

Lesson Plan: Meeting Place

Class: _____ **Teacher:** _____ **Date:** _____

Easy Peasy Level:

Beginner



Lesson Focus:

- Aboriginal Art
- Symbols
- Telling a story with art
- Bird's eye view

Evidence of Learning:

By completing this lesson, the student:

- Is able to discuss the importance art in Aboriginal culture.
- Is able to identify common symbols found in Aboriginal art and their meanings.
- Understands the concept of bird's eye view.
- Is able to create an artwork that utilizes symbols as an aid to tell a story.

Description:

In this artwork we celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island culture by using symbols commonly found in their art to create our own artwork that tells a story.

Please Note:

It is very important to remember when learning about Indigenous Art that you should never copy or recreate images or designs found in Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander artworks. These images are held sacred by Indigenous people and it is considered offensive if non-Indigenous people use their images in their own artworks or refer to their art as 'Aboriginal Art.' In this lesson we use symbols and patterns often used in Indigenous artworks to create our own artwork that tells a fictional story.

Easy Peasy Tips:

- 1 When using tempera disc paints, use a bristle brush rather than a soft hair brush. It will make it much easier.
- 2 Make sure you don't use too much water or your colours will become washed out and not as bright.
- 3 Don't forget to mix and blend colours to create more interest.
- 4 It's also a good idea to refresh your water every now and then so that your colours don't become polluted with other colours.

For The Teacher:

- Show the class images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art. Discuss the importance of



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art to their cultures and the way that it has been used to record their Dreamtime stories.

Remind students of the sensitive nature of Aboriginal art and how we must respect it.

- Discuss how different styles of art were created in different areas of Aboriginal Australia. Xray paintings came from Arnhem land while dot paintings were traditionally created in central Australia. Discuss common symbols seen in the artworks viewed by students.

You will need:

- White paper
- Black marker or pencil
- Tempera disc paints in your choice of colours
- Bristle paint brushes
- Water container or paint palette
- Optional: White pencil or oil pastel
- Newspaper or table covering
- Paint shirt or apron

Creating your artwork:

Place your paper landscape style.

- Have a look at these symbols. These are symbols commonly found in Aboriginal art. The symbols are 'read' by the viewer and tell a story. Remember that you are looking at the picture from above using a 'bird's eye view' like you would be if you were looking at a map.
- Our simple story tells the story of how four women with digging sticks (women carry digging sticks, men carry spears) are sitting by a fire which becomes their meeting place. They have travelled along the tracks to this place which is beside a creek. While they are sitting in this place, a mob of kangaroos hop around them.
- **Drawing:** In the middle of the page draw 3 circles as shown using your black pencil or marker. Don't make them too small and leave a good gap between each of the circles so that we can fit the brush between them.
- Now add 2 more as shown. You will now have 5 circles. If you made your circles too close, you may need to add more circles.
- Now draw 4 lines as shown. These represent the 4 women. Draw them nice and big but don't let them touch the circles or the edge of the page.
- Now complete the shapes as shown. Make them about as thick as your finger.
- Draw shapes as shown on a diagonal. These represent the digging sticks the women would have placed beside them as they rest by the fire.
- Draw three groups of circles as shown to represent the waterholes in the creek.
- Now join them with wavy lines to represent the running water. Don't forget to continue the lines to the edge of the page.
- Between each of the people shapes and digging sticks, draw wavy lines from the circle to edge of the page. Be careful where the line goes behind the creek. You should end up drawing 8 lines. These lines represent the tracks that the women may have taken to reach the meeting place.
- Now draw kangaroo or emu tracks on each side of the camp. Try not to draw them in a



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straight line but in an interesting direction that the animal might take.

- We'll now add some patterns and decorations to our design to make it more interesting. Alongside of the tracks, add tidy dots. Dots are commonly seen in Aboriginal art.
- Now carefully add a diagonal criss cross pattern to each of the women shapes. This is also a common pattern seen in Aboriginal art. If diagonals are too tricky, just use vertical and horizontal lines.
- **Painting:** Using your tempera disc paints, carefully paint your design. We have used colours traditionally seen in Aboriginal art but you could use any. Modern Aboriginal artists use every colour you could imagine! Don't be afraid of mixing colours but think about what colours you should use to make each shape stand out from the one surrounding it. If you use a similar colour, you won't be able to see the difference between shapes.
- Once your artwork is dry, you may like to retrace over any detail that was lost from the painting. You can also add more detail and decoration as shown using a white pencil or oil pastel. Your artwork is now complete.

What do you like about your artwork? What would you do differently next time?

Teacher Evaluation / Comment:



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