Intermediate
A New Life
Australia
Worksheet 9:
Aboriginal people
Copyright

With the exception of the images contained in this document, this work is © Commonwealth of Australia 2011. You may download, display, print and reproduce this material in unaltered form only for your personal, non-commercial use or use within your organisation for the purposes of the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP). Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, all other rights are reserved.

Use of all or part of this material must include the following attribution:

© Commonwealth of Australia 2011

This document must be attributed as [Intermediate A New Life Australia – Worksheet 9: Aboriginal people].

Any enquiries concerning the use of this material should be directed to:

- The Copyright Officer
  Department of Education and Training
  Location code C50MA10
  GPO Box 9880 Canberra ACT 2601

or emailed to copyright@education.gov.au.

Images

©2011 Photos.com, a division of Getty Images. All rights reserved.
Images reproduced with permission.

Acknowledgements

The AMEP is funded by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training.

Disclaimer

While the Department of Education and Training and its contributors have attempted to ensure the material in this booklet is accurate at the time of release, the booklet contains material on a range of matters that are subject to regular change. No liability for negligence or otherwise is assumed by the department or its contributors should anyone suffer a loss or damage as a result of relying on the information provided in this booklet.

References to external websites are provided for the reader’s convenience and do not constitute endorsement of the information at those sites or any associated organisation, product or service. The Department of Education and Training accepts no responsibility for the accuracy, completeness or currency of material contained on any external website that is referred to in this booklet.
Worksheet 9: Aboriginal people

A. Read Pauline’s story about the Dreamtime.

Aboriginal people from New South Wales and Victoria are called Koori. People from Queensland are called Murris and the people from South Australia are called Nyungars. In Australia, there are many different Aboriginal groups – there are about 500 throughout all of Australia and the stories they tell are called Dreamtime stories.

The Dreamtime is a time of creation. That’s when the land to be the way it is today, and when the animals all came the way they are today, through that period of time. Aboriginal history is different to Australian history. Aboriginal history doesn’t have any dates in it. Our history talks about what happened. And the Dreamtime stories are part of Aboriginal culture, the oral tradition. Before Captain Cook and before the English came here, Aboriginal people didn’t have books. Our information was passed down through the stories, and so the stories have lessons in them. And the lessons of life are how to look after the animals, how to respect each other, and how to care for the land.

And I’ve got one little story that teaches people the sounds of the different kinds of animals or birds that are in New South Wales. So you learn through this story. And if you are a hunter you learn to make the sounds of the birds through this story. It is a simple story and it’s a beautiful story. It goes like this...

When the world was young, in the Dreamtime, a rainbow appeared in the sky. And this rainbow seemed to take colour from all around it – all the reds, all the blues, all the greens, all the yellows and it kept growing and growing and growing. Then the rainbow exploded and when it exploded the pieces of the rainbow fell down to the ground. But as the pieces fell down they changed into the birds we know today. Some of the birds didn’t like the feeling of falling and they cried out in horror, “Aaah Aaah Aaah”, just like the crow does today. And other birds thought it was really funny, and they started laughing like this, “Haa Haa Haa, Haa Haa Haa”, just like the kookaburra. And other birds fell straight down to the ground and started walking around and they sounded like this, “Umh -umh Umh -umh”, just like the emu. And then some other birds spread their wings and started to sing, and that is how the birds got their colour and their voices today, because of the rainbow back in Dreamtime.

One of the reasons the animals are so important to us is because in our culture we believe that the animals are our totems. Every Aboriginal person traditionally had a totem. For example, in my family, my father’s totem is the night owl and my mother’s is the crow. And with those specific animals I’m not allowed to hurt, I’m not allowed to hunt and I’m not allowed to chase. I’ve got to look after them all the time because they are like my grandmother and grandfather – they’re my ancestors.
B. Answer the questions.

1. Do all Aboriginal people belong to one group or are there many different groups?
2. When do Aborigines think the land and the animals were created?
3. How do they pass on the history of their people?
4. Why are the Dreamtime stories so important for the Aboriginal people?
5. Why are the animals so important to the Aboriginal people?
6. Retell the Dreamtime story to your tutor.
7. In your country do you have any stories that are passed down from one generation to the next? If so tell the tutor your story.
8. Write your traditional story in your own words.