

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
HISTORIES AND CULTURES

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
learners first

LIVING CULTURES – MUTTONBIRDING

YEAR 5

The
Orb

MUTTONBIRDING

CULTURE AND COMMERCE

Learners explore the concepts of cultural and commercial muttonbirding practiced by Tasmania's Aboriginal people. They examine key commonalities and differences between the two practices and conduct a comparative study.

CROSS CURRICULUM PRIORITY

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures

Organising idea 2

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities maintain a special connection to and responsibility for Country/Place.

ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS

Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS)

Students describe the significance of people and events/developments in bringing about change. They identify the causes and effects of change on particular communities and describe aspects of the past that have remained the same.

They describe factors that influence their choices as consumers and identify strategies that can be used to inform these choices. They describe different views on how to respond to an issue or challenge.

CONTENT DESCRIPTORS

Geography

The influence of people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, on the environmental characteristics of Australian places (ACHASSK112).

Economics and Business

The difference between needs and wants and why choices need to be made about how limited resources are used (ACHASSK119).

Types of resources (natural, human, capital) and the ways societies use them to satisfy the needs and wants of present and future generations (ACHASSK120).

GENERAL CAPABILITIES

Critical and Creative Thinking

Inquiring – identifying, exploring and organising information and ideas

Pose questions

Level 4 – pose questions to clarify and interpret information and probe for causes and consequences

Ethical Understanding

Understanding ethical concepts and issues

Explore ethical concepts in context

Level 4 – Explain what constitutes an ethically better or worse outcome and how it might be accomplished

Intercultural Understanding

Reflecting on intercultural experiences and taking responsibility

Mediate cultural difference

Level 4 – discuss ways of reconciling differing cultural values and perspectives in addressing common concerns

Learning Goals

Learners will:

- » Describe key elements of muttonbirding for both commercial and cultural purposes.
- » Understand the key principles of producing mutton birds as a food source.
- » Identify areas in and around Tasmania where muttonbirding is practiced by the Aboriginal Community.

Learning Sequence

Activating and Engaging

Community Links

Land Links

View *Practice* from the 'Living Cultures – Muttonbirding' section of The Orb.

Ask learners:

What is happening in the mutton bird shed and rookery?

Who gets to do what in the 'birding' process?

Ask learners:

- » How do the birders on the video differentiate between commercial and cultural birding?
- » What is the language people are using to describe the practice of muttonbirding?

Exploring and Discovering

Community Links

Invite a member of the Aboriginal Sharers of Knowledge program to address the class on the following questions:

- » What is involved in commercial birding?
- » What financial and personal risks to commercial birders have to take to set up business?
- » What are the main issues for Aboriginal people regarding both commercial and cultural or family birding?
- » What has changed in the mutton bird practice with advances in technology such as the introduction of freezers, 4WD motorbikes etc?

Examine the aspect of sustainability.

- » Are there enough birds to run commercial operations sustainably?
- » How does shed and rookery ownership work?
- » What commercial, economic, practical and sustainable issues need to be considered for Birders' today?

Have learners describe and compare the practices of commercial and cultural muttonbirding.

- » How are Aboriginal people continuing their culture by engaging in these practices?
- » How can the two practices operate harmoniously in adjoining rookeries?
- » Are there any conflicts or threats to either practice that is caused by the other?
- » What advantages and disadvantages exist for commercial and cultural practices?

Synthesising and Applying

Deconstruct-Reconstruct

Learning Maps

Have learners compare the two practices and present advantages, disadvantages and opportunities of each practice.

Ask learners to:

- » Create a sequence for the timeline of a mutton bird rookery.
- » Present an annotated pictorial image outlining the stages of both cultural and commercial muttonbirding practices.

- » Identify what requirements would sustain a commercial rookery taking into account costing, space, sustainability, and possible alternative energy processes.
- » Create a marketing strategy for mutton birds as a commercial enterprise including a flyer that supports the idea of mutton birds as a viable competition to the meat industry.

Success Criteria

Learners:

- » Describe the process of muttonbirding for commercial and cultural purposes as done by Tasmania's Aboriginal people.
- » Compare the two practices of commercial and family only muttonbirding and distinguish between the two.
- » Explain the advantages, disadvantages and opportunities of both practices as viable cultural practices for Tasmanian Aboriginal people.

Resources

- » [The Orb](#)
- » [Australian Curriculum](#)
- » [Aboriginal Sharers of Knowledge \(ASK Program\) Guidelines](#)
- » [Aboriginal Sharers of Knowledge \(ASK Program\) Application Form](#)
- » The Aboriginal Education Library: email Aboriginal.education.library@education.tas.gov.au or telephone 03 6165 5480 for more resources, including the ones listed below.
- » The Eight-Way Framework of Aboriginal Pedagogy
- » *Circle*, Jeannie Baker, 2016
- » *Return to the Islands [kit] : the story of Aborigines and the tradition of muttonbirding*, Department of Education, Tasmania
- » DVD – *The Big Dog Connection*, Aboriginal Education Services, Tasmania
- » [TMAG Online Resources](#)

Glossary

Mutton bird

A shearwater or petrel of the southern oceans. D

Muttonbirding

The seasonal harvesting of the chicks of petrels, especially shearwater species, for food, oil and feathers by recreational or commercial hunters. WP

Rookery

A rookery is a colony of breeding animals, generally birds. ... The word applies to the nesting place of birds, such as crows and rooks, the source of the term. The breeding grounds of colony-forming seabirds and marine mammals (true seals or sea lions) and even some turtles are also referred to as rookeries. WP

D [Dictionary.com](#)

G General understanding

WP [Wikipedia](#)



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