Well into term 2 now, we have a busy couple of months ahead starting with National Sorry Day and leading up to what is popularly a week-long festival of celebration across Australia, NAIDOC week. There are so many aspects of Aboriginal histories and cultures, locally, regionally and nation-wide.

For a summary of key Learning Areas and Content Descriptions directly related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures within the Victorian Curriculum F-10, select the link for a copy of the VCAA’s: Learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.

We know that Aboriginal people are the best equipped and the most appropriate people to teach Indigenous knowledge. Therefore wherever possible you should seek to involve your local Koorie community in education programs that involve Indigenous perspectives. For some guidance about working with your local Koorie community to enrich your teaching program, see VAEAI’s Protocols for Koorie Education in Primary and Secondary Schools.

In this bulletin, you’ll find Victorian Curriculum links to Content Descriptions. Select the code and it will take you directly to the Victorian Curriculum site with additional elaborations.

Keep an eye out for the imminent release of a new online resource: the Coranderrk – Minutes of Evidence Teacher Resource Package, which will be available on FUSE (currently password protected), particularly designed for Years 9 and 10 History and Civics and Citizenship, and entirely applicable elsewhere across the curriculum. The Project itself focuses on the Coranderrk Reserve near Melbourne, the 1881 Parliamentary Inquiry into sub-standard conditions at Coranderrk, and more broadly missions and reserves in Victoria and across Australia.

May

National Sorry Day on the 26th May was born out of a key recommendation made by the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families in the Bringing them Home Report that was tabled in Federal Parliament on 26 May 1997.

National Sorry Day is a day of commemoration and remembrance for the Stolen Generations - the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children forcibly removed from their families, communities and cultures between the 1800s and the 1970s. The first Sorry Day was held in Sydney on 26 May 1998, and has been commemorated nationally on the 26th May each year since then, with thousands of Australians from all walks of life participating in memorial services, commemorative meetings,
survival celebrations and community gatherings, in honour of the Stolen Generations.

With sensitivity, honouring National Sorry Day and The Apology Anniversary builds understanding and respect between school and community, teachers and students.

Download the National Sorry Day Committee’s resource Learning about the Stolen Generation: the NSDC’s school resource for great classroom and whole-of-school activities.*

With students explore the deeply personal Stolen Generations Testimonies site featuring the stories of those taken from their homes and communities and information about the subsequent Inquiry.

Organise a school National Sorry Day event, such as an assembly, ceremony, concert, or oral history/story sessions.

The illustrated children’s book ‘Down the Hole’ by Edna Tantjingu Williams, tells a true and different story about a group of children in Cooper Pedy, and how when the government came to take the fair-skinned Aboriginal children away, they didn’t always find them …

For a paper attesting to the power of stories such as Down the Hole in “positioning child readers both to understand the dislocation and pain caused by government policies such as those which enforced the removal of the Stolen generations in Australia, and to appreciate the tactics of resistance by which children evaded or subverted institutional power”, read “They went Home: racialised spaces in contemporary picture books”. With secondary students, a number of plays and songs powerfully tell the stories of the Stolen Generations. Victorian singer Mati-mati singer Kutcha Edwards is both a member of the Generations and sings these stories. Archie Roach’s music also starting with They took the Children Away.

The acclaimed plays Stolen and Yibiyung include teacher notes also. Stolen by Jane Harrison tells of five young Aboriginal children forcibly removed from their parents, brought up in a repressive children’s home and trained for domestic service and other menial jobs. Segregated from society from their earliest years, not all of them successfully manage their lives when released into the outside world. Yibiyung is a Western Australian Noongar story of the play writer’s nan who was forcibly removed and story uncovered through archived government records.

* Developed by the National Sorry Day Committee in 2013, the Learning about the Stolen Generations resource provides accurate and concise background information about the Stolen Generations as well as a set of age-appropriate useful classroom exercises and ideas for commemorating both National Sorry Day and the Anniversary of the Apology. In previous years schools were encouraged to register with the NSDC, join their schools program and download Learning about the Stolen Generations from their website. However, since last year, this is no longer available online. Given the value of this resource to schools and the NSDC’s original aims, VAEAI has temporarily made this resource directly available on our resources site. To download a copy, click here.
On 27 May 1967, the Australian Government held a referendum.

This was a momentous turning point in Australian history. **More than 90 per cent** of Australian voters chose ‘Yes’ to count Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the census and give the Australian Government the power to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The purpose of the **1967 Referendum** was to make two changes to the Australian Constitution. These changes enabled the Commonwealth Government to:

(i) Make laws for all of the Australian people by amending s51 of the Constitution (previously people of the ‘Aboriginal race in any state’ were excluded) and;

(ii) Take account of Aboriginal people in determining the population of Australia by repealing s127 of the constitution (formerly, Indigenous peoples had been haphazardly included in the census but not counted for the purposes of Commonwealth funding grants to the states or territories)

From 1967, Aboriginal people were counted in the census and included in base figures for Commonwealth funding granted to the states and territories on a per capita basis.

Contrary to popular thinking the 1967 Referendum did NOT

- give Aboriginal peoples the right to vote
- give Aboriginal peoples citizenship rights
- give Aboriginal peoples the right to be counted in the census.

The Melbourne-based Bunjilaka Museum is featuring a 50th Anniversary exhibition on the 27th May. School groups and teachers should check it out.

Download the NSW-AECG teaching and learning activities about the 1967 Referendum or Reconciliation Australia [fact sheet](#) for background and activities.
With older students study the highly readable novel *Digger J. Jones* by prominent Gunditjmara author Richard Franklin. *Teaching notes* offer a range of class discussion points. Told in diary form, *Digger J. Jones* tells the story of Digger - an Aboriginal boy caught up in the events of the 1960s and the lead up the 1967 Referendum which officially counted Aboriginal people in Australia as citizens in the eyes of the Federal Government.

With upper primary school students set up a school **referendum** around issues relevant to your school or local community and involve students in electoral processes as a prelude to discussions about the 1967 Referendum.

**Watch** the short video with Faith Bandler, former Secretary of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders talking about why it was so important to have a referendum and discuss with students.

With your students **watch** Vote Yes for Aborigines (2007) directed by Yorta Yorta woman Frances Peters-Little about the 1967 referendum and the campaign for Aboriginal citizenship rights that led up to it. **Download** the teachers’ study guide to *Vote Yes for Aborigines* and design some lessons and activities suitable for your students.

Investigate the role of the Victorian **Aborigines Advancement League** in the ‘67 referendum.

With secondary students explore the excellent ‘67 **Referendum site Collaborating for Indigenous Rights** and **teaching resources** and incorporate suggested activities into your lessons.

With senior students download the **Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Constitution - school learning guide** (2014), work through the activities and discuss the case for recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our Constitution.

**Victorian Curriculum:**

**VCHHK094** The different experiences and perspectives of Australian democracy and citizenship, including the status and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, migrants, women, and children: History 5-6

**VCCCG021** Describe the process of constitutional change through a referendum: Civics and Citizenship 7-8

**VCHHK154** Significance of the following events in changing society: 1962 right to vote federally, 1967 Referendum, Reconciliation, Mabo decision, Bringing Them Home Report (the Stolen Generations), the Apology and the different perspectives of these events: History 9-10
National Reconciliation Week
27 March - 3 June

Did you know that **National Reconciliation Week** starts with the anniversary of the 1967 Referendum and ends on the anniversary of the Mabo victory, which led to the Australian Government recognising native title and acknowledging Indigenous Australians as the original occupants of Australia?

National Reconciliation Week celebrates the relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and all other Australians. Every year, the week is held between the same dates, 27 May to 3 June. The dates draw attention to significant historical events. The 27 May marks the day in 1967 when the referendum was passed for the Australian Government to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and to allow them to be recognised in the census. The 3rd of June marks the day in 1992 that led the Australian Government to recognise native title and acknowledge Indigenous Australians as the original occupants of Australia.

If your school does not already have one, consider developing a **Reconciliation Action Plan** and include activities linking National Sorry Day and reconciliation Action Week, so that colleagues and students see how these days are inter-connected. Include students, colleagues and your **LAECG** where possible in its development.

To find out more about Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs), and about planning events to celebrate National Reconciliation Week, contact [Reconciliation Australia](https://www.reconciliationaustralia.org.au).

With younger students read stories to encourage thinking about reconciliation such as the Broome-set **Two Mates** by Melanie Prewett (teaching resources available).

With local Koorie community members and colleagues organise a week of cultural activities such as performances, films, stories, workshops. Focus on the contribution that Aboriginal people have and continue to make to Australian society, and work with students to complete a variety of tasks that explore what reconciliation means for young Australians.

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**Victorian Curriculum:**

- **VCHHK076** Significance of days and weeks celebrated or commemorated in Australia and the importance of symbols and emblems, including Australia Day, ANZAC Day, Harmony Week, National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC week and National Sorry Day: **History 3-4**

- **VCCCC027** Examine how national identity can shape a sense of belonging and examine different perspectives about Australia’s national identity, including **Aboriginal** and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ perspectives: **Civics and Citizenship 7-8**

- **VCHHK154** Significance of the following events in changing society: 1962 right to vote federally, 1967 Referendum, Reconciliation, Mabo decision, Bringing Them Home Report (the Stolen Generations), the Apology and the different perspectives of these events: **History 9-10**
Mabo Day occurs annually on 3 June, commemoration of Eddie Koiki Mabo (c. 29 June 1936–21 January 1992), a Torres Strait Islander whose campaign for Indigenous land rights led to a landmark decision of the High Court of Australia that, on 3 June 1992, overturned the legal fiction of terra nullius which had characterised Australian law with regards to land and title since the voyage of James Cook in 1770.

The Mabo decision was a legal case held in 1992. It is short for Mabo and others v Queensland (No 2) (1992). The legal decision was made by the High Court on 3 June 1992. The High Court is the highest court in Australia’s judicial system. The Mabo decision was named after Eddie Mabo, the man who challenged the Australian legal system and fought for recognition of the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners of their land.

In 2010 a campaign was launched to make Mabo Day a national holiday. It has been suggested that Mabo Day is more significant to Australians than the Queen’s Birthday. In 2002, on the tenth anniversary of the High Court decision, Mabo’s widow, Bonita Mabo, called for a national public holiday on 3 June. On the eleventh anniversary, in 2003, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) launched a petition to make 3 June an Australian Public Holiday. Eddie Mabo Jnr, for the Mabo family, said:

We believe that a public holiday would be fitting to honour and recognise the contribution to the High Court decision of not only my father and his co-plaintiffs, James Rice, Father Dave Passi, Sam Passi and Celuia Salee, but also to acknowledge all Indigenous Australians who have empowered and inspired each other.

To date we have not had a public holiday that acknowledges Indigenous people and which recognises our contribution, achievements and survival in Australia.

A public holiday would be a celebration all Australians can share in with pride ... Mabo symbolises truth and justice and is a cornerstone of Reconciliation.”

MABO Classroom is interactive and relevant for studies in History and The Arts. This dynamic multiplatform site is a comprehensive resource for the teaching and learning about Eddie Koiki Mabo - his personal life, his exceptional attributes and the extraordinary achievement he determined for Indigenous Australians.
Primary students can watch the short video showing how Torres Strait Islander people celebrate the achievements of one of their greatest heroes, Eddie Koiki Mabo. Watch the BTN report about the life of Eddie Mabo and why he is such a significant Australian.

In 2010 a campaign was launched to make Mabo Day a national holiday in Australia. With your students develop a proposal for making Mabo Day a national public holiday, and consider sending it to your local member.

Explore the excellent ABC Mabo website learning resources, and Native Title timeline and discuss the importance of Native Title with your students.

Significant in Victoria is the rejection of the Yorta Yorta Native Title case in 1998 in the High Court - a decision upheld again in 2002. With senior secondary students discuss: to what extent does the concept of justice correlate with courts upholding laws; and to what extent is the law adequate in addressing issues of justice, under current Native Title legislation? Comprehensive information about the Yorta Yorta Struggle for Land Justice can be found on the On country Learning Course Wordpress site.

Victorian Curriculum:

VCHHK076 Significance of days and weeks celebrated or commemorated in Australia and the importance of symbols and emblems, including Australia Day, ANZAC Day, Harmony Week, National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC week and National Sorry Day: History 3-4

VCHHK154 Significance of the following events in changing society: 1962 right to vote federally, 1967 Referendum, Reconciliation, Mabo decision, Bringing Them Home Report (the Stolen Generations), the Apology and the different perspectives of these events: History 9-10

VCCCL023 Compare how laws are made in Australia, including through parliaments (statutory law) and courts (common law), and explain different types of laws, including executive law (delegated law), criminal law, civil law and the place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customary law; Civics and Citizenship 7-8

VCHHK155 Effects of methods used by civil rights activists to achieve change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the role of one individual or group in the struggle: History 9-10

**World Environment Day** on June 5 is celebrated every year to raise global awareness to take positive environmental action to protect nature and the planet Earth.

Aboriginal Australians have managed their country for tens of thousands of years. An **Indigenous Protected Area** is an area of Indigenous-owned land or sea where traditional owners have entered into an agreement with the Australian Government to promote biodiversity and cultural resource conservation. Indigenous Protected Areas make a significant contribution to Australian biodiversity conservation - making up over a third of Australia’s National Reserve System.

Visit or learn about Victorian Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA) in Victoria, such as Kurtonitj or Lake Condah in the South-west of Victoria.
Watch the [video](#) with Gunditjmara Elder Ken Saunders about Museum Victoria’s Bush Blitz program, working with the Gunditjmara Traditional Owners to survey biodiversity in Indigenous Protected Areas and investigate the program and some of the flora and fauna surveyed. Where else is bush Blitz Working?

Download the Bush Blitz [teaching resource](#) and work with local community members and Koorie educators to include some of the activities, such as inviting local Koorie Community members to talk to your students and tell them what they know about the movement and interactions among animals in the local area.

Is there a ‘Bush Tucker’ expert in your region? Learning about [bush tucker](#) is a great introduction to Australian plant species.

Teachers might want to investigate the pilot educational program- [bush blitz teachlive](#).

Did you know that the Gunditjmara in the South West of Victoria established intricate kuuyang (kooyang) or eel trapping and farming systems, and developed smoking techniques to preserve and trade their harvest - possibly one of the first cultures in the world to do so?

Woven eel trap

Victorian Curriculum:

VCGGK083 Similarities and differences in individuals’ and groups’ feelings and perceptions about places, and how they influence views about the protection of these places: Geography 3-4

VCGGK080 The many Countries/Places of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples throughout Australia, and the custodial responsibility they have for Country/Place, and how this influences views about sustainability: Geography 3-4

VCHHK078 The diversity and longevity of Australia’s first peoples and the significant ways Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are connected to Country and Place (land, sea, waterways and skies) and the effects on their daily lives: History 3-4

VCDTS033 Investigate how people in design and technologies occupations address competing considerations, including sustainability, in the design of solutions for current and future use: Design and Technology 5-6

VCGGK094 Influence of people, including the influence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, on the environmental characteristics of Australian places: Geography 5-6

VCGGK120 The spiritual, cultural and aesthetic value of landscapes and landforms for people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, that influence the significance of places, and ways of protecting significant landscapes Geography 7-8

VCHPEP131 Plan and implement strategies for connecting to natural and built environments to promote the health and wellbeing of their communities: Health and Physical education 7-8

VCGGK148 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ approaches to custodial responsibility and environmental management in different regions of Australia: Geography 9-10
Batman’s Treaty was signed on the 6th June in 1835 by a group of 8 Kulin Elders - including Wurundjeri Ngarungaetas (most senior leaders) Bebejan (Babajen) and three brothers with the same name, Jika Jika (Jaga Jaga) or Billibellary – and John Batman, an Australian born grazier, businessman and explorer, for the purchase of land around Port Phillip, near the present site of the city of Melbourne.

John Batman believed he was purchasing 600,000 acres, and paid 40 pairs of blankets, 42 tomahawks, 130 knives, 62 pairs of scissors, 40 looking glasses, 250 handkerchiefs, 18 shirts, 4 flannel jackets, 4 suits of clothes and 150 lb. of flour.

Batman’s Treaty is significant, as it was the first and only documented time when Europeans negotiated their presence and occupation of Aboriginal lands directly with the traditional owners, in accordance with English Common Law. However the treaty was declared void by the Governor of New South Wales, Richard Bourke on the basis that the Kulin people did not have a right to deal with the land, which ‘belonged’ to the Crown.

With students explore the National Museum Australia’s educational resources focused on Batman’s treaty.

Visit State Library Victoria’s teachers page which examines, through primary source analysis and stimulating discussion questions, some of the problems historians have with John Batman’s ‘treaty’.

View a graphic of Batman's Treaty including a transcript of the Batman Land Deed.

After researching Batman’s Treaty, discuss mutual (mis) understandings, alternate world views and the terms of this original transaction.

With your students learn as much as you can about the Kulin Nations.

For a great description of the Kulin including the signing of the treaty and daily life in days gone by, purchase copies of or borrow First People: The Eastern Kulin of Melbourne, Port Phillip & Central Victoria (Presland G. MV)

Tanderrum is a traditional ceremony of the Kulin Nations. It is a welcoming festival of song, dance, trading and cultural exchange. In Melbourne annually, members of the Kulin Nations now gather to hold a Tanderrum which launches the Melbourne Festival. Download the Tanderrum Education Resource for information about the Kulin Nations and Tanderrum and consider attending this incredible event later in October (date TBC).
Coranderrk Reserve established

On the 30th June 1836, the Victorian Government Gazette reported that 2,300 acres of land around Badger’s Creek in what is now Healesville, had been temporarily reserved “for the use of Aborigines (in lieu of the land at Watt’s Creek) by Order of the 22nd June 1863”, following a deputation to Queen Victoria during her visit in the same year, by 15 Wurundjeri (Woiwurrung), Boon Wurrung and Taungurung people.

Visit the Minutes of Evidence website and learn more about Coranderrk and its significance to Victorian Koories. Keep an eye out for the release of the Teacher Resource Package on FUSE. If able, visit Coranderrk in Healesville.

Explore the excellent Mission Voices website and teacher resources around the Coranderrk reserve. This site is dedicated to all the Aboriginal missions and reserves in Victoria, once used to control the movements and activities of Victorian Koories.

Purchase or borrow the excellent Coranderrk: We Will Show the Country (2013) about Coranderrk and the 1881 Parliamentary Enquiry.

Listen to the 2013 ABC Radio interview podcast Leave Us Here: 150 years of Coranderrk with senior descendants of Coranderrk Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin, Murrundindi, Aunty Carolyn Briggs, Uncle Wayne Atkinson and others.

There are many heroes surrounding Coranderrk and many stories of success, resilience, survival and injustice. With your students explore the lives of Wurundjeri, Taungurung and Dja Dja Wurrung heroes: William Barak, John Green, Thomas Bamfield, Robert Wandoon, Thomas Dunolly and Caroline Morgan and their involvement in the Coranderrk Parliamentary Inquiry of 1888.
Coranderrk petition - Activist William Barak and others sent this petition on behalf of the Aboriginal people of Coranderrk to the Victorian Government in 1886, see: https://museumvictoria.com.au/melbournemuseum/whatson/current

For more Koorie Perspectives, see the VAEAI Koorie Education Calendar.

Produced by the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI), May 2017.

Any enquiries, feedback and suggestions are welcomed, by contacting VAEAI on (03) 94810800 or emailing vaeai@vaeai.org.au.