



Teacher Resource

# Indigenous Art

## 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. Discuss the BTN Indigenous Art story as a class.
2. What type of art did the artists featured in the story make?  
Name the medium/s they used.
3. What are ochres and how are they used in First Nations art?
4. What type of art was Albert Namatjira famous for?
  - a. Dot art
  - b. Rock art
  - c. Watercolour painting
5. Name three facts you learnt watching the BTN story.

## Activity: See, think and wonder

After watching the BTN Indigenous Art story, students will respond to the following questions:

- What did you SEE in this video?
- What did you LEARN from this story?
- What was SURPRISING about this story?
- What QUESTIONS do you have about this story?



## Activity: Class Discussion

Discuss the BTN story as a class. Ask students to record what they know about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art. What questions do they have? In small groups, ask students to brainstorm responses to the following questions:

- How would you describe the art in the BTN Indigenous Art story? Describe the style, technique and colours.
- Complete this sentence. Something that really caught my eye was....
- What did you like about the art?
- What questions do you have about the artwork?

### EPISODE 23

20th August 2024

#### KEY LEARNING

Students will explore and analyse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and create their own artwork inspired by their family.

#### CURRICULUM

##### Visual Arts – Years 5 & 6

Explore ideas and practices used by artists, including practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, to represent different views, beliefs and opinions.

Develop and apply techniques and processes when making their artworks.

##### Visual Arts – Years 7 & 8

Experiment with visual arts conventions and techniques, including exploration of techniques used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, to represent a theme, concept or idea in their artwork.

Analyse how artists use visual conventions in artworks.

## Activity: Exploring Indigenous Art

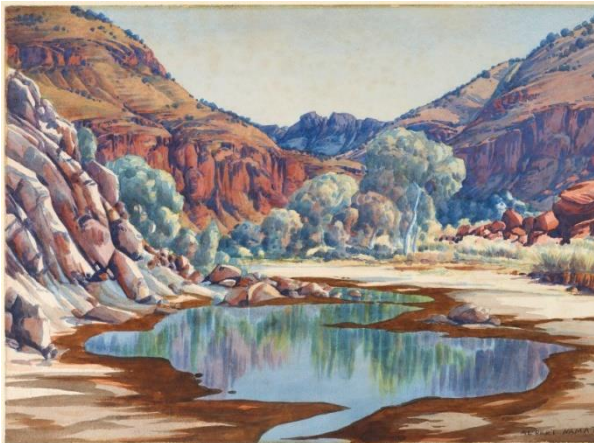
Students will explore and analyse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art to understand its cultural significance and techniques. They will then create their own artwork inspired by their family heritage, reflecting on how their family story can be expressed visually.

### Class Discussion

Begin with an introduction to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Highlight the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and the role of art in storytelling and cultural expression.

### Art Analysis

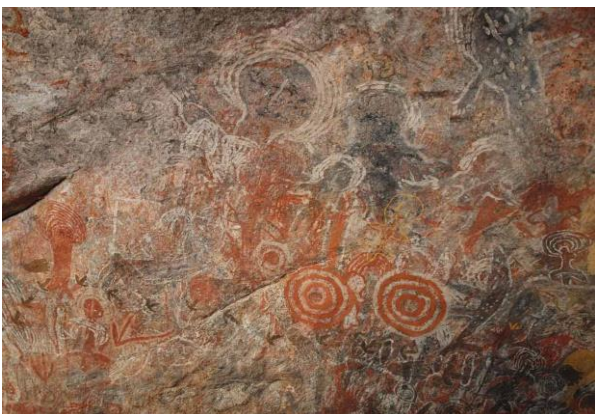
Provide students with a range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artworks, including dot paintings, bark paintings, carvings, and weavings. Explain common themes, symbols, and techniques used in these artworks. Below are some examples of artworks created by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists. Students will analyse one or more artworks and then respond to the questions below.



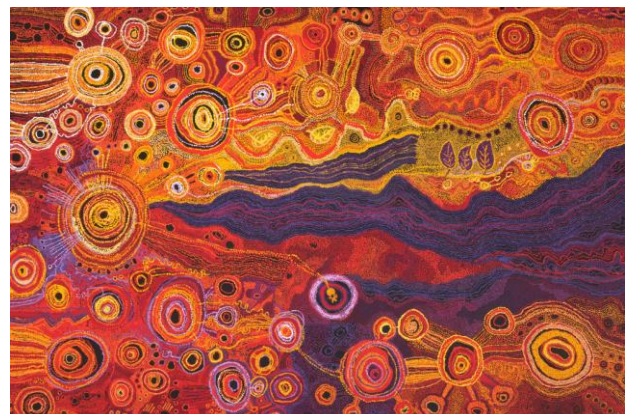
Albert Namatjira (Source: [Art Gallery NSW](#))



Pondi (Murray River cod), Yvonne Koolmatrie (Source: [Art Gallery of South Australia](#))



First Rock Art (Source: [National Museum Australia](#))



Tjungkara Ken, Sandra Ken, Yaritji Young, Freda Brady, Maringka Tunkin, Pitjantjatjara people, (Source: [NGA](#))

Students will analyse an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork and respond to one or more of the questions below.

- Record as much information as you can about the artwork in 15 minutes. Record everything you see. The longer you look the more you will see. Write 5 dot points about your first reactions of the artwork. Who or what do you think the artwork is about? What does it remind you of? What does it make you think about?
- Who created the artwork?
- What is the name of the artwork?
- What colours have been used in the artwork? How do the colours contribute to the artwork's meaning?
- What symbols or patterns do you notice? What might these symbols represent?
- How was the artwork made? Is it a painting, print, sculpture or another type of artwork? What materials were used to make it? What techniques does the artist use?
- What do these artworks tell us about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and their connection with the land?
- What questions do you have about the artwork?

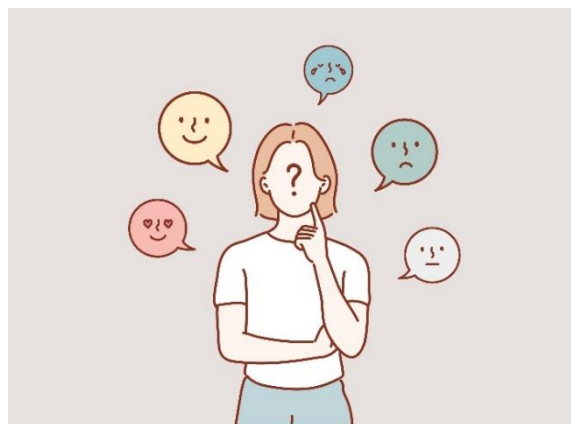
### Create an Artwork

Students will create their own artwork inspired by their family heritage, reflecting on how their family story can be expressed visually. Students will brainstorm ideas for their artwork including family symbols, significant events, or personal stories.

### Brainstorm

Students can respond to the following questions to help guide their brainstorming.

- Where were you born?
- What language/s do you speak?
- What is your favourite activity to do as a family?
- What do you celebrate?
- Do you have any special ceremonies that your family participates in?
- What are some symbols that represent these celebrations and ceremonies?
- What do you think is unique and special about your family?



### Create

Students will create an artwork based on their family. They will include symbols or styles that reflect their family's heritage or a personal story. They can use techniques learned from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art if they choose.

Below are some guidelines for students as they create their artwork.

- Use colours that you feel reflect you and your family.
- What style will you use to create your artwork?
- What symbols might reflect your culture?

### Experimenting with Colour

Experiment with paints and mixing colours to find a colour or a palette of colours that represents you and your family.

- What is your favourite colour? Why?
- Think about how this colour makes you feel or if it reminds you of a personal experience.
- What does the colour represent?

You can create different tints of the colour by adding varying amounts of white paint to make it lighter. You can create different shades of the colour by adding varying amounts of black paint to make it darker. Experiment with different brushstrokes and different amounts of paint on your brush.

### Themes and Symbols

Think about the things that you love and the things that are precious to you and your family. How can you represent these stories in your artwork, through symbols?

It could be your pets, family celebrations, or a personal story about an event that you experienced with your family.

What symbols can you use in your art to represent these things?

Students will write an artist's statement to go with their artwork, explaining the symbols they've used and the story they have told through their art.

### Exhibition

Curate a class exhibition of your students' artworks and choose a title for the exhibition. Invite students from other classes at your school to attend your exhibition. Consider holding your exhibition at your local library or local council.

## Activity: Visit an Art Gallery

Plan a trip to your local art gallery to explore its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art collection. Look for prints, paintings, and sculpture. Alternatively, if you are unable to physically visit an art gallery, visit an online art gallery. For example, visit the [National Gallery of Australia](#) to explore a range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art. Students can work individually or in small groups, using the following as a guide.

### Step 1: Plan your visit

As a class, plan a trip to your local art gallery to explore its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art collection. You will need to think about the following:

- What do you already know about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art?
- What do you want to learn? Write 5 questions that you would like to investigate.
- How will you get there and how long will you need to visit the exhibition?
- Can you meet a tour guide or education guide to show you around?
- What will you need to take with you?

## Step 2: Explore the art gallery

When you arrive at the art gallery, visit the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art collection. Spend time visiting each artwork. Choose one of the artworks (painting, print, sculpture) that you will focus on for this project.

Write down as much information as you can about the artwork in 15 minutes. Record everything you see in detail. The longer you look the more you will see. Consider looking at it from different angles, up close and far away.

- Is it a painting, print, sculpture or another type of artwork?
- What materials were used to make it?
- Describe what it looks like, including colours, shapes and patterns.
- How does the artwork make you feel?

Draw a picture of the artwork including as much detail as possible.

## Step 3: Back at school

When you get back to school you will write a short description explaining more about the artwork you focused on.

Reflect on the artwork and use the internet to learn more about the artist. Respond to the following.

- What attracted you to the artwork?
- Did you enjoy looking at the artwork? Why?
- What were your first impressions of the artwork?
- How would you describe the artwork to someone who has never seen it before?
- Is it contemporary or traditional?
- If you could interview the artist, what questions would you ask them about the artwork? If the artist is alive, find out if you can contact them for an interview.
- What is the 'story' behind this artwork?
- Where is the artist from?
- Interesting facts

## Useful Websites

- [Who Are We?](#) – Adelaide Festival Centre
- [First Rock Art](#) – National Museum Australia
- [Indigenous Art](#) – BTN