is trying to tell us? What is the message?
- How does the cartoon make you feel?
- What questions do you have about the cartoon?
- Is this cartoon a primary or secondary source? Explain your answer.



Cartoon by Geoff Pryor (Source: [National Museum Australia](https://www.nma.gov.au))

Activity: History of Nuclear Testing

Provide your students with the opportunity to act as historians to learn more about the history of nuclear testing. Students will investigate in more depth some questions they have about nuclear testing and the impact it has had on people and the environment.

Students can take notes as they watch the BTN Nuclear Tests story or download the transcript after watching the story to guide them through the activity. Students will use the following as a guide, or students can write their own inquiry question to investigate.

- Write a summary about nuclear testing in Australia, which answers the 5 W's – Who, What, Where, When and Why?
- Find one primary source and one secondary source which helps you understand more about the history of nuclear testing in Australia.
- Create a timeline highlighting key events in the history of nuclear testing. Include a title, date, and description for each event. Collect and reference primary and secondary sources (including photographs, newspapers, stories and maps). Consider using internet search engines, museums and library catalogues to find your information.
- How were Indigenous communities affected by nuclear testing in Australia? Include the following words in your summary: Maralinga, Emu Field, Montebello Islands, contamination, health effects, radiation, Royal Commission.
- What impact has nuclear testing had on the environment and people?

Share

- Share and compare your research with your classmates.
- Present your research in an interesting way.

Persuasive writing

Should countries be allowed to conduct nuclear testing? Develop an argument for or against the issue.

Useful Websites

- [Nuclear Testing \(2024\)](#) – BTN
- [Trump wants to resume US nuclear weapons testing. This is what it could look like](#) – ABC News
- [Maralinga History](#) – BTN
- [Hiroshima Anniversary](#) – BTN
- [Maralinga](#) – National Museum Australia