

SAY AUSTRALIAN
SOUTH SEA ISLANDERS
OUR NAME

Visual Arts | Years 9–10

Teacher Resource



Acknowledgement of Country

Queensland Museum acknowledges the First Peoples — the Traditional Custodians of the lands, waters and sky where we live and work. We honour their unbroken connection to Country, culture, and community. We pay respect to Elders past, present and future. We recognise our shared history and commit to embedding First Nations voices in Queensland's continuing story.



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Say Our Name

Why is this exhibition called *Say Our Name*?

Calling a person or group of people by their correct name shows you recognise and respect them. It can also be a way to honour or remember someone — think about when you or your team win an award, and your name is read aloud at assembly!

The opening of *Say Our Name* marks 30 years since the Australian Commonwealth Government recognised Australian South Sea Islander (ASSI) peoples as a disadvantaged group with their own history, culture and identity. Six years later, the Queensland Government formally recognised the contributions and achievements of ASSIs in a [Recognition Statement](#). As a result, a whole generation has grown up being able to say with confidence who they are and where they come from.

But do *you* know who Australian South Sea Islanders are?

ASSIs are descendants of the South Sea Islanders who, between 1863 and 1904, were kidnapped or recruited to work cheaply, mostly on Queensland's cotton and sugar plantations. They also contributed to Australia's farming, maritime, pearling and railway industries, as well as working as house servants and child carers. 62,000 men, women and children were brought from over 80 Melanesian islands, including Fiji, New Caledonia, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The ASSI community has played a significant role in shaping Australia's cultural diversity and history, and in establishing the stability of Queensland's economy.

This exhibition amplifies and celebrates ASSI community voices, experiences and cultural expression.

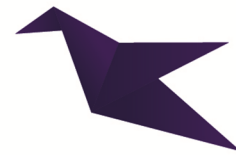
Today, we *say their name* — Australian South Sea Islanders — to show we respect and value this distinct community of people.

Making and responding with cultural sensitivity

As artists, we make and respond to art with curiosity, creativity and respect. Being culturally sensitive means understanding that there are differences and similarities between cultures or cultural identities, and that these comparisons are of equal value. No cultural identity has looks, behaviours, attitudes or beliefs that are superior to another.

Australia's historical context and identity as a nation rich with diverse cultural backgrounds continues to shape and impact our society.

As you engage with objects, photographs, documentation, artworks and research from *Say Our Name*, remember to ask questions, consider how it applies to your own identity formation, and respect the cultural identities represented in the exhibition.



Visiting Queensland Museum Kurilpa

Important information

[Say Our Name](#) opens Saturday 24 August 2024 and runs until Sunday 13 July 2025. The exhibition is located at Queensland Museum Kurilpa (QMK) on Level 2. You can download a [site map here](#).

For information about school visits, including getting here, timing your visit, supervision and group size, cost and invoicing and facilities and services, [visit our website](#). For convenience, this page also includes links to download a risk assessment and certificate of currency, as well as order lunch packs.

For groups of 10+ students or children, please use this [school booking form](#).

Learning resources

To enrich this experience, Queensland Museum [learning resources](#) may be accessed. Creating a free account means you can save, sort, manage and share your favourite resources (including audio and video, objects, events, fact sheets, images, learning resources and loan kits).

[QM Loans](#) is Queensland Museum's object library that suits Queensland schools and early years. The QM Loans collection features kits and sets of museum objects to support the Australian curriculum, early learning and community engagement. We have 24 locations across Queensland to collect and return your education loans kits, including Queensland Museum Rail Workshops (Ipswich), Queensland Museum Cobb+Co (Toowoomba) and Queensland Museum Tropics (Townsville).

Other learning opportunities

SparkLab

Include a visit to QMK's *SparkLab* while you're here! *SparkLab* is an interactive science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) space, ideal for 6 to 13 year olds. Exhibits and programs link to Australian Curriculum in the learning areas of Science, Technologies and Mathematics. [Click here](#) for further information and to book your visit.

Future Makers

Future Makers is an innovative partnership between Queensland Museum and Shell's QGC business aiming to increase students' uptake of and performance in STEM-related subjects and careers. It also provides curriculum-aligned learning resources and strategies to inspire teachers and increase confidence delivering STEM activities in the classroom. Find out about workshops, online courses, events and resources [here](#).



Curriculum links

This resource is aligned with [Australian Curriculum](#) Visual Arts, Years 9–10.

Content descriptions

Visual Arts, Years 9–10	
AC9AVA10E01	investigate the ways that artists across cultures, times, places and/or other contexts develop personal expression in their visual arts practice to represent, communicate and/or challenge ideas, perspectives and/or meaning
AC9AVA10D01	experiment with visual conventions, visual arts processes and materials to refine skills and develop personal expression
AC9AVA10D02	reflect on the way they and other visual artists respond to influences to inspire, develop and resolve choices they make in their own visual arts practice
AC9AVA10C01	evaluate critical feedback when planning, developing and refining their visual arts practice
AC9AVA10C02	select and manipulate visual conventions, visual arts processes and/or materials to create artworks that reflect personal expression, and represent and/or challenge, ideas, perspectives and/or meaning
AC9AVA10P01	evaluate art exhibits to inform the curation and exhibition of their own and/or others' artworks and/or visual arts practice

General capabilities

Knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions:

- critical and creative thinking
- digital literacy
- ethical understanding
- intercultural understanding
- literacy
- personal and social capability



Learning objectives

Students are learning:

- to manipulate media, techniques and processes to represent their ideas
- how artists use visual conventions to explore who they are and where they fit, and as a way of storytelling
- how to consider others' viewpoints on records of history
- how artists create compositions
- how artists display artworks to emphasise meaning.

Success criteria

Students will be successful when they can:

- demonstrate purposeful use of media to express characteristics of their personal history
- discuss the purpose of visual conventions to communicate meaning and viewpoints, using appropriate language to label, categorise, describe and explain
- reflect on how they fit into their social and cultural environments
- apply visual conventions to create original compositions
- increase engagement with their artworks through innovative displays.



Teacher notes

Using this resource

- This resource includes learning activities designed in response to a school visit to [Say Our Name](#).
- Enrich student experience by incorporating key resources into teaching and learning.
- Learning activities are organised into four 1-hour lessons.
- Teachers should encourage students to remember at least one aspect of the exhibition for the learning activity.

Key resources

[Explore the objects](#) that represent Australian South Sea Islander culture held in collections across Queensland, particularly the Kastom objects in the [Queensland Museum Collection](#).

Queensland Museum holds over 700 objects in our Australian South Sea Islanders Kastom collection that tell the stories of movement of people from islands in the Pacific to Queensland and the personal objects they brought with them. Through the project we are exploring objects connecting South Sea Islander history and identity. We aim to develop an understanding of objects valued by the community that are held in public and private collections locally, interstate and internationally. As part of the project we aim to digitise as many Queensland Museum collection objects as we can to make them available online.

Key artists

- Jasmine Togo-Brisby
- Dylan Mooney
- Luther Cora

Materials

Each student will need:

- a HB pencil
- an eraser
- coloured pencils
- their sketchbook, visual diary or paper
- access to a device to record digital photographs or moving footage and editing software

Optional: media and tools for different artwork methods.



Learning activities

Lesson 1: Belonging

Inquiry question

- How do artists and curators represent identity and belonging?

Preparation

- Prepare a still image of the [Recognition Statement Scroll](#) collection item for students to view, or print copies for each table.

Introductory activity

- Go around the class, inviting each student to share a particular object, artwork, person (digital story or photograph), place or event from the *Say Our Name* exhibition. It could be something the student recalled for its shock value, visual appeal, intrigue, humour or otherwise, but the student should be able to explain why they remember it.
- As a class, brainstorm reasons why the curator may have included these objects, artworks, people, places and events in the exhibition to communicate Australian South Sea Islander (ASSI) identity.

Learning activities

- Read the following statement aloud and project/supply the [Recognition Statement Scroll](#) when needed, allowing students time to read it:

ASSIs are descendants of the South Sea Islanders who, between 1863 and 1904, were kidnapped or tricked into working hard labour.

62,000 men, women and children were brought from over 80 Melanesian islands, including Fiji, New Caledonia, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Some were even told they were invited aboard cruise ships but were taken to Australia instead. Most South Sea Islanders worked on Queensland's cotton and sugar plantations, but they also contributed to Australia's farming, maritime, pearling and railway industries, as well as working as house servants and child carers.

In 1901, the controversial 'White Australia Policy' was implemented, including a legislative measure called 'The Pacific Islander Labourers Act'. This Act ordered that all South Sea Islanders be deported to their home islands by 1906. Many were afraid of the rejection they would face if they returned home. Many more did not know where their original homeland was. There are stories of people being separated from family, deported to the wrong island and escaping into the bushland to avoid deportation.

Some South Sea Islanders were allowed to stay. Those who stayed continued to face great hardship, including restricted access to jobs and education and other racial discrimination.

It wasn't until 1994, after decades of lobbying, that the Australian Commonwealth Government declared ASSIs a distinct cultural group.



In 2000, the Queensland Government released a formal Recognition Statement. The statement includes a promise that ASSIs would 'have equality of opportunity to participate in and contribute to the economic, social, political, and cultural life of the state'.

- In small groups, students work together to answer the following questions:
 - Why do you think ASSIs wanted to be formally recognised as a distinct cultural group?
 - How do ASSIs benefit from other Australians 'saying their name'?
 - What might some challenges be for ASSIs trying to determine their cultural identity into the future?
- As a class, discuss answers, electing a member from each group to share group responses. Students capture class responses in their visual diary.
- Students write, speak or sign a short reflection, answering some of the following questions:
 - What objects, people, places or activities make me feel I belong and why? Were these things automatically mine from birth, or have I had to earn them?
 - What groups do I belong to? (this could include family, school, sporting, cultural, religious, ethnic or hobby groups, as well as geographical community groups)
 - In what ways do I celebrate my cultural identity? (consider family, religious, cultural and other community celebrations)
 - How would I describe myself to someone I'd never met? Would sort of information would I include/omit?
- As a class, give each student the opportunity to reflect and share their feelings about the object, artwork, person (digital story or photograph), place or event they discussed at the beginning of the lesson. Has their perspective changed after thinking more about belonging and identity?



Lesson 2: Keeping memories

Inquiry question

- How do artists document memories?

Introductory activity

- Students reflect on the previous lesson, discussing their responses to the questions about identity and belonging if comfortable. How would they feel if their stories were lost or lost in translation?

Learning activities

- Explain that all stories and histories are viewed through a lens, both by the storyteller (artist) and story listener/reader (audience). The curator of an exhibition will also apply their own lens when selecting items and organising the layout.
- Pose the question below and ask students to *Think-Pair-Share*.

What is Imelda Miller trying to communicate through her curation of *Say Our Name*?

 - *Think* — spend three minutes considering your own response to the question and write or draw this in your visual diary.
 - *Pair* — spend five minutes discussing your responses with your elbow partner and listening to their response. Copy down ideas your partner had that you did not.
 - *Share* — with your partner, decide which responses are most valid or important and raise your hand to share these with the class. As you listen to responses from the class, write down any more ideas you like.
- Pose the question below and ask students to *Think-Pair-Share* with a new elbow partner.

To what effect has Miller used the idea of memories? Give examples.
- Allow students time to consider a significant personal memory and record it in their visual diary using words and quick sketches. Their memory should be connected to the idea of belonging and/or identity and include at least one object, person, place or event.



Lesson 3 and 4: Video diary

Inquiry questions

- What memories are significant to me?
- How can I capture and keep memories?

Preparation

- Encourage students to bring any small items or objects relevant to their memory to school for use as *mise en scène*.
- Supply devices for students to take digital photographs or moving footage, as well as devices with editing software.

Introductory activity

- Students share their significant memory with an elbow partner. Invite students to share sketches or ideas with the whole class.

Learning activities

- As a class, discuss reasons for keeping memories. Discussion purposes could include:
 - ensure that violent or other devastating elements of history are not repeated
 - strengthen family or community
 - give people a sense of belonging within a group with shared memories
 - boost mood
- As a class, generate a list of ways that people keep memories. Write responses on the whiteboard. How do students in the class tend to record their memories?
- Explain that students will be creating a video diary to capture their significant memory. The video will go for a maximum of one minute, and for no more than 100 words. Students can make or bring in any relevant objects to include in their video as *mise en scène*, or to show or talk about. They can also include background music if it strengthens their communication of the memory. The videos will be uploaded or shared on a digital platform, so students should all adhere to the same conventions (e.g. landscape format, full HD resolution).
- Independently, students start designing their video diary, using storyboards, annotated sketches, scripts or similar in their visual diary.
- Once designs are completed, give each student the opportunity to share (show preliminary sketches, explain the memory represented and any *mise en scène* or added elements). Invite the class to engage in *TAG* peer feedback in small groups (feedback could also be given using colour-coordinated post-it notes or via digital/online comment).
 - *T* — tell your classmate something you like about their design
 - *A* — ask for clarity about something



- *G* — give a suggestion
- Depending on confidence and ability, students can work in small groups, independently or as a class to produce video diaries. Allow students time to record multiple takes but ensure that each student has the opportunity to produce a video they are happy with.
Note: recording each video diary in one take with minimal editing will expedite the process.
- As a class, come to a consensus on how best share their video diaries with family and friends. Consider the way that Miller invited engagement with the digital stories in *Say Our Name*. Display options include:
 - projecting the video diaries so that people viewing the display can move in front of the projection (the task could be extended to include audio or other sensory elements)
 - sharing them on a social media or shared class platform
 - creating one film product to play on a school display or during an event.
- Students write an artist statement (50–100 words) that
 - explains their intentions and inspiration
 - evaluates the success (strengths and limitations) of their video diary
 - evaluates its ability to communicate a significant memory and how the memory is connected to belonging and/or identity.



Endnotes

ⁱ Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) (2022). *Australian Curriculum, Visual Arts Version 9.0, 2022*, https://v9.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/learning-areas/visual-arts/year-9_year-10.

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