

## To Federation and Beyond – Teacher’s notes.

### Introduction.

The show covers how Australia has been governed from the Dreamtime to the present, and how, in a democracy, the people contribute to the way a country is run.

**1. Aboriginal Australia.** The key principle to the way Australia was governed in the Dreamtime was to respect the land, and it will in turn sustain you and provide for you. The Aboriginal way of life was in step with the cycles of nature, which guided their thinking as to how their society should be governed, leading to a sustainable relationship with the land.

**Q.** The Aboriginal people lived in harmony with the land. What does this mean ?

**A.** They only drew from the excess food and resources that the land supplied, having little impact on the landscape, and making very few changes to it.

**Q.** Did they always live in harmony with each other ?

**A.** No, at times there was conflict within tribes and between tribes.

**Q.** How was conflict resolved?

**A.** At times, through capital punishment, otherwise, a settlement or agreement would be made.

**Q.** Who had the most say in how an Aboriginal tribe was governed ?

**A.** Usually the Tribal elders, (the older men), who had a great deal of life experience and were considered very wise.

**Q.** What type of society did the Aboriginal people establish ?

**A.** A Hunter-gatherer society.

**Exercise:** Many tribal names are actually family names because the family and its history was very important in Aboriginal society.

(i) Do you know the Tribal names for your area ? If not, what are they ?

(ii) Trace your family history for several generations.

### **2. Colonisation.**

In 1770, a British explorer landed in Botany Bay and claimed that it was now British territory. The large European countries such as Spain, France, Portugal, Holland, (The Netherlands), and Germany had been doing this since as far back as the 13<sup>th</sup> Century.

**Q.** Why did these countries claim the land when there were already indigenous people living there ?

**A.** They were considered more powerful because of the degree of technology they had developed, and chose to expand. They would continue to occupy the land until someone more powerful came along to take it.

**Q.** When colonisation and settlement took place, what effect did it have on the land and the people ?

**A.** People. The consequences were often tragic for indigenous people. If there was a battle they would ultimately lose to the more powerful nations. If not, members could be affected by new diseases, causing considerable loss of life. Some indigenous people would accept the change and move on.

Landscape. Forests would be cleared to make way for farms, so the landscape was changed considerably. The balance between the land and the people was changed to make way for a new way of life, bringing excesses such as pollution and loss of habitat for wildlife.

**Q.** What type of society did the colonists establish ?

**A.** A subsistence society, where people farmed the land around them to grow the food and keep the animals that were needed to survive.

**Q.** In 1788 when the First Fleet landed, how was the new colony governed ?

**A.** One person, known as the Governor, was the most powerful person in the colony who made all or most of the important decisions that affected the colony.

**Q.** Once the colony had been established, what became the main industry ?

**A.** Agriculture. Now that the farms could produce enough food and resources to support the people in the colony, they began producing a surplus and sold products to other nations to establish trade. The first major product was wool.

**Q.** How many colonies would eventually be established and what would they be called ?

- A.**
1. 1788: Colony of New South Wales.
  2. 1825: Colony of Van Diemen's Land. (Changed to Tasmania in 1856.)
  3. 1827: Colony of Western Australia
  4. 1836: South Australia, began as a British province, but changed to a colony in 1861.
  5. 1851: Colony of Victoria.
  6. 1859: Colony of Queensland.

Note: In 1841, New Zealand, which was originally also claimed by the British, separated from New South Wales.

**Q.** In which year did the land become known as Australia and what was the occasion called ?

**A.** In 1901, the land became known as Australia and the colonies became states. This occasion was called 'Federation'.

Note: In 1911, the Australian Capital Territory (Canberra), was established.

**Q.** When and where was gold first discovered ?

**A.** In 1851, Edward Hargreaves discovered it near Bathurst, N.S.W.

Because gold was discovered, people started looking for it elsewhere.

**Q.** Name 3 other Gold mining towns or regions in the colonies.

**A.** Ballarat, Bendigo: Victoria

Hill End, Sofala: New South Wales.

Kalgoorlie: Western Australia.

Palmer River: Queensland.

### **The Australian Flag.**

**Q.** When was the flag first flown and what do the symbols on it mean ?

**A.** The flag was first flown in 1901.

**Symbols:** The Union Flag. (Top left). Represents our British background from the colonial past and our membership in the Commonwealth.

Large 7-point star. (under the Union flag). Represents the 6 states and 1 territory (A.C.T.) that make up Australia.

The Southern Cross: (The other 5 stars). Can be seen from everywhere in Australia, and plays a part in Aboriginal folklore.

### **3. Democracy.**

**Q.** What do we call the system of Government existing in Australia today ?

**A.** A Democracy.

**Q.** What are some of the key principles in a Democracy ?

**A.** (i) People vote for the person they want to represent them in Parliament, where important decisions which affect the running of the country are made.

(ii) Each person's vote is of equal importance, and carries the same value whether you are rich or poor, etc.

(iii) Politicians are voted by the people to run parliament, and they must run the country according to a set of laws and principles called, 'the Constitution'.

The aim of "To Federation and Beyond" is to show how people of different perspectives all have an opportunity to be heard through voting for their respective leaders, and that power in a democracy is shared by the people and the government.