



Minutes of Evidence Curriculum & TRP


Suggested questions for the Minutes of Evidence Coranderrk Curriculum Teacher Resource Package ‘**Music resources**’

The collected songs (available on the resource website) have been sourced to offer a different way of accessing a range of themes/topics important to the study of Australian Indigenous histories.

Scott Darlow is an accomplished Aboriginal singer/songwriter who has kindly made this material available for use by Victorian teachers and students. Formerly a high school teacher, Scott is a proud Yorta Yorta man who uses his guitar, didgeridoo and voice to connect with people and educate and inspire them to be passionate about Aboriginal culture and reconciliation.

Due to the fact that this is an *individual* reflecting on his own thoughts, circumstances and experiences, it should not be presumed that other people will necessarily share the same views or experiences.

***note** – The song *We Will Show the Country* (music, lyrics and instruments – Frank Gaylard, vocals – Tim Ward, mixing – Jim Sismanes) was produced as a response to the Minutes of Evidence curriculum project and details Barak’s story at Coranderrk. This could be a good song to begin your analysis of the Coranderrk story.

	
Activity	Resource
<p>Choose a relevant song from the selection by Scott Darlow.</p> <p>Working in pairs or small groups, choose a song or two and</p> <p>a) answer the following questions</p> <p>b) complete the following activities, using one or more of the suggested worksheets.</p>	<p>Songs & lyrics</p> <p>Audio and lyrics available on resource website</p> <p>Useful worksheets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Y chart • Making Connections • 6Cs of Primary Source Analysis <p>Printable worksheets are available on the resource website</p>

Initial song activities

(1) Listen to the songs (avoid reading the lyrics or the synopsis at this stage).

Complete a **Y chart worksheet** by brainstorming:

- What the song “looks like” to you (what do you see in your mind when you listen to the words and music?)
- What the song “sounds like” to you (what do you hear? Expression? Instruments? Language? Meaning?)
- What the song “feels like” to you (what does it make you feel? How do you think the artist feels? How are feelings expressed in the song, either with music or lyrics?)

(2) Once you have listened and completed the Y chart, read the lyrics and song synopses.

Using the **Making Connections worksheet**, identify:

- Any personal experiences this song raises for you
- Any prior knowledge you have about the topic/issues in this song
- Any additional sources, or historical stories or individuals, that come to mind when listening to this song.

(3) Songs can often be very useful primary sources – helping you, for example, to understand what was motivating an artist at the time he/she wrote the song, or perhaps revealing what was an important social issue at the time of its production.

Using the **6Cs of Primary Source Analysis worksheet**, brainstorm:

- The content of the song (what)
- The creator of the song (who)
- The context of the song (where, why)
- Is the source reliable as a source of information? Why/why not?
- How does the song contribute to our understanding of historical issues?
- What connections can you make with your prior knowledge of the topic?

Finally:

- What questions does this song/lyrics/synopsis raise for you?
- What other additional sources might help better understand the issues/topics raised by this song?

Sample questions for songs

Sorry

Sorry is a song written by Scott Darlow that attempts to highlight the real history of this country, and ask the listener to stop and consider how they would feel if they had lived the generations of mistreatment, racism, lack of opportunity, genocide, land displacement and the Stolen Generations experienced by Indigenous peoples in Australia.

Questions:

Listen to the song - and read the lyrics and song synopsis (see PDF).

1. Darlow sings: *“Stolen history is here today,
It's here to stay,
Across the nation, generations
Feel the sorrow and the shame”*

What might he mean when he refers to “stolen history”? Which ‘generations’ might he be talking about who feel the “sorrow and the shame”?

2. The song mentions “genocide”. This is a contentious issue in some quarters – with some historians denying Australia has a genocidal past. Still other historians (and many Aboriginal people) assert that genocide *has* occurred. Research what constitutes ‘genocide’ – and analyse how Australia’s history might be said to have featured aspects of genocide.
3. When Darlow sings of “Bloodline history”, he refers to the “many generations that have had pain, trauma and damage, that then go on to parent the next generation in a way that is influenced by that pain”. How could trying to better understand this intergenerational trauma go some way to contributing to reconciliation in modern Australian society?
4. The title of the song refers to the campaign by many people across Australian society (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal), waged for many years, that sought to obtain an official apology for Australian Indigenous people for the Stolen Generations and related suffering as a result of colonisation. Research the history of the “Sorry” campaign in Australia and the role of the Federal government in this process (i.e. Howard Coalition Government and later the Rudd Labor Government).
5. Darlow writes that *Sorry* is about asking people to feel empathy – often described simplistically as ‘walking in someone else’s shoes’. The process of analysing events using *historical empathy* is a little more complex – involving understanding *why* a historical person acted the way he or she did, based on the culture of the time period being studied, rather than judging people or events from the past simply with emotional responses. How might employing this concept of historical empathy (perhaps better described as ‘historical perspective-taking’) enable us to effectively analyse events from the past (and our present society) in order to envision a better future for all Australians?

See: <http://historicalthinking.ca/historical-perspectives>
https://tc2.ca/uploads/PDFs/thinking-about-history/historical_perspective_elementary.pdf

Two Worlds

Two Worlds is a song written by Scott Darlow that was inspired by a young Indigenous student, Josh Hardy, who was murdered in an act of senseless violence in Melbourne. According to friends and family, Josh had an ability to thrive in both the Aboriginal and the non-Aboriginal communities – a lot like many of the historical figures (Barak, Sir Doug Nicholls, Oodgeroo Noonuccal etc.) we read about when studying places and events such as Coranderrk and the broader struggle for rights and freedoms of Aboriginal people.

Questions:

Listen to the song - and read the lyrics and song synopsis (see PDF).

1. Darlow sings: *“I never felt like I fit in,
Never felt at home, always felt alone
Like somehow I'd been switched...”*

What might he mean by this?

2. What might Darlow mean when he sings he's going to “keep his dreaming strong”?
3. When Darlow mentions “All the things they did, the stuff they heard, the horror that they saw” – to what (historically) might he be referring?
4. Thinking about the story of Coranderrk in particular, how (in what ways) can people such as William Barak be said to have “walked in two worlds”?

Can you identify other important Aboriginal figures in Australian history who managed to hold onto their cultural identity while also having an enormous impact on broader (and often hostile) Australian society with their talents, skills, determination and courage?

5. How might allowing ourselves to learn and grow from other people and cultures make us 'richer'?

Can you think of major examples from Australian history where society has benefited from the input of different cultures and traditions?

Solid Rock

Perhaps one of the most famous Australian rock songs ever written, *Solid Rock* was written by Shane Howard (Goanna) and released in 1982. It reached No. 2 on the singles charts and had an impact overseas. Archie Roach, the famed Aboriginal singer/songwriter, noted that its release

was a turning point. It made us aware that we weren't alone. Made me think about songs and music. The song's as relevant now as it was back then.

In this version, Scott Darlow performs *Solid Rock* with Shane Howard himself.

Questions:

Listen to the song - and read the lyrics and song synopsis (see PDF).

1. Who were the “proud people” that came, “looking for their promised land”, mentioned in the second verse?
2. From your study of the European settlement of Australia, explain in detailed terms what Howard/Darlow mean when they sing about the “sting” of “white man, white law, white gun”.
3. Scott Darlow states that this was the first song about Aboriginal people and culture that mainstream Australia embraced. What other songs since (with similar themes) have had a similar impact or effect on the Australian and international music scene?
4. Reflect on the line “And the winds of change, are blowing down the line”. After an analysis of modern Australian history (since the 1980s), is it possible to identify “changes” in the recognition of Australian Indigenous people, as well as a genuine spirit of reconciliation in contemporary Australian society?

List and briefly detail key historical events to justify your response.

5. Read/listen to Kevin Rudd’s *Apology to Australia’s Indigenous peoples* - a speech delivered in 2008.

<http://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/our-country/our-people/apology-to-australias-indigenous-peoples>

Using the **Analysing Cause and Consequence worksheet** (see PDF) and your research into the ‘Sorry’ campaign’s history, assess the relevant social **factors, groups** and **individuals** who were involved and evaluate the impact each had towards this momentous occasion in 2008.

See: <http://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/sorry-day-stolen-generations>

<https://www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Apology-fact-sheet.pdf>

Down Like Flies

Down Like Flies is a song written by Scott Darlow about the plight of indigenous people that, often and for many, has not improved even after generations.

Questions:

Listen to the song - and read the lyrics and song synopsis (see PDF).

1. What does Darlow mean when he sings, “we’re going down like flies”? Who? How?
2. What is the ‘gap’ to which he refers? What does he mean when he says that “the gap’s not closing anywhere”?
3. In what sense are the issues sung about in this song “everyone’s fault”?
4. What might Darlow mean when he sings that “the grass is greener over there”?
5. In his synopsis to *Down Like Flies*, Darlow refers to life expectancy figures, education statistics and prison statistics.

A useful site to better understand these issues (and the part they play in disadvantaging Australian indigenous people and communities), and how you might be able to positively contribute, is:

<https://www.oxfam.org.au/what-we-do/indigenous-australia/close-the-gap/>

a) Write a report on these 3 important issues using the following sites for research. Can you identify any trends? Major issues? Overt differences from the statistics of non-Aboriginal people?

Aboriginal health (life expectancy etc.) figures:

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/indigenous-observatory/>

Aboriginal education statistics:

<http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/CaSHome.nsf/4a256353001af3ed4b2562bb00121564/95ed814872649b0dca25758b000314ef1?OpenDocument>

Aboriginal incarceration statistics

<https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/law/aboriginal-prison-rates>

Note: April 2016 marked 25 years since the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

b) Has the situation improved since this report was published? Using an **Annotated Timeline** or **Colour coded Timeline worksheet** (see PDF), create a timeline of events surrounding Aboriginal incarceration *since* the findings from the Royal Commission were published in 1991. To what extent has there been change, or continuity, when it comes to this issue?

You Won

You Won is a song written by Scott Darlow, which was inspired by Sir Douglas Nicholls – and motivated also by the example of Aboriginal leaders such as Vincent Lingiari and Mick Dodson.

Questions:

1. Darlow sings “cos you played them at their game, and in the end you won”. What might he mean by this?
2. Who was the ‘them’ to whom he refers, and in what ways did Douglas Nicholls, or other Aboriginal leaders from many different eras, ‘play them at their own game’?
3. What might the subject of the song possess that “ is so much stronger than anything they've got”?
4. Research the life and achievements of Sir Doug Nicholls. For what reasons might Nicholls be a hero to Darlow – and many other people?

See:

<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/nicholls-sir-douglas-ralph-doug-14920>

The story of legend: Sir Doug Nicholls (short film)

<https://vimeo.com/168125126>

5. Research the achievements of a female figure from Australian history (and/or the present!) who might, in the same way as Sir Doug Nicholls, have provided (or may still be providing) inspiration and example to following generations (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal alike). Complete a **Historical individual study worksheet** (see PDF) noting their qualities/achievements.

Choose from this list or research one of your own choosing:

- Truganini
- Faith Bandler
- Oodgeroo Noonuccal
- Rosalie Kunoth-Monks
- Patricia O'Shane
- Lowitja O'Donoghue
- Marcia Langton

See also:

<http://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/nitv-news/article/2015/03/06/20-inspiring-black-women-who-have-changed-australia>

Extension Task:

Research a song/s by another Indigenous artist or with themes relevant to Aboriginal Australia and its history.

Apply the same graphic organisers to assist with your analysis – or choose a different one that suits your purpose from the worksheets available online.

- ◆ What topics do they sing about?
- ◆ What is the artist trying to achieve by writing this music?

Suggested artists/songs include:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| - Archie Roach | = | "Took the Children Away" |
| - Yothu Yindi | = | "Treaty", "Freedom" |
| - Midnight Oil | = | "Beds are Burning", "The Dead Heart" |
| - Paul Kelly/Kev Carmody | = | "From Little Things Big Things Grow" |