

ONELAND

DHARRMBUNGI MARRANGIGI

Director Susie Agoston



©ONELANDFILMS

<https://theeducationshop.com.au>

© ATOM and ONELAND FILMS 2020

ISBN: 978-1-76061-348-8

ATOM
AUSTRALIAN TEACHERS OF MEDIA

A STUDY GUIDE BY THOMAS REDWOOD,
DARYL FERGUSON AND SUSIE AGOSTON

Synopsis

The words Dharrmbungi Marrangigi are granted by Yolgnu Elder Mrs Gurruwiwi to reflect the ethos of ONELAND and represent “learning together”.

This film documents the Elders and schoolchildren in the far north-west NSW township of Brewarrina welcoming non-Indigenous schoolgirls from Sydney into their remote community and how the two cultures together form a future for Australia.

Sydney-based book publisher, filmmaker and netball coach Susie Agoston, who has strong ties with the remote Aboriginal community of Brewarrina, invites girls from her netball teams to join her on a 1600 kilometre road trip to meet the First Nations schoolchildren and to have the opportunity to meet the Elders - custodians of Traditional Lore and knowledge, history and heritage - of one of the oldest living Cultures in the world today.

The girls from Sydney were born in Australia and have lived here all their lives. They may have had the opportunity to travel the world, but they have never met an Aboriginal person.

At 4am, the group leaves Sydney in a minibus. After thirteen hours on the road, and driving through the red earth kangaroo and emu country, they arrive in Brewarrina. Although the girls arrive three and a half hours late (without phone reception for the last 400 kilometres), the local children are still waiting to greet them. They are warmly welcomed and within minutes the children are all playing together.

One of Susie’s friends in the community, environmentalist Ngemba Elder Feli McHughes, formally welcomes the girls to his ancestral country. His niece Shantea, greets the girls from Sydney in her traditional Ngemba language.

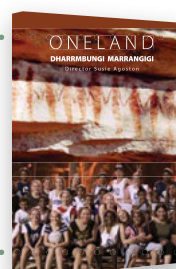
The next day the children are shown the 60,000-year-old fish traps in the Darling River, one of the oldest man-made structures in the world. The traps were engineered by the Ngemba people and are still maintained and used today, as a continuation of the ancient cultural practices tens of thousands of years old.



Ngemba Corroborree Dancer

CONTENT HYPERLINKS

- 3 DIRECTOR’S NOTE**
- 5 CULTURAL SAFETY**
- 5 AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM CONTENT LINKS**
- 7 PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITIES**
- 11 POST-VIEWING ACTIVITIES**
- 15 USEFUL LINKS**



[Watch Trailer](#)

The girls from Sydney are shown how Indigenous cultures communicate in many sophisticated ways: through speech, gesture, song, ceremonial dance, message sticks, as well as the very important mode of communication through visual symbolism such as in rock art. Throughout the film the girls and all the children are warmly invited to engage with these cultural practices and have the opportunity to use ochres to create rock art, and participate in preparing the ground for a corroboree. Later that evening they are invited with the community to join in the celebrations and learn about the significance of the dances and movements.

The girls also learn of the more recent history of the past 155 years.

On their first night together the girls from Brewarrina and Sydney are already planning to meet up again in Sydney for the annual *Colour Run* in support of Cancer Research.

The story concludes with the children reuniting in Sydney 6 weeks later, as they had planned, to participate in the *Colour Run* – where the girls from Brewarrina and Sydney run together as one team.

The camaraderie is ongoing - the girls have since reunited in Sydney, and they are now planning to do a road trip to Brewarrina to see everyone again.

Feli has been invited to schools to give talks, and some of the girls from Sydney have given talks at their school assemblies.

A story of reconciliation across cultures, ONELAND DHARRMBUNGI MARRANGIGI demonstrates a path forward for Australia, for First Nations and non-Indigenous people to learn together, to engage with, respect and connect with Aboriginal communities and their traditional values and cultures.

“For us to move forward you’ve got to first know about the First Nations people and watching this documentary to see the Aboriginal girls and the non-Indigenous girls coming together – they learnt something from each other – they shared stories and what I’ve seen is the richness of learning from one another.”

At the end, the Colour Run reminded me of a rainbow - because what’s at the end of a rainbow there’s gold, there’s treasure and that’s what both sides of two different cultures got - they got so much richness from one another”

Ngemba Elder Aunty Mary Waites



Ngemba Elder Feli McHughes
with Susie Agoston

Director’s Note

First Nations peoples have lived in the country of Australia for up to 120,000 years, surviving on the land, with the land and for the land, always sustainably, always with care for future generations.

It is with the deepest trust by both the Elders and children of Brewarrina and the children and their parents of the Mosman community that we were able to make this journey.

Dharrmbungi Marrangigi “Learning Together” was granted by my wonderful friend Yolgnu Elder Mrs Gurruwiwi, as her representation and reflection of the ethos of ONELAND.

The Gurruwiwi family has since traditionally adopted me as family and I feel extremely honoured to be entrusted to bear the Yolgnu skin name Wamatjin, *sister*.

Because of my ongoing philanthropic work with Aboriginal Education

Officers in Redfern, Penrith and Kempsey; Aboriginal Artists and remote Art Centres; the Aboriginal Education Council, Patrick White Indigenous Children's Literature; and with publishing and documentary filmmaking for Indij Readers - I was introduced to Ngemba Elder, environmentalist Feli McHughes.

In 2012, I was making a documentary about the Darling River with Feli, and I invited my daughter Alexandra to come with me to Brewarrina. The welcome into this Aboriginal community and the embrace by the Elders and children that Alexandra felt so deeply, later gave me the idea to ask the Elders if I may invite some of the girls in the netball teams I coach in Sydney to come to Brewarrina, to have the opportunity to meet and talk with them, and to meet the schoolchildren there. The Elders welcomed the idea, as did the girls I coached and their parents – so we started to plan how to get there!

David, my son, suggested I take a film crew and make a documentary about this journey. I said no – because I'd never driven a minibus before let alone driven 1600 kms with a group of children and teenagers on remote roads, so I didn't really want the extra challenge and responsibility of filming! ... David finally talked me into it, and I very much appreciate that. My instructions to the crew of two people – one cameraman, one sound technician - were to *"be invisible"* and *"not to interfere with anything that was happening – even if it would look good on camera"* ... this was about bringing the children together and I didn't want the camera to interfere

with that openness. The guys on crew were amazing – we all forgot they were there and we ended up with raw footage that unfolds its own story.

Thank you to the Elders for trusting me, the friendships of the Ngemba, Murrawarri, Kamillaroi, Barkanji, Baranbinja, Weilwan and Ualiai children of Brewarrina who welcomed us and the girls from Sydney who embraced this strong and precious culture.

I also thank Ngemba Traditional Owner and Cultural Leader Daryl "Peg" Ferguson for graciously going through, word-by-word the text of this study guide with me, for Cultural Nuances, Advice and Cultural Knowledge so that, after seeing the documentary, readers of this guide have the opportunity of a window into a philosophy which reflects thousands and thousands of years of knowledge and survival.

And the journey continues – during post production of the documentary we have been back to Brewarrina several times, and we are planning our next trip with boys as well as girls.

– Susie Agoston, ONELAND DHARRMBUNGI MARRANGIGI Documentary Director and Producer, and ATOM Study Guide co-author

SCHOOL Film Presentations, Speakers and Q&A:

Cultural Advisors with Susie Agoston, the documentary Director and Producer, form ONELAND SCHOOL SPEAKERS PROGRAMS – to present at film Screenings and for Q&A, and can assist with discussing and exploring the issues raised by the Documentary ONELAND DHARRMBUNGI MARRANGIGI.

Please contact Susie Agoston for bookings and terms: contact@oneland.com.au



Cultural Safety

Before proceeding with this study guide it is essential for teachers and students to become familiar with standards for cultural safety. The following links provide directions in (1) developing cultural safety in the classroom, (2) tackling the problem of tokenistic study and discussion of Indigenous subject matter and (3) creating safe environments for the use of visual media.

* Cultural Safety and Respect in the Classroom

Where appropriate, providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, students, Elders, families and wider community members to share their perspectives, histories and cultures in the classroom can be incredibly enriching. However, it is important for teachers and educators to be careful not to assume what stories or knowledges can be shared by particular community members, students, or children, and when, where and with whom they can be shared. This activity encourages staff to consider scenarios, evaluate policies and principles and consider how cultural safety could further be promoted within the wider school or early learning service community.

* Tackling Tokenism

From: www.narragunnawali.org.au/professional-learning/40/tackling-tokenism

Tokenism is often cited as a barrier to demonstrating respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and perspectives, particularly in visible and tangible ways. This activity encourages staff to reinterpret or reinvent a demonstration of respect which may, on the surface, appear to be tokenistic. In doing so, they consider how effectively to turn tokenism into meaningful symbolic and practical action

* Ensuring Film Screenings are Culturally Safe and Respectful

This link provides general guidelines around how to facilitate culturally safe and respectful screening sessions and pre-screening or post-screening discussions.

www.sbs.com.au/sites/sbs.com.au/home/files/reconciliation_film_club_planning_guide.pdf

Australian Curriculum Content Links

ONELAND DHARRMBUNGI MARRANGIGI can be linked to the following subject areas within the Australian Curriculum.

- MODERN HISTORY (YEAR 11)
- LANGUAGES
- CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP
- ENGLISH
- GEOGRAPHY
- MEDIA STUDIES
- HISTORY

Modern History: Unit 2 'Movements for Change in the 20th Century' (Year 11)

Recognition and rights of Indigenous peoples

- The nature of the relationship of Indigenous peoples with their land and their response to perceptions of, and feelings about, the arrival of the colonisers (ACHMH070)
- The basis on which the colonists claimed sovereignty and imposed control, including conquest, treaty and the doctrine of 'terra nullius'; and the consequences for the legal status and land rights of Indigenous peoples (ACHMH071)
- The nature of government policies and their impact on Indigenous peoples, for example protection, assimilation (including the Stolen Generations), and self-determination (ACHMH072)

- The role of individuals and groups who supported the movement for Indigenous recognition and rights, including the methods they used and the resistance they encountered (ACHMH073)
- The economic, political and social challenges and opportunities Indigenous peoples have faced, including the role of cultural activity in developing awareness in society (ACHMH074)
- The achievements of Indigenous peoples at the end of the 20th century, including the right to vote, land rights/native title, and attempts at reconciliation (ACHMH075)
- The continued efforts to achieve greater recognition, reconciliation, civil rights, and improvements in education and health (ACHMH076)

Languages Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages (Years 8 and 9)

- Investigate programs, initiatives and techniques that keep Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages strong
- Understanding the importance of intergenerational collaboration and transmission in keeping languages strong and discussing some of the associated challenges

Civics and Citizenship (Years 8 and 9)

- How and why individuals and groups, including religious groups, participate in and contribute to civic life (ACHCK079)
- How Australia's international legal obligations shape Australian law and government policies, including in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (ACHCK093)
- Account for different interpretations and points of view (ACHCS085) and (ACHCS098)
- Recognise and consider multiple perspectives and ambiguities, and use strategies to negotiate and resolve contentious issues (ACHCS086) and (ACHCS099)
- Present evidence-based civics and citizenship arguments using subject-specific language (ACHCS088) and (ACHCS101)
- Reflect on their role as a citizen in Australian, regional and global contexts (ACHCS089) and (ACHCS102)

Media Arts (Years 7 and 8)

- Develop media representations to show familiar or shared social and cultural values and beliefs, including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (ACAMAM067)
- Analyse how technical and symbolic elements are used in media artworks to create representations influenced by story, genre, values and points of view of particular audiences (ACAMAR071)
- Identify specific features and purposes of media artworks from contemporary and past times to explore

viewpoints and enrich their media arts making, starting with Australian media artworks including of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media artworks (ACAMAR072)

Media Arts (Years 9 and 10)

- Manipulate media representations to identify and examine social and cultural values and beliefs, including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (ACAMAM074)
- Analyse a range of media artworks from contemporary and past times to explore differing viewpoints and enrich their media arts making, starting with Australian media artworks, including media artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and international media artworks (ACAMAR079)

English: Literature (Year 8)

- Explore the interconnectedness of Country/Place, People, Identity and Culture in texts including those by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors (ACELT1806)

English: Literacy (Year 8)

- Plan, rehearse and deliver presentations, selecting and sequencing appropriate content, including multimodal elements, to reflect a diversity of viewpoints (ACELY1731)

History: Knowledge and Understanding (Year 7)

- The importance of conserving the remains of the ancient past, including the heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (ACDSEH148)

Geography: Geographical Knowledge and Understanding (Year 7)

- Economic, cultural, spiritual and aesthetic value of water for people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and peoples of the Asia region (ACHGK041)

Geography: Geographical Knowledge and Understanding (Year 8)

- Spiritual, aesthetic and cultural value of landscapes and landforms for people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (ACHGK049)

Geography: Geographical Knowledge and Understanding (Year 9)

- The perceptions people have of place, and how these influence their connections to different places (ACHGK065)



Murrawarri / Ngemba
River Dancers

Pre-viewing Activities

* 1: Ngemba Language & Culture

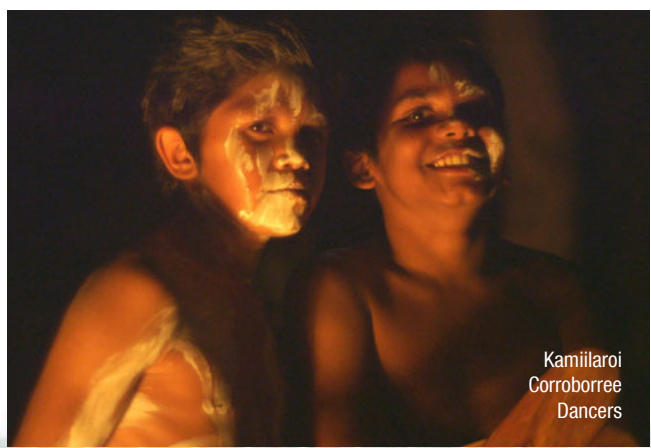
– “We’re starting to get part of our language back...once you’ve got your language it’s a big part of your identity”
Ngemba Elder Feli McHughes

Ngemba is the first language of the Ngemba nation, of which the community of Brewarrina is a part. Like First Peoples across Australia, Ngemba peoples have traditionally been multilingual and fluent in the many languages spoken by neighbouring language groups. In the Brewarrina region, as in many regions, the rich traditional multilingual culture has been suppressed by the dispossession and assimilation processes that the Australian Government undertook, to the point where only English was allowed to be spoken and the traditional languages were forbidden to be spoken and punishable.

Descendants of cultures thousands of years old were forced to stop speaking the language of their people. In recent decades many peoples are reviving their ancestral languages.

ACTIVITY QUESTIONS

- What is the name of the language group of your region?
- In acknowledging the country of your school, which First Nations group do you recognise as the Traditional Owners?
- What is the difference between a ‘clan’, a ‘language group’ and a ‘nation’?
- Why do you think many Indigenous leaders prefer the term ‘First Nations’?
- What language does the word ‘Aboriginal’ come from? What does the word mean?
- What language does the word ‘Indigenous’ come from? What does the word mean?
- What are some of the problems with applying one word (e.g. Aboriginal) to name all of the different peoples, nations and cultures in Australia?



Kamiilaroi
Corroborree
Dancers



Brewarrina
Fish Traps

* 2: Brewarrina, the Darling River and the Baiame's Ngunnhu (Fish Traps)

On the banks of the Darling River, Brewarrina has been home to Indigenous communities for tens of thousands of years. The name Brewarrina is derived from the Weilwan word 'burru waranha' – the name of a certain type of acacia tree. Brewarrina is the traditional land and meeting place of the Ngemba, Murrawarri, Kamillaroi, Barkanji, Ualiai, Weilwan and Baranbinja peoples.

As a meeting place Brewarrina is a very important site where many First Peoples come together to partake in important Traditional Law Making, in ceremonies, corroborees, to trade, and to enjoy the abundant food source harvested from the river.

Of extraordinary historical significance in the Brewarrina region are the Baiame's Ngunnhu - Brewarrina Fish Traps. At over 60,000 years old, the Baiame's Ngunnhu have been acknowledged as the oldest human-made structures in the world. These traps are examples of Indigenous aquaculture. The fish traps comprise a series of intricate engineering systems incorporating series of rocks across

defined sections of the Darling River, to channel fish into the traps.

The success of the harvesting method relied on traditional sustainable practices. Pregnant fish would be removed from the traps and released back into the river to breed. Fish for food were kept in running water.



Such practices are typical of the ecological approach to hunting and land management practiced by First Peoples across Australia. Different species of flora and fauna were kept at mutually sustainable levels by strict ecological practices. These practices were codified in Traditional Lore as essential responsibilities of adulthood and custodianship.

The Baiame's Ngunnhu fish traps at Brewarrina are inextricably fundamental for the Ngemba people and neighbouring Indigenous communities. Indigenous peoples using the river have for tens of thousands of years enjoyed an abundance and variety of fish and shellfish. These fish would include the Boney Bream, Freshwater Catfish, Silver Perch, Golden Perch and Murray Cod. However, the fish enjoyed by different Indigenous communities along the Darling River for over 60,000 years are now diminished in numbers with the introduction of non-native species and the removal of rock traps for the building of the Brewarrina Weir.

ACTIVITY QUESTIONS

- What is meant by Traditional Law and Traditional Lore?
- Locate Brewarrina on the map of Australian First Nations
- Copy the Ngemba region from a map, using different colours to mark the different nations around the Ngemba region.
- Why might Brewarrina be a meeting place for different First Peoples?
- Where does the Darling River begin and end? Through how many nations does the river pass?
- Only fifty years ago, most scientists believed it impossible that people had inhabited the continent of Australia for more than 25,000 years. Now, evidence from near Warrnambool in Victoria suggests habitation for over 120,000 years. For how long has it been proven archeologically that First Peoples have lived in the Brewarrina region?
- What kinds of evidence does modern archaeology rely on to establish historical timelines?
- The British entering Australia did not recognise First Nations' ownership and habitation of this country and used the legal concept of terra nullius ('no one's land') to claim possession by the Crown (Crown Sovereignty). The British justified Australia as terra nullius on the basis that, although First Peoples lived on the country, they did not appear to use the land agriculturally or to establish permanent settlements, and therefore they did not own it as property. How do the 60,000+ year old Baiame's Ngunnhu Brewarrina Fish Traps challenge the description of terra nullius?
- What other examples from around Australia (e.g. Indigenous aquaculture, agriculture, permanent settlements) can you find that prove First Nations' use of the land and contradict the premise of terra nullius?



Kimberley Rock Art, Kulumburu

* 3: Rock Art

“Rock art is a complex written language, describing knowledge of water sources in the desert, tracking animals and communicating deep spiritual, cultural and practical survival teachings.” – from ONELAND DHARRMBUNGI MARRANGIGI

A visual history of First Peoples of Australia is expressed through the remarkable rock art as a form of communication.

Rock art can be found all across Australia, from the Kimberleys in north Western Australia, to Arnhem Land, to Gippsland in south-east Australia and further south to Tasmania.

Paintings and etchings play a very important role in many Indigenous cultures. In different examples of rock art from across Australia, images and icons are used to communicate essential information.

- The information in the images may be for survival, as instructions on how to find water.



L-R: Jirrengger Rock art ; Ngemba Rock Art, Gundabooka

- The information may be cultural such as to add one's handprint to document history and to recognise the ancestors of one's country.
- The information may be spiritual so that the Lorens are observed and respected by all those passing through the country.

These forms of communication were essential to physical, cultural and spiritual survival. Rock art would communicate complex and multifaceted social networks maintained by First Peoples across Australia. It is devastating that much known rock art is not heritage-protected and is often destroyed by development, yet the strength of Aboriginal visual language survives today in the forms of paintings and artworks that communicate stories expressing life and preserving and passing on Culture.

CLASS ACTIVITIES

- Find three examples of rock art from different regions of Australia.
- How do these different examples compare?
- What are the notable stylistic differences?
- What are the notable stylistic similarities?
- Research the Rainbow Serpent across different First Nations cultures.
- Research evidence of rock art depicting thousands of years of rising sea levels
- With respect to and with the permission of the custodians of rock art in each specific region prepare a presentation or project (examples could be Arnhem Land, the Kimberleys, Blue Mountains, The Grampians).
- Explore some examples of contemporary Western Desert art and consider these paintings as examples of living spirituality and storytelling.

SOME KEY FACTS

- Australia has more than 100,000 rock art sites.
 - The oldest directly dated Australian rock art is about 28,000 years old but various sites have used pieces of red ochre dated back to over 50,000 years ago.
 - Rock art around the Australian coastline describes rising sea levels which occurred 17,000 to 7,000 years ago
 - The Djulirri shelter in the Wellington Range, Arnhem Land is Australia's largest pigment-based rock art site containing more than 3,100 paintings, stencils, prints and beeswax figures. Djulirri rock art, dated more than 15,000 years old, includes a vast wall of about 1,500 paintings which chronicle First Nations contact with Southeast Asian seafaring people from the 1600s.
 - Arnhem Land rock art was still being made until the second half of the twentieth century
 - Depictions of extinct Tasmanian tigers were found in mainland Australia that are at least 15,000 years old.
 - Rainbow Serpent artwork and oral history references found across Australia have been traced back in rock art more than 6,000 years.
 - Wollemi National Park in NSW contains more than 120 rock art sites.
 - Australia has no national strategy or register of its known rock art.
- These and other facts found at <https://www.griffith.edu.au/research/impact/rock-art/>.



First Nations people have
lived on this country for
120,000 years

Post-viewing Activities

* 1: Missions, Massacres and Survival

First Nations peoples have lived in Australia for up to 120,000 years, surviving on the land and with the land. Since Captain Cook first declared the continent 'terra nullius' ('no one's land') in 1770, and until 1967, Indigenous peoples were not given the rights of citizenship in their own country.

A devastating period in recent Australian history involved the policies for removal of children implemented in different forms up until the 1970s. The 'Bringing Them Home' report estimates the number of children to be 100,000. As a result of having been removed from their families - or their parents or grandparents being removed - many Indigenous people in Australia today remain unaware of their Indigenous identity and who their families are, and where they are from.

In ONELAND DHARRMBUNGI MARRANGIGI, Barkanji Elder Aunty Bim explains her memories of the reality of child removal in Brewarrina:

"When we were kids, they still had the welfare, the mission ... you'd look up the road and there would be coming a

black car and your mum would say 'run, run' ... I used to hide... because we were at that stage where the welfare could take you. We could have been part of the Stolen Generation..."

Gunditjmara Bundjalung Elder Archie Roach wrote the iconic song "*Took the Children Away*" which has become an anthem for displaced Indigenous people around the world.

To read the lyrics and hear the song go to www.archieroach.com/charcoalane

In Brewarrina 155 years ago was the brutal massacre of the Baranbinja tribe.

The determination of Indigenous Peoples across Australia to survive and keep their culture and identity alive despite two centuries of repression and trauma is truly inspiring. In communities like Brewarrina this is taking the form of language revival and the education of young Ngemba people in traditional cultural practices and knowledges.

Widespread awareness is growing with the introduction of Indigenous Knowledges into the Australian Curriculum, with Indigenous histories and with documentaries such as ONELAND DHARRMBUNGI MARRANGIGI.

QUESTIONS

- Why did governments not classify Indigenous peoples as legal adults with full citizenship rights?
- Why was the invasion of First Nations territories not reported as a formal invasion by the invading governments?
- If the British had recognised the sovereignty of the First Nations they invaded, what would they have been forced to offer First Nations?
- Why were the early invasions not formally documented? How does this affect 'official' versions of what happened during the 1800s?
- What Indigenous accounts of history have generally not been recognised by non-Indigenous historians?
- When were Aboriginal missions first established in different colonies of Australia?
- What was the perceived function of missions?
- What would the First Nations peoples' perspective be on being forced into a mission?
- Which organisations usually controlled missions?
- What forms of culture and religion were Indigenous peoples in missions forced to adopt?
- Although the missions were set up to provide for the "protection and survival of Indigenous people", how did missions perpetrate forms of cultural genocide?
- What effect did assimilation have on the thousands of years of Culture and tradition?
- What effect did stealing children have on their mothers and families?
- Once taken away from their families, why were many children not told of their Aboriginality?
- Listen to Archie Roach's song "Took the Children Away" www.archieroach.com/charcoalane Discuss the lyrics.
- How might assimilation policies have created trauma for Indigenous communities?
- Research the background to the *Bringing them Home* Report. (1997)
- How many children does the *Bringing them Home* Report estimate to have been removed from their parents and families?
- On hearing Barkanji Elder Aunty Bim's story about the fear of being taken by the government, one of the visiting girls from Sydney expresses her profound grief: "it's one thing to think it was really bad and shouldn't have happened when you're back in Sydney, and then actually talking to everyone here who actually experienced it and felt that pain. It's just... unbelievable." How does hearing Aunty Bim's experiences as a young child increase your understanding of the fear and reality of the Stolen Generations?
- The 'National Apology' to the Stolen Generations was the first Act of Parliament made by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd in 2008. Read the transcript of the 'National Apology' <https://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/our-country/our-people/apology-to-australias-indigenous-peoples>
- <https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/articles/apology-australias-indigenous-peoples>
- To what extent does assimilation continue today? How are Indigenous peoples required to assimilate and how would that make Indigenous people feel?
- How are communities like Brewarrina reviving their Indigenous culture?
- How many Indigenous massacre sites are there in Australia?

* 2: Reconciliation across Cultures

“The more that other cultures are aware of our people the better off Australia will be...there are a lot of young people in Sydney who have never even met an Aboriginal person, let alone come out to the community and connect.” – Ngemba Elder Feli McHughes

Indigenous peoples make up less than 5 per cent of the Australian population, and while many live in remote areas away from cities and regional centres, many Aboriginal people also live in the cities. Most non-Indigenous Australians have little or no contact with First Nations people and, as one of the 16 year old girls from Sydney explains in ONELAND:

“I’ve never met an Aboriginal person before, I’ve never been to an Aboriginal community before, but I was born in Australia and have lived here my whole life, and I’m excited to meet some people in the Aboriginal communities”.

ONELAND DHARRMBUNGI MARRANGIGI shows the goodwill when non-Indigenous Australians wish to learn and understand the Indigenous way of life.

We can see from this film that when visitors enter a community in a respectful, organised way and by

invitation, they are warmly welcomed. It is an ancient and established code of practice to acknowledge visitors. For tens of thousands of years Lores have been followed of travelling respectfully through the country of other Indigenous people.

Ngemba Elder Feli McHughes welcomes the visitors

“We want you to feel at home on our country... so on behalf of the Ngemba nation, I welcome you.”

We then hear the traditional values in the words of schoolgirl Shantea welcoming the visitors in her Ngemba language:

*“Hello how are you
it’s good to see you
we remember the people who lived before us
travel well through our country
come sit with us”*

The visiting girls from Sydney want to learn, and they value what they have been told, both in the way they listen, and in the way they respect another’s country. The welcome they receive from the Ngemba, Kamillaroi, Barkanji, Marrawurri, Weilwa, Uaiai and Baranbinja community is heartfelt.



Murrawarri /
Ngemba River
Dancers



Dharrmbungi Marrangigi
Learning Together

One of the girls visiting Brewarrina reflects

"I love all the people around here, it's amazing atmosphere and community, sense of family"

The visiting girls were introduced to and included in traditional culture which gave them a whole new level of insight into and respect for the country they live in. They develop a new sense of their identity and roles as Australians. As one of the girls says:

'Australians forget that we have our own really rich culture here in Australia. It's fascinating and I think it's really important to understand it.'

As they leave Brewarrina for Sydney, one of the visiting girls reflects:

'If there's going to be change, it starts at home and we've got to do it ourselves.'

After two centuries of devastation, reconciliation could mean the start of a national culture in which education, recognition and respect for the First Peoples are integral to every Australian's education – an education that extends beyond textbooks and classrooms to involve living connections across cultures.

One way reconciliation can be achieved is with continuing meetings and communication, and learning about and embracing Australia's precious heritage such as in the documentary ONELAND DHARRMBUNGI MARRANGIGI.

QUESTIONS

- 'Self-determination' can refer to many aspects of Indigenous independence and empowerment: cultural, political and economic. Research the different uses of the term and discuss what you think self-determination means.
- Reconciliation means the re-establishment of peace and agreement between two parties who have been in conflict. Is reconciliation an appropriate word to describe Indigenous-Settler relations?
- Explore the Reconciliation website www.reconciliation.org.au and discuss the key ideas and values.
- What does 'Constitutional Recognition' refer to?
- Read through the Uluru Statement. Discuss as a class the statement's key points: ulurustatement.org.
- What are the three priorities outlined by the Uluru Statement?
- What do you think the phrases 'structural nature of our problems' and 'the torment of our powerlessness' refer to?
- What is the meaning of 'Makarrata' and why has the Uluru commission been named the Makarrata Commission?
- How did the visiting girls from Sydney in ONELAND show cultural respect?
- What sorts of ideas, values and actions are involved to achieve the following?
 - To connect with Country and Community
 - To connect with Language, Culture and Story
 - To connect with History ('Truth-telling')
 - To connect with Indigenous Knowledges (such as Land Management)
- To formally acknowledge the unceded sovereignty of First Nations
- To respect another community's land
- What are some of the ways the Ngemba people of Brewarrina welcome the visitors into their culture?
- What are some of the ways a visitor might be culturally respectful?
- How might cultural insensitivity be experienced by Indigenous peoples?
- How can sport be a foundation for cross-cultural understanding?
- As a class discuss and note:
 - In what ways can Australian society change to become more culturally respectful?
 - How can Indigenous cultures, histories and knowledges become a more prominent and important part of schooling across Australia?
 - What would a true reconciled Australian society look like and how can it be achieved?
- From the notes above, develop an essay outlining the goals and challenges of reconciliation

Useful Links

Reconciliation Australia www.reconciliation.org.au

Brewarrina Local Aboriginal Land Council: www.brelalc.org

The Uluru Statement: ulurustatement.org

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Studies (AIATSIS) aiatsis.gov.au

Closing the Gap website outlining the many different areas of
the government led initiative. closingthegap.pmc.gov.au

Lowitja Institute - Australia's National Institute for Aboriginal
& Torres Strait Islander Health Research www.lowitja.org.au

Bringing them Home Report (1997) – Report of the National
enquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Children from their Families. www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/bringing-them-home-report-1997/

AIATSIS – Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Studies: Apology to Australia's Indigenous
Peoples. www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/bringing-them-home-report-1997/

Australian Human Rights Commission – Social Determinants
and the health of Indigenous peoples in Australia – a
human rights based approach. www.humanrights.gov.au/about/news/speeches/social-determinants-and-health-indigenous-peoples-australia-human-rights-based/

Creative Spirits is an independent website covering a wide
range of Aboriginal cultural, social and political issues.
www.creativespirits.info

The Cape York Partnership - outlining the initiatives in social
and education reform in the Cape York region. www.capeyorkpartnership.org.au

The Central Land Council (Northern Territory) www.clc.org.au

The Aurora Project – for more information on initiatives in
Indigenous education. www.auroraproject.com.au

Referendum Council: www.referendumcouncil.org.au

United Nations UNDRIP: www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.html

Indigenous Knowledge Systems in the Australian Curriculum:
www.sbs.com.au/nitv/nitv-news/article/2018/11/05/experts-say-indigenous-knowledge-will-enrich-science-education/

Cultural Advisors with Susie Agoston, the documentary
Director and Producer, form ONELAND SCHOOL
SPEAKERS PROGRAMS – to present at film Screenings
and for Q&A, and can assist with discussing and
exploring the issues raised by the Documentary
ONELAND DHARRMBUNGI MARRANGIGI.

Please contact Susie Agoston for bookings and terms: contact@oneland.com.au

This ATOM Study Guide for the documentary ONELAND DHARRMBUNGI MARRANGIGI has been compiled
by Thomas Redwood, co-authored by Ngemba Cultural Teacher Daryl Ferguson with Susie Agoston and
approved by Ngemba Elder Feli McHughes, Barkanji Elder Aunty Bim and Traditional Cultural and Teaching
Advisors

FOOTNOTE: With the greatest respect we wish to advise that where the words Aboriginal and Indigenous are
used in this Guide it is intended that they imply and are synonymous with the words First Nation

Study guide writers: Thomas Redwood with cultural advisor Daryl Ferguson and Susie Agoston.
©ONELAND FILMS Cultural text, Documentary Quotes and Photographs

FILM PRESENTATION and SPEAKERS / Q&A

ENQUIRIES:

ONELAND ARTS SPORT EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT
SUSIE AGOSTON (Founder / CEO)

contact@oneland.com.au