

Discovering Indigenous Australians through the Australian Museum

A Teachers' Resource Pack for ESL and
Adult Literacy students

Section 3 Back in the classroom



Hands stencil
on cave

Introduction

Outlines for units of work based on various text types

Introduction

The Units of work in this section build on:

- the 'Preparing for the Museum visit' activities.
- 'At the Museum' activities that the learners have completed. They enable students to use their experiences from their Museum visit and to work with a range of text types.

This section includes the outlines of teaching units on the following:

Unit 1: Writing a description of an artefact

Unit 2: Writing a recount

Unit 3: Writing a report

Unit 4: Writing an opinion text

Extension activities

The units of work chosen for language learning activities after the Museum visit will depend on:

- the curriculum framework
- the focus of the course
- learner language levels
- learner needs.

The units of work are based on the teaching/learning cycle which implements the genre approach to language learning. The diagrammatical representation of the teaching/learning cycle was first developed by Callaghan and Rothery (1988:39). The teaching/learning cycle used here is the one developed for adult ESL by Green (1992) and adapted by Cornish (1992:17).

Outlines for units of work based on various text types



Dance Mask from Murray Island

Unit 1 - Writing a description

An image of the Dance Mask described in this activity can be found on the previous page.

Text structure

Text Structure	Model Text
Statement of Topic	The Dance Mask The Dance Mask comes from Murray Island which is also known as Mer. Murray Island is in the Torres Strait.
Description - appearance	The mask looks very attractive because it is decorated with natural materials. The pointed snout is turtle shell and the teeth are made from bone. Other parts are made from fibre, cloth and bone.
Description - uses	This mask was worn by men in the traditional 'Kaap Dance'.

Language features

Language features	Examples
Noun groups including articles, adjectives, classifying words, nouns	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Dance Mask• Murray Island• the Torres Strait• The mask• natural materials• The pointed snout
Simple being verbs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• is also known• The pointed snout is turtle shell
Simple behaving verbs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This mask was worn

Unit of work: Writing a description of an artefact

Building the context

1. Discuss the purpose of descriptions with the class.

Ask why we write descriptions ie to describe the way things are.

Stress that the description will be about:

- what artefacts are
- what artefacts are made from
- what people do with the artefacts

2. Ask students to look at Artefact 1 on the Artefact Sheet p.62 and brainstorm vocabulary.

Learners can use their Section 1 and Section 2 Activity Sheets to remind themselves of vocabulary.

3. Elicit the names of the artefacts in pictures 1-6 on the Artefact Sheet and ask them to write the name above the artefact. (basket, shield, Rainbow Serpent painting, dhari head dress, spear head, Number 7 club)

4. Ask questions which elicit descriptions of these artefacts, for example:

What does it look like?

What do people do with it?

Where does it come from?

Write single clause descriptions to answer these questions onto strips of paper.

With the learners sort the sentences, first into one set per artefact and then according to whether they describe appearance, location or uses.

5. Ask how a written description might be different from a spoken description.

Tape teacher and/or learners describing artefacts in spoken language and talk about how a written description is the same and how it is different.

Discuss how the learners might present their texts eg as posters, in a class display with illustrations, in a student newsletter etc.

Modelling/deconstructing the text

Staging

1. Provide activities such as the following:

- learners identify descriptions of artefacts from a set of texts on the same topic
- learners compare two or three descriptions of different artefacts

2. Draw learner attention to the statement of the topic in the model text and show how it predicts the rest of the text.
3. Label the stages of one or more descriptions.

Language Features

1. Point out key language features of the model text.

Learners use coloured highlighters to identify these features on the model and on other descriptions.

2. Provide activities such as the following:
 - cloze of model text with *being* and *having* verbs deleted
 - jumbled noun group activities based on artefact vocabulary
 - an activity to practice the pronouns *it* and *they*
3. Model the structure of *being* and *having* clauses and provide practice activities.
4. Model and provide practice activities in linking simple clauses with *and*.

Joint construction of the text

1. Act as a scribe and prompt while class jointly creates a written description of Artefact 2 on the Artefact Sheet below. Use an overhead transparency or whiteboard.
2. Model editing and proof-reading techniques.
3. Ask students to write a final draft of their description.

Independent construction of the text

1. Each learner chooses Artefact 3, 4, 5 or 6 on the Artefact Sheet.

Using their knowledge of purpose, text structure and language features, learners write a description of the artefact.

Throughout the drafting process, learners consult with teacher and peers. Drafts are edited, reworked and proofread as required.

2. Critically evaluate with learners the success of the texts and suggest areas for further work.

Linking related texts

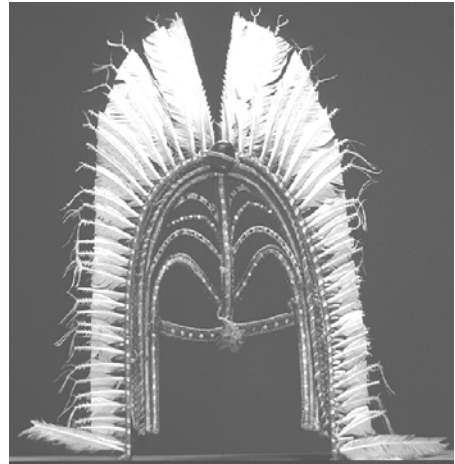
1. Learners write descriptions within other areas of the curriculum.
2. Learners write other text types about artefacts.

Artefact sheet

Artefact 1 _____



Artefact 4 _____



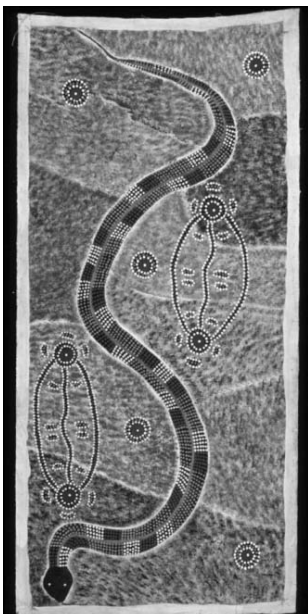
Artefact 2 _____



Artefact 5 _____



Artefact 3 _____



Artefact 6 _____



Unit 2 - Writing a recount

Text structure

Text Structure	Model Text
Title	The <i>Indigenous Australians</i> exhibition
Orientation	<p>Last week I went to the <i>Indigenous Australians</i> exhibition at the Australian Museum with my class.</p> <p>First we all met outside the Museum in College Street. We paid the admission and went inside. Next our teacher asked us to work in groups. Each group had some Activity Sheets to complete while looking at the exhibition. Maria, Lee, Van and Lydia were in my group.</p>
Record of Events	<p>When we arrived at the exhibition, we completed some Activity Sheets on the ramp which led to the exhibition. After that we walked through the whole exhibition to get an idea of what was in it.</p> <p>Our group had to work on a particular part of the exhibition which was about spirituality. We went to that part of the exhibition and completed our Activity Sheets. It was good that we were able to help one another.</p> <p>In the section on Spirituality we read about the Rainbow Serpent and saw many interesting artefacts which had been made by Indigenous people in Australia. We sat in a little replica of a bush church and listened to some people from the Torres Strait Islands singing hymns.</p>
Reorientation	<p>After nearly two hours the whole class met again in the foyer of the Museum. We discussed our Activity Sheets before we went home. Everyone talked about the displays in the train.</p>
Coda	<p>We all agreed that it had been a fascinating visit. Now I know a lot more about Australia's Indigenous cultures and how important they are to Australia.</p>

Language features

Language Features	Examples
Focus on individual participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the Museum in College Street• our teacher• Maria, Lee, Van and Lydia
Personal pronouns	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• we• they
Time markers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• after• and then
Circumstances of time and place	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• last week• In the foyer of the Museum
Past simple action verbs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• arrived• sat
Words for personal response	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• interesting• important

Unit of work: Writing a recount

Building the context

1. Discuss the purpose of recounts with the class ie to retell past events.

Ask why and when we tell others about the things which have happened to us (to inform and entertain).

Ask the class to predict the steps we go through to achieve this purpose. Recall spoken recounts if relevant.

2. Review Indigenous Australians vocabulary sorting the words into three categories:

- names of the peoples and artefacts
- words for expressing a personal response
- action words

Learners can use Section 1 and 2 Activity Sheets, as well as any material collected at the Museum, to remind themselves of the vocabulary.

Include spelling activities as required.

3. Ask questions which elicit a recount, for example:

Where did we go?

Who did we see there?

What did we do first?

What did we do next?

How did we feel about what happened?

What happened in the end?

Write single clauses to answer these questions.

Discuss how to sequence them in time.

4. Discuss who will be reading the recount, for example family members, other students or teachers, someone who has never been to the Museum etc.

Ask how this will affect what we write.

5. Discuss how the finished recount might look and how it might be presented, for example in a newsletter, in a class book, in a personal letter or postcard etc.

2. Modelling/deconstructing the text

Staging

1. Introduce the model text.

Identify the stages with the learners.

Compare the model with other recounts.

2. Name the stages of the text.

Draw learner attention to the function of each stage:

Orientation: sets the scene, answers the questions *when? where? who? what?*

Record of Events: tells the reader what happened, sequenced in time

Re-orientation: rounds off the text and links it with the beginning

Coda: is an overall comment about the whole experience.

3. Provide activities such as the following:

- learners identify the Museum recount from a set of texts
- learners compare two or three recounts of different events
- learners re-assemble the model text which has been cut into stages
- learners label the stages of the model text
- learners summarise the events in point form
- learners construct a timeline of the events

Build reading skills and strategies as required.

Text Organisation

1. Cut the model text into paragraphs. Then cut off the topic sentence of each paragraph. Ask learners to match each topic sentence to the rest of the paragraph.

Point out:

- each paragraph usually has only one kind of information
- the topic sentence signals the kind of information to come in the paragraph
- how to start a new paragraph

Language Features

1. Point out key language features of the model text. Learners use coloured highlighters to identify these features in the model and in other recounts.
2. Provide activities to drill and practise the form of simple past tense verbs noting irregular forms of common verbs.
3. Provide activities such as the following:
 - sequencing of jumbled events into a cohesive recount adding given time markers as required
 - cloze of model text with action verbs deleted so learners have to insert action words and add correct past time markers

- jumbled noun group activities based on Indigenous Australian's vocabulary
 - clozes of model text and other recounts in which the personal pronouns are deleted and have to be replaced
 - activities to sort verbs/processes - action, thinking/feeling, saying, being/having
4. Model the structure of simple clauses drawing attention to the three components of the clause (participants, processes and circumstances) and provide practice activities.
 5. Model and provide practice activities in linking simple clauses with *and*, time conjunctions and other conjunctions as required.

3. Joint construction of the text

1. Act as a scribe and prompt while class jointly creates another written recount of the visit to the *Indigenous Australians*. Use an OHT or whiteboard.
2. Model editing and proof-reading techniques.
3. Provide group work activities in recount writing for further practice as required.

4. Independent construction of the text

1. Using their knowledge of purpose, text structure and language features, in their Museum groups learners write a recount of their visit to the *Indigenous Australians* exhibition.

Throughout the drafting process, learners consult with teacher and peers. Drafts are edited, reworked and proof-read as required.

2. Critically evaluate the success of the texts with learners and suggest areas for further work.

5. Linking related texts

1. Learners write recounts within other areas of the curriculum.
2. Learners write other text types about Indigenous Australians.

Unit 3 - Writing a report

Text structure

Text Structure	Model Text
Title	Australia's Indigenous peoples
General Statement	Indigenous Australians live in all parts of mainland Australia and most of the islands which lie off the Australian coast. The term 'Indigenous Australians' describes both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The term 'Aboriginal' is used when the reference is to stories, histories, ceremonies or objects which are not relevant to Torres Strait Islander peoples.
Description of Indigenous groups	Aboriginal people also have terms in their own languages to describe their language groups. Some of these terms are: 'Koori' (south east Australia), 'Murri' (northern NSW and Queensland), 'Palawa' (Tasmania), 'Nunga' (South Australia) and 'Yolngu' (north eastern Northern Territory). These Aboriginal groups have geographical and cultural similarities but are composed of distinct groups and cultures. Before contact with Europeans there were several hundred groups occupying the Australian continent.
Description of origins	There are many different theories about the origins of Indigenous Australians. Many Indigenous people believe that their people have been here since the beginning of time. Various European theories suggest that a number of migrations from other lands brought Indigenous Australians to this continent. Whatever their origins may be, only Indigenous Australians can say: We are the first Australians.
Description of connection to the land	For at least sixty thousand years Indigenous Australians had their own way of life which included educational, medical, legal, sociocultural and economic structures. The land provided Indigenous people with their basic physical needs such as food, water, shelter, rest and recreation. It provided a reason for their existence in the world. It was the basis of their spirituality, which gave meaning to their whole way of life.

(Report adapted from *Wanyaarri* 1997: 6 -7)

Language features

Language Features	Examples
Generic participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous peoples • Indigenous Australians • Torres Strait Islander peoples
Words for general categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • most of the islands • structures • theories
Simple present tense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • live • describes
Noun groups for classifying and describing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous people • Australian mainland • cultural similarities • language groups
Name of what is being described or a pronoun as Theme placed at the beginning of the clause	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous people live in all parts of mainland Australia • Many Indigenous people believe • The term 'Aboriginal' is used.

Unit of work: Writing a report

Building the context

1. Discuss the purpose of reports with the class, that is to describe the way things are, to document information about things in the world.

Ask why and when/where we describe the way things are and document information (eg textbooks, encyclopaedias, workplace reports, information texts from government agencies).

Ask the class to predict the steps we go through to achieve this purpose.

2. Review Indigenous Australians vocabulary sorting the words into four categories:

- words to describe peoples
- words to describe origins
- words to describe cultures
- words to describe issues

Learners use their SECTION 1 and 2 Activity Sheets, as well as any material collected at the Museum, to remind themselves of the vocabulary.

Include spelling activities as required.

3. Ask questions which elicit a report, for example:

Who are Indigenous Australians?

Where do they live?

What do we know about their cultures?

Write single clauses to answer these questions.

Discuss the best way to organise all this information.

4. Discuss who will be reading the report (for example other students or teachers, someone who has never been to the Museum) etc.

Ask how this will affect what we write.

5. Discuss how the finished report might look and how it might be presented (for example in a newsletter, in a class book etc).

Modelling/deconstructing the text

Staging

1. Introduce the model text.

Identify the stages using the questions discussed above to elicit the stages.

Compare the model with other reports.

2. Name the stages of the text.

Draw learner attention to the function of each stage:

General Classification - identifies the subject

Description - series of paragraphs

3. Provide activities such as the following:

- learners identify the report from a set of texts
- learners compare two or three reports of different things
- learners sequence the stages of the report which has been cut up
- learners label the stages of the report

Build reading skills and strategies as required.

Text Organisation

1. Cut the model text into paragraphs. Then cut off the topic sentence of each paragraph. Ask learners to match each topic sentence to the rest of the paragraph.

Point out:

- each paragraph is usually about only one kind of information
- the topic sentence signals the kind of information in the paragraph to come
- how to start a new paragraph

Language Features

1. Point out key language features of the model text.

Learners use coloured highlighters to identify these features on the model and on other reports.

2. Provide activities to drill and practise the form of present tense being and having verbs.
3. Provide activities such as the following:
 - organising individual pieces of information about the Museum into categories, for example appearance, facilities, exhibitions
 - cloze of model text with participants deleted
 - jumbled noun group activities based on Museum vocabulary
4. Model the structure of simple clauses drawing attention to the three components of the clause participants, processes and circumstances and provide practice activities.
5. Model and provide practice activities for building noun groups to use in reports

Joint construction of the text

1. Act as a scribe and prompt while class jointly creates a written report on an aspect of Indigenous Australian cultures. Use an OHT or whiteboard.
2. Model editing and proof-reading techniques.
3. Provide group work activities in report writing for further practice as required.

Independent construction of the text

1. Using their knowledge of purpose, text structure and language features, learners write a report on the aspect of Indigenous Australian culture which they investigated at the Museum.

Throughout the drafting process, learners consult with teacher and peers. Drafts are edited, reworked and proof-read as required.

2. Critically evaluate with learners the success of the texts and suggest areas for further work.

Linking related texts

1. Learners write reports within other areas of the curriculum.
2. Learners write other text types about Indigenous Australians.

Unit 4 - Writing an opinion text

Text structure

Text Structure	Model Text
Title	Recognition of traditional artists
Thesis Position Preview	The term <i>Indigenous Australian</i> arts brings to most people's minds the image of the boomerang, X-ray art, dot painting and the sound of the didgeridoo, clap sticks and corroborees. In the past, images from traditional Aboriginal art have often been stolen and used inappropriately. This appropriation of Indigenous art continues today. Traditional Indigenous artists should be recognised as the owners of their art and compensated accordingly when their images are used.
Argument 1 Point Elaboration	In the past much Indigenous art was dismissed merely as craft and valued purely for its novelty. More recently the artistic merit of works of Indigenous artists and the skill involved in their creation has gained respect from the broader community.
Argument 2 Point Elaboration	Until recently the only places to see traditional art and traditional objects were museums. However, now traditional as well as contemporary art is being bought by art galleries and many people are buying Indigenous works for private art collections.
Argument 3 Point Elaboration	Many of the designs are also of spiritual and cultural significance to Indigenous people and the country to which they belong. These traditional designs are copyright to the artist and if the designs are stolen, the artists suffer at a number of different levels: spiritually, culturally and financially.
Restatement of Thesis	The work of traditional artists from areas such as Arnhem Land, Central Australia and Melville and Bathurst Islands is flourishing and achieving national and international recognition. It is important that traditional artists receive recognition for the ownership of their art as this is part of the process of recognising Indigenous cultures.

(Information in opinion text adapted from Wanyaarri 1997: 7 -8)

Language features

Language Features	Examples
Generic participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indigenous artists
Simple present tense	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• are• brings
Noun groups for classifying and describing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• dot painting• private art collections• X-ray art• the artistic merit of works of Indigenous artists
Expressions of point of view	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• it is important that traditional artists receive recognition• should be recognised

Unit of work: Writing an opinion text

Building the context

1. Discuss the purpose of opinion texts with the class, that is, to put forward a point of view.

Point out that the learners will be writing a special type of opinion text - an exposition. An exposition argues for one point of view. A discussion, on the other hand, presents both sides of an argument on a topical issue.

Brainstorm with learners some issues which could arise in relation to the topic of Indigenous Australians.

Ask why and when/where we wish to argue for our point of view, for example in letters to government authorities or institutions to support something we believe in, in letters to the editor, in letters of complaint, in essays.

Ask the class to predict the steps we go through to achieve the purpose of putting forward a point of view.

2. Review Indigenous Australians vocabulary by sorting the words into categories which support the different sides of issues raised in the brainstorm session.

Learners use their Section 1 and 2 Activity Sheets, as well as any material collected at the Museum, to remind themselves of the vocabulary.

Include spelling activities as required.

3. Ask questions which elicit an opinion on any of the issues raised, for example:

Do you think Indigenous Australians who were taken from their families should be compensated?

Why is this important? List the reasons.

What evidence do you have to support your arguments?

Write single clauses to answer these questions.

Discuss the best way to organise all this information.

4. Discuss who will be reading the opinion, for example other students or teachers, a government minister, newspaper readers etc.

Ask how this will affect what we write.

5. Discuss how the finished opinion text might look and how it might be presented, for example as a letter, as an essay.

Modelling/deconstructing the text

Staging

1. Introduce the model text.

Identify the stages using the questions discussed above to elicit the stages.

Compare the model with other opinions.

2. Name the stages of the text.

Draw learner attention to the function of each stage:

Thesis - states the writer's position and previews the arguments

Arguments - each argument states the point of the argument and then elaborates the argument with evidence or other support

3. Provide activities such as the following:

- learners identify the Indigenous Australians opinion text from a set of texts about Indigenous Australians
- learners compare an exposition and a discussion
- learners compare two or three expositions on different topics
- learners sequence the stages of the exposition which have been cut up
- learners label the stages of the exposition

Build reading skills and strategies as required.

Text Organisation

1. Cut the model text into paragraphs. Then cut off the topic sentence of each paragraph. Ask learners to match each topic sentence to the rest of the paragraph.

Point out:

- each paragraph usually has only one kind of information
- the topic sentence signals the kind of information in the paragraph to come
- how to start a new paragraph (new line, indent if handwritten)

Language Features

1. Point out key language features of the model text.

Learners use coloured highlighters to identify these features on the model and on other reports. In particular highlight those words which are expressions of point of view.

2. Provide activities such as the following:

- organising individual opinions and evidence into arguments based around one point
- cloze of model text with conjunctions deleted
- jumbled noun group activities based on Museum vocabulary
- joining separate clauses to form clause complexes linked by logical and additive conjunctions
- noun group building activities
- activities to build a repertoire of expressions of opinion

Joint construction of the text

1. Act as a scribe and prompt while class jointly creates an exposition based on Indigenous Australians. Use an OHT or whiteboard.
2. Model editing and proof-reading techniques.
3. Provide group work activities in opinion writing for further practice as required.

Independent construction of the text

1. Using their knowledge of purpose, text structure and language features, learners write an opinion text based on the *Indigenous Australians* exhibition.

Throughout the drafting process, learners consult with teacher and peers. Drafts are edited, reworked and proof-read as required.

2. Critically evaluate with learners the success of the texts and suggest areas for further work.

Linking related texts

1. Learners write expositions within other areas of the curriculum.
2. Learners write discussions about related topical issues.

Extension Activities

Indigenous cultures and peoples play a significant role in Australian culture.

Groups of learners could research different aspects of this role and present information to the class.

Topics might include:

- the use of Indigenous cultures to promote Australia internationally, for example, use of Indigenous images in international promotions, Indigenous performances at major events, etc
- the place of Australian mammals in Australian Indigenous culture, for example in spiritual life; as a resource for food, clothing etc; in art, stories, music and dance (see Nicholson, 1996, *Wanyaarri*, NSW AMES)
- issues facing Indigenous peoples today eg health, recognition, land rights, social justice, etc.