

Lesson Plan – Maurie Japarta Ryan Oral History Analysis

KLA HISTORY

STAGE/S year 9-12

TIME = 45mins total per activity

OUTCOMES: AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM & A.C.T SENIOR BOARD OF STUDIES

To develop students' skills in investigation, interpretation and communication using observation, questioning and analysis of research material.

YEAR -9

Develop questions about the past to inform inquiry. Identify points of view, perspectives, values and attitudes in historical sources. Develop historical texts, particularly narratives and descriptions, which incorporate evidence.

YEAR -12

Formulate inquiry questions and plan inquiry. Distinguish between fact and fiction. Identify and describe points of view, perspectives, values and attitudes in historical sources. Use historical terms and concepts. Participate in exchanges of ideas in examining historical issues. Make apt and thoughtful application of information from sources. Demonstrate an empathetic understanding of values and cultures.

PRIOR LEARNING:

The *Bringing Them Home Report* was published on the 26 May 1997. The Report was an inquiry into the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families. The creative spirits website notes that:

'The report made over 54 recommendations for reparations including an apology to Indigenous peoples. Key findings included:

- 10 to 33% of Aboriginal children were removed from their families between 1910 and 1970.
- This stolen generation of Aboriginal children often suffered physical and sexual abuse and official bodies failed to protect them.
- Many Aboriginal children were never paid for the work they did ('Stolen Wages').
- Under international law, from approximately 1946 the policies of forcible removal amounted to genocide.¹

Bringing Them Home Oral History Project

The Commonwealth Government invited the National Library of Australia (NLA) to carry out the *Bringing Them Home Oral History Project*. The NLA published, *Many Voices: Reflections on Experience of Indigenous Child Separation* in 2000, based on the interviews collected.

The editors Doreen Mellor and Anna Haebich commented that:

'The project documents the previously unrecorded accounts of a wide range of individuals involved in or affected by the separation of Indigenous children from their families. The project was

¹ 'Stolen Generations timeline', 10 June, 2010,

<<http://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/politics/stolen-generations-timeline.html#ixzz0pZJmyovu>>

established to create a comprehensive public record based on firsthand testimony that would enable the wider community to better understand what people had experienced.²

Maurie Japarta Ryan was interviewed in 2000 as part of the NLA's *Bringing Them Home* Oral History Project.

RESOURCES

Oral history by Maurie Japarta Ryan [..\Oral history resources\Maurie Ryan render 2.wav](#)

Excerpts from oral history transcript of interview with Maurie Japarta Ryan

[..\Oral history resources\Transcript excerpt.doc](#)

Ryan, Japarta Maurie, & Dimond, Glenys, 2000 *Japarta Maurie Ryan interviewed by Glenys Dimond in the Bringing them home oral history project [sound recording]*

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.oh-vn770916>

LESSON DEVELOPMENT: ACTIVITY 1 ORAL HISTORY ANALYSIS 45 MINS

Listen to the oral history by Maurie Japarta Ryan and read the accompanying excerpt from the transcript.

Build a class mind map that documents answers to the questions below.

- For what purpose has this interview been conducted?
- What is the plot of the storyline?
- What is the narrator's relationship to the events under discussion?
- Is this oral history a primary or secondary historical source?
- How does the segment give insight into the topic of land rights and the stolen generation?
- How do tone and emotion add meaning to the topic in the interview?
- What can this tell us about the way the narrator thinks about his experience?
- What topics does the narrator speak about with enthusiasm, or conviction? What might this tell us?
- Are there times when the narrator doesn't seem to answer the question? What might be the reason for this?
- What can you say in relation to the role of memory in the segment? Is memory discussed nostalgically? Is it breaking or reinforcing silences in official Australian histories? Does it play a role of historical affirmation?

LESSON DEVELOPMENT: ACTIVITY 2 TALKING STICK 45 MINS

In groups of 10 sit in a circle. In order to speak a person must go into the circle and pick up the stick. The speaker must hold the stick while they talk and replace it when they stop. Speakers describe their own personal experiences in regard to the issues brought up in this interview? Use the first person, 'I feel..., becauseand why....'

LESSON DEVELOPMENT: ACTIVITY 3 SITUATIONAL ROLE PLAY 45 MINS

² *Many Voices: Reflections on Experience of Indigenous Child Separation*, National Library of Australia, Canberra, 2002, p 3.

In pairs interview one another. Take notes and feedback comments to the main group.

- Describe some of the advantages and disadvantages of being removed from your family?
- How might you feel about yourself if you did not know where your parents were?
- What would it be like to grow up at school and not be able to go home?
- How would you feel about not being able to speak the same language as your family?
- What would you feel if your child was taken away and you never saw him or her again?

LESSON DEVELOPMENT: ACTIVITY 4 ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW 45 MINS

At home Interview two relatives separately about the same shared event.

At school Compare both versions. Are there distortions or omissions between each interpretation of the event? If so how might this reflect upon issues of memory and perception in firsthand accounts and on using oral histories as evidence? Discuss in class.

LESSON DEVELOPMENT: ACTIVITY 5 TAKE A WALK ABOUT 45 MINS

Visit a place that has changed and was previously used for something else. Conduct an interview on the site. Describe your memory of this place as it was originally or might have been when you lived, played or worked there.

Go to Picture Australia website <http://www.pictureaustralia.org/>

Look for images of places in the past that have now disappeared. For example the Molonglo Internment camp

<http://www.pictureaustralia.org/search/molonglo+internment+camp>

Take a contemporary shot of the same place and add it to Picture Australia's OurTown group.

For instructions see: <http://www.pictureaustralia.org/contribute/individual.html>

Visit Reconciliation Place in Canberra

See the memorial to Vincent Lingiari and take some photos.

Build your own Powerpoint presentation using your own photos and images from the Library's collection.

Take a virtual visit to Reconciliation Place

<http://www.pictureaustralia.org/search/vincent+lingiari>

LESSON DEVELOPMENT: ACTIVITY 5 WEBQUEST 45 MINS

Meet and find out more about key people involved in the Wave Hill walkout.

Dexter Daniel

<http://www.pictureaustralia.org/search/Mr+Dexter+Daniels>

Frank Hardy

<http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/cphotography/0/0/0/doc/cp000971.shtml>

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/result?q=Frank+Hardy>

Robert Tudawali

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/result?q=Robert+Tudawali>

Vincent Lingiari

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/result?q=Vincent+Lingiari>

CONCLUSION

As Maurie Japarta Ryan stated in his oral history, 'The Wave Hill Walk Out was the first movement in modern day land rights and Vincent Lingiari is the father of land rights in the Northern Territory.'

The Gurindji peoples' walk out led to the Australian Government passing the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) in 1976. In 1982, Eddie Mabo from Murray Island in the Torres Strait claimed his people also had a right to own the land they had lived on for thousands of years. In 1992, the High Court of Australia agreed. They passed the Mabo Decision that led to further successful land claims by Indigenous people. Eddie Mabo's papers are held in the NLA's collection and can be seen in the Treasures Gallery.

EVALUATION

Activity 1 Oral History Analysis

Did the class document answers to all the questions and use historical terms and concepts?

Activity 2 Talking stick

Did students genuinely empathise with the speaker and reflect an understanding of values and cultures?

Activity 3 Situational Role Play

Were students able to reflect and place themselves in the speaker's situation, to make apt and thoughtful application of information from their own sources?

Activity 3 Oral History interview

Did students exchange ideas about examining historical issues using firsthand accounts as historical evidence for research material?

Activity 5 Take a Walk About

Did you find your student images in Picture Australia a week later using the tags that students provided? Did students develop their own historical texts and add them to a research database?

Activity 5 Webquest

Did students develop skills in investigation and observation of research material? Were students able to search the NLA's Trove database and navigate the eight collection zones?