

History

Indigenous Australians



For Junior Primary

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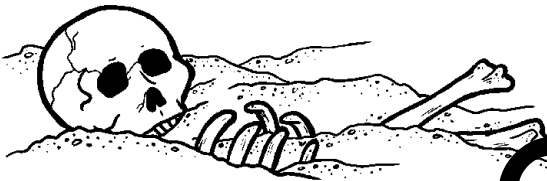
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- The very first people to set foot in Australia were Indigenous Australians.
- They walked from Asia to Australia on land bridges, which are now underwater.
- They have lived in Australia for approximately 50,000 to 60,000 years.
- We know this because we have dug up and dated their skeletons and items that they have used. We have also uncovered and dated their art work.

☐ Fill out the information.

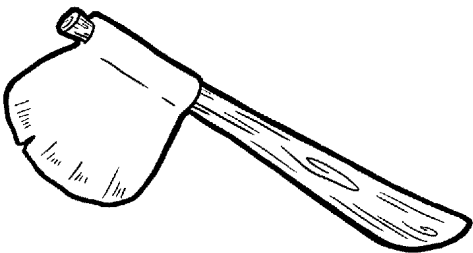


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☐ These are all primary sources of evidence because ...

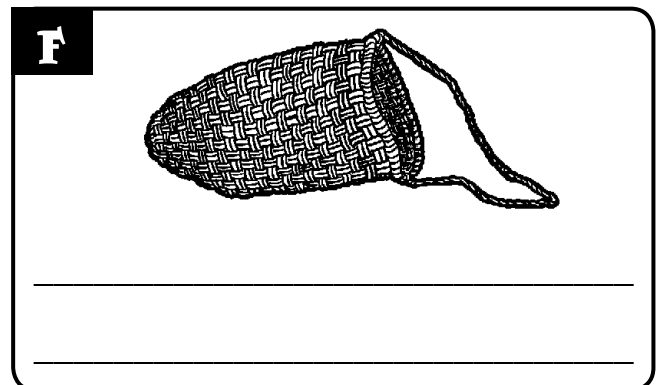
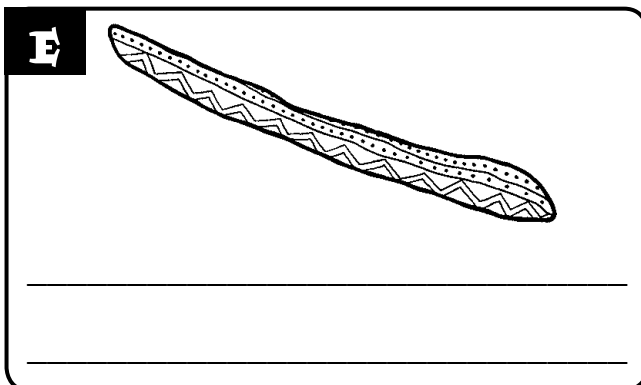
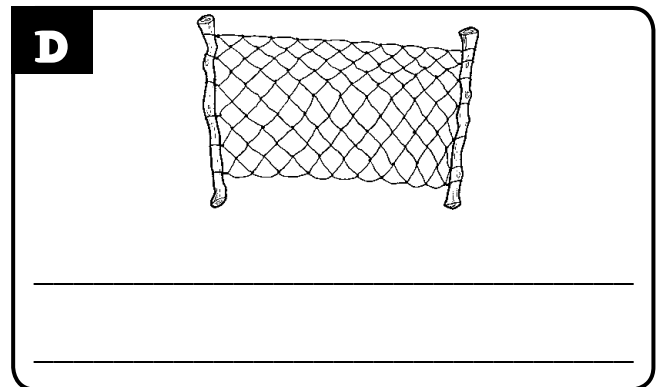
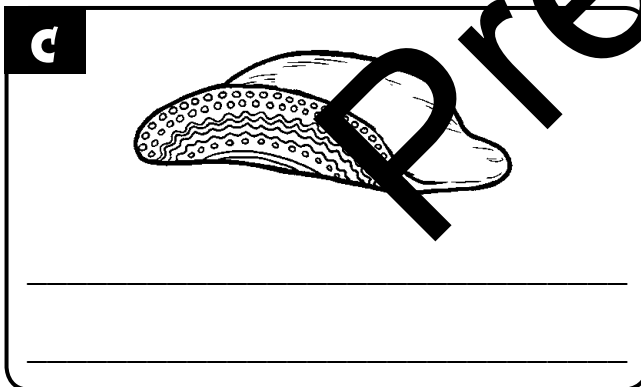
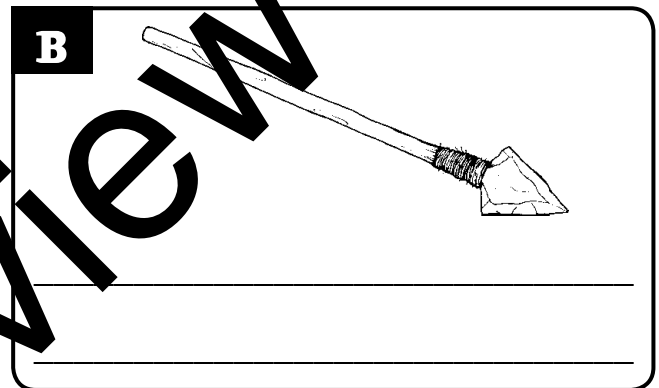
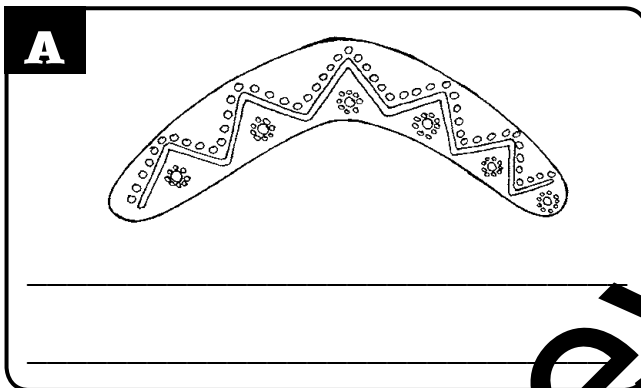
- The Indigenous Australians travelled to Australia in groups, known as clans. The groups settled in different spots and spoke different languages.
- They made their own hunting and gathering tools from whatever they could find in their environment. The hunting tools were used to kill animals. The gathering tools were used to collect food from above ground and under the ground.

☐ Use the words to label the hunting and gathering tools.

fishing net
spear

boomerang
coolamon

digging stick
basket



☐ Colour the hunting tools green and the gathering tools yellow.
Say what each item might have been made from.

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► Activity Page

- Indigenous Australians were known as hunter-gatherers.
- This means that they learned how to find different kinds of food and sources of fresh water by moving from place to place.

☐ Place the foods in the correct columns.

honeycombs	fish	goannas	mussels	flowers
possums	wallabies	wattle seeds	echidnas	ducks
frogs	berries	yams	moths	grubs
pigeons	birds' eggs	lilies	cockatoos	macadamia nuts

Foods Gathered	Foods Hunted

- Indigenous Australians also made their own art materials and musical instruments.

☐ Match the words with the descriptions by drawing lines.

Paint brush

sticks of wood knocked together or on the ground rhythmically.

Paint

made by sticking human hair to a stick of wood.

Canvas

bark, cave walls and rocks were used.

Clap sticks

made by crushing coloured rocks and mixing with saliva or blood.

☐ Look at these symbols that are used in indigenous desert art.



tracks



kangaroo



emu



honey ant



grub



possum



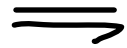
club



digging stick



human



spears



nest



well or waterhole



man



rain



star



quandong



bush plum



bowl



rain/flowers/
fruit/eggs/fruit



rainbow/cloud/
sand dune/cliff

☐ Create a message in the space below using the symbols above. Can a classmate interpret your message?

Preview

Write what your message means on the back of this sheet.

How to make a paintbrush

☐ Indigenous Australians obtained all of their art supplies from their natural surroundings. Use the information on page 9 to write instructions for 'How to make paint and a paintbrush from natural materials'. Set your instructions out as numbered steps.

- When the British set up colonies around Australia, the lives of Indigenous Australians were disrupted.
- The British brought many diseases with them (e.g. smallpox and malaria), which wiped out whole clans of Indigenous Australians.
- The British brought foxes and cats with them which fouled natural water supplies and made it difficult for Indigenous Australians to access fresh water.
- The British fenced off large amounts of land so the Indigenous Australians couldn't move from place to place to access food.
- The British claimed that Indigenous Australians had no right to sell or buy land because Australia was 'terra nullius' (belonged to no one).

Consequences

☐ Use the information above to complete the consequence chart.

Diseases

The British brought many diseases with them, such as smallpox and malaria.

These diseases wiped out whole clans of Indigenous Australians.

Foxes and Cats

Fences

Terra Nullius

Page 3

The students should recognise the first source as a human fossil or skeleton. Tell them that many indigenous skeletons have been dug up at traditional indigenous burial sites and experts have tested these skeletons to determine for how long indigenous people have inhabited Australia. You could discuss the Mungo Man and the Mungo Lady – indigenous skeletons dug up at Lake Mungo in New South Wales. Experts believe that the Mungo Man is 40,000 years old and the Mungo Lady is between 40,000 and 68,000 years old, making her the oldest fossil in Australia.

The students should label the second source rock art. Tell the students that indigenous art work can be found at indigenous rock shelters on the walls. Experts are able to date the art work and understand more about the indigenous way of life by what the people represented in their art.

The students should label the third source either an artefact, hunting tool or spear.

As a class think of a definition for primary sources of evidence (sources which have been created at the time of the event, rather than after the event). Discuss why all of the sources shown are primary sources.

Page 4

The hunting tools are: the boomerang (A), the spear (B) and the fishing net (D). The gathering tools are: the coolamon (C), the digging stick (E) and the basket (F).

A boomerang was made from wood taken from trees; spears were made from wood and stone and tied together using the stems of plants; fishing nets were made from the fibres from barks of trees; coolamons were carved from wood, as were digging sticks. Baskets were made from stems of plants and from strips of bark softened in water.

Page 5

Foods gathered: honeycombs, birds' eggs, berries, wattle seeds, yams, lilies, mussels, moths, macadamia nuts, flowers, grubs. Foods hunted: possums, frogs, pigeons, echidnas, wallabies, goannas, fish, cockatoos, ducks.

The paintbrush should be matched with the 2nd description. The paint should be matched with the 4th description. The canvas should be matched with the 3rd description and the clap sticks should be matched with the 1st description.