

TEACHER GUIDE
YEAR 6 HASS – HISTORY & ANALYSING

Examining sources relating to Australia's Federation and Constitution

Warning – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers and students are advised that this curriculum resource may contain images, voices or names of deceased people.

YEAR 6 HASS – HISTORY & ANALYSING

ACARA code: [ACHASSK134](#)

Examining sources relating to Australia's Federation and Constitution

ACARA code: [ACHASSI126](#)

Australian Curriculum Link

Humanities and Social Sciences/Year 6/Knowledge and Understanding/History/ACHASSK134

Humanities and Social Sciences/Year 6/Inquiry and Skills/Analysing/ACHASSI126

Australian Curriculum Content Description

ACHASSK134 Key figures, events and ideas that led to Australia's Federation and Constitution.

ACHASSI126 Examine primary sources and secondary sources to determine their origin and purpose.

Australian Curriculum Elaboration

ACHASSK134 Studying Australia's path to Federation through an examination of key people (for example, Henry Parkes, Edmund Barton, George Reid, John Quick) and events (for example, the Tenterfield Oration, the Corowa Conference, the referendums held in the colonies between 1898 and 1900).

ACHASSI126 Identifying and distinguishing fact and opinion in information and identifying stereotypes and over-generalisations (for example, over-generalisations about the role of women, the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, the work of politicians, the beliefs of religious groups).

Essential question

What do primary and secondary sources tell us about how the creation of the Constitution, and the Federation of Australia, impacted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, cultures and histories?

Australians Together Learning Framework

Tells Australia's narrative through the lens of 5 Key Ideas that inform teachers and students about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives.



The Wound

Injustice from the impact of colonisation

Students will recognise the pain and disadvantage many First Nations people experience, that started at colonisation and continues today.



Our History

A past that shapes our story as a nation

Students will critically engage with Australia's stories and understand the impact our history continues to have on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and all who call Australia home.



Why Me?

What's it got to do with me?

Students will explore why Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures are relevant to them today.



Our Cultures

Everyone has culture. Know about your culture and value the cultures of others

Students will learn more about their own culture and identity, and gain a better understanding of, and respect for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.



My Response

Steps we can take to build a brighter future

Students will gain an understanding that a brighter future is possible for all Australians, but to get there we each need to play our part.

Glossary

Terms that may need to be introduced to students prior to teaching the resource:

activist: a person who works to bring about change.

censuses: official government surveys that collect population data about every citizen. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), a government agency, collects data for the Australian Census every four years.

colonisation: the act of one country invading and taking over another.

colony: an area or a country that is separate from but under the rule of another country and is occupied by settlers from that ruling country.

Constitution: a document of the rules by which a nation is governed, and the rights the citizens are entitled to.

Constitutional recognition: the adding of a statement to the Australian Constitution that acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the First Peoples of Australia.

Elder: a leader or senior person in an Indigenous community; a custodian of language and cultural knowledges.

Federation: the joining together of separate states to establish one country.

First Nations people: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

primary source: objects or documents that are original, or first-hand accounts, that are created or written during the time being investigated.

referendum: a vote for all enrolled voters asking a question about whether the rules of the government should be changed.

rights: a rule by law of what a person is allowed to do, or allowed to have.

secondary source: documents of writing, or accounts about the past, that were created after the time being investigated.

stereotype: an over-simplified and fixed view of a particular person or thing.

Traditional Custodians: people who are the original inhabitants of Australia.

treaty: a formal agreement between countries or two groups of people (in this case the Australian Government and First Nations Peoples), usually over the use of land or the rules of trade.

Wurundjeri: an Aboriginal nation of the Woiwurrung language group, situated around the present location of Melbourne, Victoria.

Yorta Yorta: an Aboriginal nation of the Yorta Yorta language group, situated around the present location of Goulburn, north-eastern Victoria, and southern New South Wales.

	Teacher guidance	Ideas for student activities
<p>Introduction</p>	<p><i>Before beginning the study, it's important to ask students to access their prior knowledge about the topic with an introductory question or activity.</i></p> <p>This unit examines the impact of Australia's Federation and Constitution on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, cultures and history. Ideally, students will have prior knowledge of events leading up to Federation, and reasons for and against Federation.</p> <p>Students will use primary sources and secondary sources to explore the impact of Federation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. They'll explore resistance to colonisation, movements to amend the Constitution and how exclusion from the Australian Constitution led to events in the 20th and 21st centuries.</p> <p>With teacher guidance, students will explore how lack of recognition can affect the way laws and policies are made. Students will consider and examine contemporary movements for recognition and come up with their own thoughts on how constitutional recognition and representation could impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.</p> <p>Note that the Federation questions development activity allows students to work with the Civic and Citizenship Questioning and research skill ACHCS054.</p> <p>Useful resources</p> <p>To begin the backgrounding of this topic, ABC Behind The News have a brief overview of Federation in the video <i>Federation of Australia</i> (4:37): https://education.abc.net.au/home#!/media/1957410/federation-of-australia</p> <p>Parliamentary Education Office (PEO)'s resource, <i>The federation of Australia</i>, can be used to explore the reasons for Federation in more detail. There is a notable exclusion of Indigenous perspectives on this site: https://peo.gov.au/understand-our-parliament/history-of-parliament/federation/the-federation-of-australia/</p>	<p>Federation questions development</p> <p>Watch the ABC Behind The News video <i>Federation of Australia</i> (4:37) as a class.</p> <p>Read through the Parliamentary Education Office webpage, 'The federation of Australia', either as a class or individually.</p> <p>In small groups, write ten questions that could be answered by watching and reading the resources seen so far. Use different question words to get people thinking – <i>who, what, when, where, why</i>.</p> <p>Swap questions with another group and attempt to answer the questions they wrote.</p> <p>Source analysis</p> <p>In pairs or small groups, take a closer look at the two primary sources on the PEO webpage from 1896 – <i>Combine Australia!</i> and <i>Don't be in such a hurry gentlemen!</i></p> <p>Consider fact, opinion, stereotype and over-generalisation, as well as message. Share your thinking as a class.</p> <p>Federation class discussion or debate</p> <p>Hold a class discussion or debate to explore reasons for and against the Federation of Australia.</p>
 <p>Our History</p>	<p><i>There are many stories that make up Australia's history. It's important to use resources that include perspectives and voices of First Nations people, such as those contained in this resource.</i></p> <p>Becoming a nation</p> <p>From 1788 until 1901, Australia was made up of a handful of colonies of the British Empire.</p> <p>In 1889, Sir Henry Parkes, Premier of New South Wales, gave a speech at Tenterfield, New South Wales, where he called for all colonies to come together as a nation. We now refer to this speech as The Tenterfield Oration.</p>	<p>Research presentation</p> <p>In small groups, use primary and secondary sources to research and prepare a two-minute presentation for the class on a key figure or event from Australia's path to Federation. Report on where you found your sources and how reliable you believe they are.</p>

	Teacher guidance	Ideas for student activities
	<p>In the years following his speech, referendums were held across Australia for voters to approve the draft of the Australian Constitution and for the colonies to join together to become a nation. Although the majority of voters said ‘yes’ to Federation and the Constitution, many people weren’t eligible to vote. In fact, the government at the time passed a law which denied all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people federal voting rights (AEC, 2019).</p> <p>Henry Parkes, Edmund Barton, George Reid and John Quick are considered the key ‘fathers’ of Australian Federation. They are all non-Indigenous men. Evidence of their attitudes towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people isn’t easy to find. What we do know is that the Constitution that was written at Federation excluded First Nations people and didn’t recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the land. Primary sources and secondary sources from prior to Federation and post-Federation reveal the impact this exclusion had on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</p> <p>The fight for rights and recognition of First Nations Peoples</p> <p>Since colonisation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have fought for rights to the land that they have lived on, and cared for, for many thousands of years. For example, Wurundjeri Elder, William Barak (c.1824 – 1903), fought the closure of his traditional lands at Coranderrk, Victoria, throughout the late 19th century (Aboriginal Victoria, 2019). Another example is William Cooper (c. 1860 – 1941), a Yorta Yorta man, who fought for Aboriginal rights from 1887 until his death in 1941 (Aboriginal Victoria, 2019).</p> <p>Since 1901, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have fought for constitutional recognition, and many continue to campaign for this today.</p> <p>Useful resources</p> <p>This Australian history timeline focuses on events through the lens of Indigenous recognition: https://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-07-06/indigenous-recognition-timeline-of-australian-history/6586176?nw=0</p> <p>This simple timeline, produced by the Australian Electoral Commission, has questions and answers and can support student understanding of Federation: https://education.aec.gov.au/teacher-resources/federation/files/aec-quiz-12-road-to-fed.pdf</p> <p>This article on the history of voting rights for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people gives insight into Australian democracy, with a particular focus on South Australia: https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-05-30/south-aust-history-of-aboriginal-australians-voting-rights/8572140</p>	<p>Timeline creation activity</p> <p>Create a timeline of the key events for and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people leading up to Federation. Where were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people being recognised, valued and acknowledged for their contribution? (Think – soldiers in war? Sportspeople? Activists? Cultural leaders? Men allowed to vote in South Australia?)</p> <p>(This activity is designed to prompt students into understanding the many rich and varied roles and stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at the time, countering the one-dimensional stereotyped view often presented.)</p> <p>Primary source study</p> <p>Explore a selection of primary source material including photographs and newspaper cartoons from the late 19th century and early 20th century.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people depicted? • What evidence does this provide regarding attitudes towards First Nations people during Federation? • Are the attitudes presented based on fact or opinion? • What stereotypes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people exists in this time period? <p>Argument text production</p> <p><i>Should William Cooper be considered a founding father of Australia?</i></p> <p>Research William Cooper, a Yorta Yorta man and leading Aboriginal activist, and write a persuasive text to answer the above question. Critically analyse your sources to determine which are fact or opinion.</p>



The Wound

Teacher guidance

The story of our nation's past is hard to face but it's important; it's left a wound that can be seen in the inequality between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous Australians. Help students understand how this wound continues to have an impact today.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people excluded from the Constitution

Prior to colonisation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples had rich societies with trade, law and culture – all forms of democratic organisation (Lucashenko, 2015). Despite this, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were a notable exclusion during the referendums leading up to Federation and the writing of the Constitution.

From 1901 until 1967, the Constitution excluded First Nations people in two ways:

1. Section 51 (XXVI) explicitly excluded the Commonwealth Government from making laws about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This enabled the states and territories to continue destructive policies which included taking children from their families, and removing people from their lands, languages and cultures.
2. Section 127 excluded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from being counted in national censuses.

These two sections were amended in the 1967 Referendum. However, there's still no statement in the Constitution that recognises First Nations people as the **Traditional Custodians** of the land we now call Australia. Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people report that this historical exclusion and the continuing lack of recognition in the Australian Constitution is painful and continues to have an impact today.

The Uluru Statement

The fight for constitutional recognition is ongoing. In 2017, 250 Indigenous leaders from across the country came together to send a message to parliament to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the Constitution. They did this by producing the Uluru Statement from the Heart. This statement followed years of First Nations leaders campaigning for change. The call for constitutional recognition in the Uluru Statement was delivered to the government on May 26 2017. It was rejected five months later by the Government of Australia under Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull.

Useful resources

This article, *The first Australian democracy* is useful for teacher understanding and gives insight into Indigenous perspectives on democracy including exclusion from the Australian Constitution: <https://meanjin.com.au/essays/the-first-australian-democracy/>

This is the Turnbull Government's response to the Uluru Statement from the Heart. This is a great primary resource to develop understanding of governmental positions to constitutional recognition: <https://www.malcolmturnbull.com.au/media/response-to-referendum-councils-report-on-constitutional-recognition>

This is a useful website for photographs: <https://federation.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/slides/slideshow/ss6.htm>

This National Museum of Australia webpage has a detailed timeline of events throughout Australian history: <https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/explore-defining-moments?from=0>

Ideas for student activities

Class discussion

Discuss Section 51 (XXVI) and Section 127 of the Australian Constitution and what impacts these sections might have had on First Nations people. It may be useful to include relevant state laws of the time regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Behind The News, Constitutional Recognition video

As a class watch the Behind The News segment Constitutional recognition. Discuss the following inquiry questions:

- What are some of the changes people want to make to the Constitution?
- What questions do you have after watching this story?

	Teacher guidance	Ideas for student activities
 <p>Why Me?</p>	<p>This ABC Behind The News, <i>Constitutional recognition</i> video (3:54) is an excellent secondary resource to build students' understanding of the topic: https://www.abc.net.au/btn/classroom/constitutional-recognition/11370486</p> <p><i>Help students understand that because they call Australia home this relates to them. Explore what's happening, or has happened, around your local area that's relevant to this topic.</i></p> <p>There are opportunities here for students to develop empathy and understanding for how the past affects today.</p> <p>Students can explore what it would mean to be excluded from documents and decisions that affect their lives. Imagine if school policies and rules ignored the voices of certain groups of students while making decisions that impacted their lives.</p> <p>By examining ways that recognition can happen locally, students are able to use the skills of historical empathy and inquiry to formulate new ideas.</p> <p>The power to decide</p> <p>Federation is an important moment in Australia's history – it's the moment that Australia became its own nation, separate from Britain. Many non-Indigenous Australians were given the opportunity to vote for or against Federation in referendums, or national votes. They were responsible for making a decision that would affect everyone in Australia, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</p> <p>Being excluded from voting for Federation and the Constitution is just one example of the exclusion Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have experienced throughout Australia's history. Other examples include not being counted in the census until after 1967 and not being given control over decisions, such as where to live and work.</p> <p>It's very important for all people to have a voice and to participate in making decisions that impact them. Thinking about the decisions that we all make in our own lives can help us understand this. Think about how your voice is included at home and school. Are you involved in decisions that affect your own life? Do you choose what activities you do outside of school or how you spend your time? What opportunities do you have to be involved in decision making at school?</p> <p>Students explore how a culture of exclusion continues to exist today.</p>	<p>A different school constitution role-play</p> <p>In small groups, imagine what effect ignoring a subpopulation of your school might have on how school is organised. For example, what would happen if all boys were excluded from decisions, playgrounds were built for everyone except those born in March, or the uniform shop didn't cater for the younger children in the school? Does this reflect a united school community?</p> <p>Present your short role-play to the class for wider reflection.</p>
 <p>Our Cultures</p>	<p><i>Help students connect with and acknowledge the importance of culture and examine the living cultures of First Nations Peoples, which have adapted and survived since colonisation.</i></p> <p>Cultural expressions of campaigning for change</p> <p>Campaigns for change, run by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have taken on many different forms throughout Australia's history. Examples of types of campaigns include protest, submissions to parliament, legal action and raising awareness on social media.</p>	<p>Campaign for recognition</p> <p>Explore how your local communities have sought to recognise the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In groups produce a strategy to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices, histories and cultures within your own school, classroom or communities.</p>

	Teacher guidance	Ideas for student activities
	<p>We can also see Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people fighting for change through different cultural expressions such as art or songs. Looking at these sources provides an excellent opportunity to understand Australia's history and current situation from the point of view of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. These cultural expressions provide an alternative narrative to what we see in mainstream media, which often perpetuates stereotypes and over-generations about First Nations people.</p> <p>Encourage students to think of cultural expressions they have seen that have been created by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Alternatively, explore one or both of the songs included here in the useful resources section.</p> <p>Useful resources</p> <p>This webpage provides lyrics, audio, translations and context for Yothu Yindi's song <i>Treaty</i>: https://aiatsis.gov.au/news-and-events/blog/treaty-yothu-yindi</p> <p>This website provides resources for the Advance Australia Fair 2.0 task and is useful for both teachers and students to build understanding: https://www.rap.org.au/</p> <p>This webpage provides background information about treaty: https://australianstogether.org.au/discover/the-wound/the-lack-of-treaty/</p>	<p>Media study – song</p> <p>Explore the lyrics and meaning behind Yothu Yindi's song Treaty. What's this song in response to?</p> <p>Using the internet and research skills, find out what's happened in your state or territory in relation to treaty.</p> <p>Do the sources you found present a fair and balanced, reliable overview?</p> <p>Advance Australia Fair 2.0 personal reflection</p> <p>The Recognition in Anthem project has re-written the Australian Anthem to be inclusive of all Australians. After listening to the song and reading the song sheet, reflect on what you've heard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think of the amended lyrics? • What lyrics stand out in the changes? • How would changing our national anthem make a difference - to identity? to reconciliation? to cultures and attitudes?
 <p>My Response</p>	<p><i>Help students critically and creatively process and demonstrate their learning on this topic by exploring meaningful ways to respond. Ask students to come up with their own ideas about what they can do.</i></p> <p>As a class discussion point, students will respond to the question about whether the Australian Constitution should be amended. To conclude the unit after reflection, students will demonstrate their learning through a personal journal task. What has stood out for them? How have they felt? What did they learn?</p> <p>What can you take away from this?</p> <p>There are many ways that you can identify fact and opinion, stereotypes and over-generalisations in the texts you consume including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysing sources by looking for the origin and underlying belief, and by challenging any stereotypes in the text. • Questioning whose voices you hear on issues and considering whether all groups involved have been fairly represented. • Learning more about Indigenous histories and cultures, and how historical events still impact many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people today. • Seeking out sources that are written or produced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. 	<p>Formal class debate</p> <p>Should the Australian Constitution be amended? Give your reasons.</p> <p>Journal task</p> <p>Reflect on what you've learnt throughout this unit, and your feelings on the fight for constitutional recognition. What has changed in your understandings?</p>

	Teacher guidance	Ideas for student activities
Other resources	<p>Life at the time The My Place website provides fictional accounts of children’s lives in each decade from prior to 1788 until now. There’s also a book of the same name that supports student understanding of life in each decade: http://myplace.edu.au/decades_timeline/1890/decade_landing_11.html</p> <p>Democracy The Museum of Australian Democracy has excellent resources on this period of Australian history: https://www.moadoph.gov.au/learning/</p> <p>The Australian Constitution Centre has produced a timeline of the development of ideas that were incorporated in the principals of the Australian Constitution: https://www.australianconstitutioncentre.org.au/timeline.html</p> <p>Constitutional recognition This fact sheet provides a great simple summary of the need and process of constitutional reform for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/constitutional-reform-fact-sheet-recognising-aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-people</p> <p>This resource, suitable for building teacher understanding, is about why constitutional reform continues to be a pressing issue for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia: https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/constitution/reform/constitutional_reform2011.pdf</p> <p>This video of the First Nations Regional Dialogue can provide students with current attitudes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to constitutional reform and is an excellent primary resource: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmRGj1zaTRo&feature=emb_rel_end</p>	
References	<p>Aboriginal Victoria. (2019, September 30). <i>William Barak: an ambassador to his people</i>. Retrieved from Aboriginal Victoria: https://www.aboriginalvictoria.vic.gov.au/william-barak</p> <p>Aboriginal Victoria. (2019, September 29). <i>William Cooper: A leader of leaders</i>. Retrieved from Aboriginal Victoria: https://www.aboriginalvictoria.vic.gov.au/william-cooper</p> <p>Lucashenko, M. (2015). <i>The First Australian Democracy</i>. Retrieved from Meanjin Quarterly: https://meanjin.com.au/essays/the-first-australian-democracy/</p> <p>Williamson, B. (2017, May 30). <i>South Australia’s history of voting rights for Aboriginal Australians</i>. Retrieved from ABC News: https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-05-30/south-aust-history-of-aboriginal-australians-voting-rights/8572140</p>	

For the Australian Curriculum content descriptions and elaborations, © Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) 2010 to present, unless otherwise indicated. The Australian Curriculum material was downloaded (accessed 28/01/20) and was not modified. The material is licensed under CC BY 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>). For further information, see our terms of use here <https://australianstogether.org.au/terms-and-conditions>.