

UNIT 1: MY MOB



Topics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do we communicate? 2. Why is language important to culture? 3. What is cultural identity?
Objectives	<p>Working individually and collaboratively, students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore types of communication, both verbal and non-verbal. • Explore, analyse and interpret the nature and purpose of communication. • Examine how language is connected with culture. • Learn about formal and informal language and how language can help to define culture. • Explore the inseparable connection between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and Country, environment, fauna and flora. • Learn about the culture of the Adnyamathanha people and develop the ability to recognise elements of their own culture. • Develop an understanding of the diversity of family roles and responsibilities within and across cultures.
Curriculum Links	<p>This material has been aligned with the Australian Curriculum areas of:</p> <p>English The Arts Languages</p> <p>With a Cross-Curriculum Priority of:</p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures</p>
8 Ways Aboriginal Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deconstruct/Reconstruct • Learning Maps • Community Links • Symbols and Images • Non-verbal • Story-sharing
Videos	<p>Wadu Matyidi Mini Doc: <i>Who We Are - Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla</i></p>



UNIT 1: MY MOB

Unit 1: My Mob	
Inquiry 1: How do we communicate?	
Description: Working individually and collaboratively, students explore, analyse and interpret the nature and purpose of communication.	
Student Activity Sheets	MM1.1 - Shapes Game MM1.2 - Reflection Sheet: Communication MM1.3 - Mime Activity MM1.4 - Emoticon Drawing Activity
Background Information Sheet	Communication

1. VIEW

As a class, view the *Wadu Matyidi* animation and the Mini Doc: *Who We Are - Inhaadi Utyu Ngarpurla*.

2. EXPLORE COMMUNICATION

Discuss the three main characters in the animation and the way they communicate with one another.

Ask the following questions to stimulate the discussion:

- Other than talking, how do people communicate with each other?
- What forms of non-verbal communication did the children use?
- How did the characters react when they saw the man on the horse?
- Why was it important for the characters to communicate without verbal communication?

On an IWB or board, write the following communication forms as main headings: *verbal* and *non-verbal*. Ask students to brainstorm ideas about why each form of communication is important and have them suggest a definition for each.

Refer students to the Background Information Sheet Communication to further research the suggested forms of communication.

3. SHAPES GAME

Divide the class into pairs and have them play the Shapes Game (Activity Sheet: MM1.1). Through this game, students should begin to realise their reliance on non-verbal cues (e.g. body gestures and touch) as much as verbal cues. It is anticipated that students will experience some frustration in relying on only verbal communication skills.

After each player has had a turn, ask the class to assess how they performed in the game and what they may have learned about communication throughout the process. Ask students to complete 'Part 1' of the Reflection Sheet: Communication (Activity Sheet: MM1.2).

4. MIME

Introduce students to the Mime Activity (Activity Sheet: MM1.3). Ask students what they know about mime and what they believe to be the important features of mime. Divide students into pairs to complete their activity sheet and play the Mime Game. Have students demonstrate their action to the class.

Ask students to complete 'Part 2' of the Reflection Sheet: Communication (Activity Sheet: MM1.2).

5. EMOTICONS

Instruct students to complete the Emoticon Drawing Activity (Activity Sheet: MM1.4), whereby they use a digital drawing program (such as Microsoft Paint) or paper and pencils to draw what the emotions of 'happy', 'sad', 'anger' and 'fear' look like. If students have a mobile phone, they may wish to emulate the emoticons from their phone.

6. REFLECT

Ask students to complete 'Part 3' of the Reflection Sheet: Communication (Activity Sheet: MM1.2).

Follow this up with a class discussion asking the students what they have learnt about communication:

- What interesting things have you learnt about communication?
- Which type of communication do you think is most important? Why?



UNIT 1: MY MOB

Inquiry 1: How do we communicate?

Activity Sheets:

- MM1.1 - Shapes Game
- MM1.2 - Reflection Sheet: Communication
- MM1.3 - Mime Activity
- MM1.4 - Emoticon Drawing Activity

1. View

Watch the *Wadu Matyidi* animation and Mini Doc: *Who We Are - Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla*.

2. Explore Communication

Other than speaking, can you think of ways in which you communicate with others? What were some of the ways that the main characters in the animation communicated with one another? Explore with your class and read the Background Information Sheet on [Communication](#) to help you learn more.

3. Shapes Game

In pairs, play the [Shapes Game](#), following the instructions provided. How did you go? Was it easy? Share your results with your class.

Complete 'Part 1' of your [Reflection Sheet: Communication](#) - don't forget to add your name!

4. Mime

What do you know about 'mime'? Answer the questions in your [Mime Activity](#) sheet and play the Mime Game with a partner. Demonstrate your miming action to the class and see if they can guess what it is.

Answer 'Part 2' of your [Reflection Sheet: Communication](#) to record what you have learnt.

5. Emoticons

Draw a picture to represent each of the emotions listed in your [Emoticon Drawing Activity](#) sheet. Use a computer drawing program such as Paint, or print the page and use pencils. If you have a mobile phone handy, you might even like to find an appropriate emoticon and copy it into your page. List beside each picture any words or physical features that might help to define the emotion.

6. Reflect

Finalise your [Reflection Sheet: Communication](#) by answering the questions in 'Part 3'.

MM1.1

SHAPES GAME

Two Players

Each player needs:

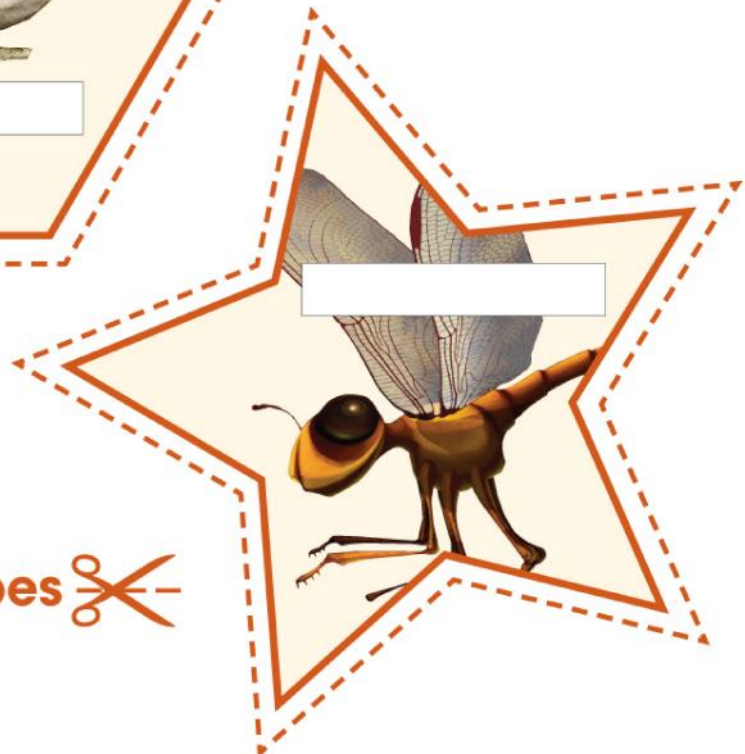
- 2 pages of the printed *Wadu Matyidi* shapes
- a pair of scissors
- a large piece of paper

Instructions

1. Cut out all of your shapes.
2. Write the name of the shape in the middle of each one.
3. Sit back to back on the floor with your partner, so you cannot see each other. Place your sheet of paper in front of you and your shapes next to the paper.
4. Choose who will be player one and who will be player two.
5. Player one – arrange your shapes onto the piece of paper in front of you. This can be in any order, but don't tell player two where you are placing your shapes.
6. Player two – no peeking and no speaking! Your challenge is to now try and arrange your shapes onto your piece of paper, so that they match player one's order, using only the verbal direction from player one.
7. Player one - give directions to your partner about what order you have placed your shapes and where. For example "the square is at the top left hand side of the large paper" and "the triangle is on the bottom right hand side of the page".
8. You must not repeat the instruction, or give any more detailed instructions to player two.
9. Player two – you must follow the instructions without asking any questions and without speaking at all.
10. Continue playing the game until all of the shapes are placed on the large piece of paper.
11. When all the shapes are on the paper, compare how your and your partner's shapes look on the large paper. Do they look the same or are they different?
12. Now swap roles and play again.

Too easy? Let's make it harder...

Try to play the game again, but this time, you aren't allowed to use the names of the shapes. For example, "this shape has four sides and I have placed it at the top left hand side of the paper" and "this shape has three sides and is on the bottom right hand side of the page". Hint: Use the pictures and colours found on the shapes to help you describe them to your partner.



Cut out the shapes 



Cut out the shapes ✂





Name: _____

MM1.2

Reflection Sheet:

COMMUNICATION

Part 1

1. Were your partner's shapes placed differently to yours at the end of the Shapes Game?
2. What did you find most difficult about the Shapes Game?
3. What feedback would you give your partner about the instructions they gave you during the Shapes Game?
4. If you were to play the game again, what would you do differently to make sure you were giving your partner really clear instructions?



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MM1.2

Reflection Sheet: COMMUNICATION

Part 2

5. What is non-verbal communication?

6. Think about the *Wadu Matyidi* animation and explain a time when the characters communicated without words.

7. Think about the *Wadu Matyidi* animation. Why do you think non-verbal communication (body language) was important to the character?

8. Explain a time when you have used non-verbal communication (e.g. at home, at school or with a friend).



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M1.2

Reflection Sheet.

COMMUNICATION

Part 3

9. List **five** examples of when you have used written communication.

10. Explain why verbal communication is important.

11. Why do you think it is important to be able to understand the emotions another person is feeling?

12. What was the most important thing you have learnt about communication?



Name: _____

MM1.3

MIME ACTIVITY

Non-Verbal Actions

1. Think back to the class list of examples of non-verbal behaviours and communication. Write down some examples that portray a simple non-verbal, everyday action.

- i. e.g. waving goodbye _____
- ii. _____
- iii. _____
- iv. _____

Mime Game

1. Find a partner and choose an action from the list below:

Mime examples from *Wadu Matyidi*

- skimming rocks across the waterhole
- catching an insect
- tracking an animal
- building a campfire
- playing clap sticks
- climbing a tree
- drinking from a waterhole

2. With your partner, practice miming the action. Be ready to perform this in front of the class. Remember mime means you are acting without using any words. So make sure your actions are big and clear!



Name: _____

M.1.4

EMOTICON DRAWING ACTIVITY

1. Use either paper and pencils or a drawing application on your computer.
2. In the box, draw a face that displays the emotion written below.
3. List some of the physical features that might show this emotion next to your drawing.

HAPPY

SAD

ANGER

FEAR



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Unit 1: My Mob

Inquiry 2. Why is language important to culture?

Description:

Students examine how language is connected with culture. Students learn about formal and informal language and how this can help to define culture.

Student Activity Sheets

MM2.1 - Language
MM2.2 - Language Enquiry
MM2.3 - Reflection Sheet: Language and Culture

Background Information Sheets

Language and Culture
Communication
Wadu Matyidi Press Kit

1. VIEW

As a class, view the *Wadu Matyidi* animation and the Mini Doc: *Who We Are - Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla*.

2. EXPLORE LANGUAGE

As a class, discuss what the students observe about the three main characters of the animation and the way they use language to communicate with one another. Ask the following open-ended questions to stimulate students thoughts and opinions about language:

- What do we know about the language that the three main characters were speaking?
- Was the language style of the characters formal or informal?
- Do you think it is important for different cultures to speak their own language?

Ask students to individually complete the questions in Language (Activity Sheet: MM2.1).

3. EXPLORE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Split the class into 3-6 small groups. Ask each group to read the Background Information Sheet Language and Culture and then discuss one of the following topics:

- How can language give us a sense of belonging?
- How might language create culture?
- How can different languages be preserved over time?

Each group should have a recorder and a reporter to capture the main points of their discussion on the Language Enquiry (Activity Sheet: MM2.2) sheet provided, for reporting back to the class.

Follow on from the activity with a class discussion about the Adnyamathanha Language class students represented in the Mini Doc: *Who We Are - Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla* and their project *Wadu Matyidi*.

- How has the language class given these students a sense of belonging?
- How has the *Wadu Matyidi* project helped to preserve culture?

You may wish to refer to the Press Kit for additional background information about the *Wadu Matyidi* project.

4. REFLECT

Ask students to reflect on their small group discussion by completing the Reflection Sheet: Language and Culture (Activity Sheet: MM2.3).



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Inquiry 2. Why is language important to culture?

Activity Sheets:

MM2.1 - Language
MM2.2 - Language Enquiry
MM2.3 - Reflection Sheet: Language and Culture

1. View

Watch the *Wadu Matyidi* animation and Mini Doc: *Who We Are - Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla*.

2. Explore Language

How did the three main characters in the animation *Wadu Matyidi* communicate with one another? How important do you think it is for different cultures to speak their own language? Discuss your ideas with the class. Use these ideas to complete your Language activity sheet. You might like to use an online dictionary or an online encyclopedia, such as Wikipedia, to help develop your answers.

3. Explore Language and Culture

With your group, read through the Background Information Sheet Language and Culture and select one of the following topics:

- i. How can language give us a sense of belonging?
- ii. How might language create culture?
- iii. How can different languages be preserved over time?

Discuss the topic with your group and use the Language Enquiry sheet to record any important points from your discussion so that you can report them back to the class.

Once you've heard from each of the groups, think about the Adnyamathanha Language class students in the Mini Doc: *Who We Are - Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla* and their language project *Wadu Matyidi*. How do you think the language class has given these students a sense of belonging? Do you think the project helped to preserve the Adnyamathanha culture? Share your ideas with your class.

4. Reflect

Answer the questions in your Reflection Sheet: Language and Culture to show what you have learnt about language and culture.



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MM2.1

LANGUAGE

Now that you have just had a class discussion about language and watched the *Wadu Matyidi* animation and Mini Doc: *Who We Are - Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla*, answer the following questions:

1. Write your own definition of the word *language* in the box below. You might like to use an online dictionary or encyclopedia for more help.

Language:

2. Can you think of any examples of different languages used in different cultures? Write them down.

3. Do you use language differently when you are talking to your friends compared to when you talk to an elderly relative? Write your answer and explain.



Name: _____

LANGUAGE ENQUIRY

Your topic: _____

[illegible]



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MM2.3

Reflection Sheet.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

1. Use the table below to list any ideas about the following questions:

Why is language important to us?	How do we use language?	What are the benefits of using language?

2. Create a statement, to share with your class, which describes the connection between language and culture.



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Inquiry 3. What is cultural identity?

Description:

Students develop an understanding of culture and cultural identity. Students think about their own culture, whilst exploring the culture of the Adnyamathanha people.

Student Activity Sheets

MM3.1 - Concept Map: Culture
MM3.2 - Ema's Profile
MM3.3 - Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla - Who We Are

Background Information Sheets

Language and Culture
Cultural Identity

1. VIEW

As a class, view the *Wadu Matyidi* animation and the Mini Doc: *Who We Are - Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla*.

2. EXPLORE CULTURE

Guide students in using a dictionary, either online or in book form, to look up the definition of 'culture'. There are many different definitions so focus students on the definition relating to social or ethnic groups, rather than on the arts and education definitions. You might like to use the Background Information Sheet Language and Culture to assist them with their research.

Direct students to individually create a concept map, or another visual brainstorm, demonstrating their understanding of the word 'culture'. This can be done using mind mapping software, Microsoft Word or by hand using the provided Concept Map: Culture (Activity Sheet: MM3.1). Their map should include:

- The word 'culture' in the centre of the page
- Any words or sentences they have learned that help to define the word 'culture'
- Any images to match the words and sentences that they have included.

3. EMA'S PROFILE

Ask students to individually answer the questions on Ema's Profile (Activity Sheet: MM3.2). Students may need to re-watch the Mini Doc: *Who We Are - Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla* as a class or online in order to help them to answer the questions.

4. EXPLORE CULTURAL IDENTITY

With the class, discuss the cultural aspects of the Adnyamathanha people in the Mini Doc: *Who We Are - Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla*. You might like to use the framework and example provided in the Background Information Sheet Cultural Identity. Ask the class the following questions and note the students' answers on the whiteboard:

- a) What sorts of things have helped the Adnyamathanha people develop their culture over time? e.g. stories, the flora and fauna of their country.
- b) What do you think the word heritage means?
- c) Tell me one thing about your family's culture?
- d) How does your family's heritage help develop a certain culture? e.g. Italians will often have a passion for cooking Italian food, and perhaps call an elderly member of the family Nona (grandmother).

5. WHO WE ARE

In the classroom, have students complete 'Part 1' of Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla - Who We Are (Activity Sheet: MM3.3), asking students to select one storyteller from the Mini Doc: *Who We Are - Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla*. Direct students to complete 'Part 2' and 'Part 3' as a home based assignment. These activities will require them to speak to an elder within their own family, such as mum, dad, a grandparent or an older family friend, in order to complete the two profiles.

Once each student has returned their assignment, you might like to collectively share these in the classroom as a community tree wall or combine into a scrapbook titled "Who We Are".



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Inquiry 3. What is cultural identity?

Activity Sheets:

MM3.1 - Concept Map: Culture

MM3.2 - Ema's Profile

MM3.3 - Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla - Who We Are

1. View

Watch the *Wadu Matyidi* animation and Mini Doc: *Who We Are - Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla*.

2. Explore Culture

What is 'culture'? There are many different definitions. Use an online dictionary or encyclopedia to research what the word 'culture' means when we are looking at social or ethnic groups.

Once you've found enough information to write a definition of 'culture', create a Concept Map using your Concept Map: Culture activity sheet or another program. Place the word 'culture' in the centre of your page and include any additional words, sentences or images that help to define what you think 'culture' means.

3. Ema's Profile

Who is Ema and where does she come from? Answer the questions in your Ema's Profile activity sheet. You might need to watch the Mini Doc: *Who We Are - Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla* again, in order to help you answer the questions.

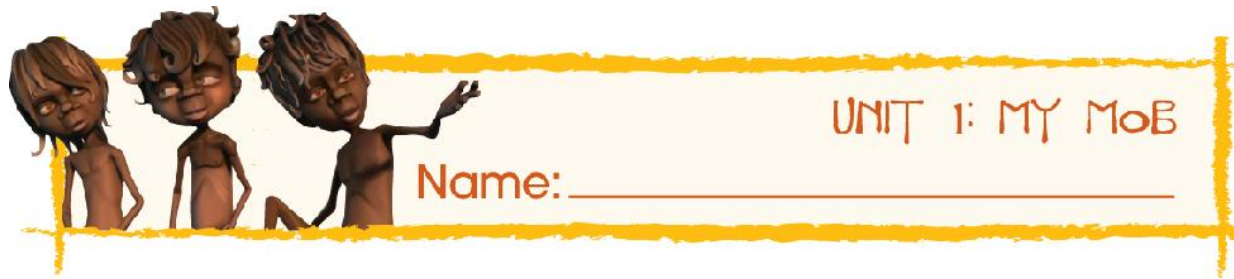
4. Explore Cultural Identity

What have you learnt about the culture of the Adnyamathanha people from watching the Mini Doc: *Who We Are - Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla* and the *Wadu Matyidi* animation? What examples can you think of from your own family's heritage that might help to define your own culture? Think of some examples and share them with your class.

5. Who We Are

Pick one storyteller, Emori, Salote or Ema, from the Mini Doc: *Who We Are - Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla*. Complete the profile for your storyteller in 'Part 1' of Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla - Who We Are.

Now, choose one elder in your family to help you complete the other two profiles about you ('Part 2') and your selected family member ('Part 3'). This might be a grandparent, mum, dad or older family friend. Make sure you work with them to complete the activity sheet. Once you've completed these, share a copy with your family and with your class.



MM3.1

CONCEPT MAP: CULTURE

CULTURE



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MM3.2

EMA'S PROFILE

Watch the Mini Doc: *Who We Are - Inhaadi Utyu Ngarlpurla* and complete the following questions:

QUESTION	INFORMATION
Who is Ema?	
Where does she come from?	
What is she doing? Why?	
Who is she learning from?	
What is she being taught? Why?	
Why is the area called 'home'?	
What languages are spoken?	

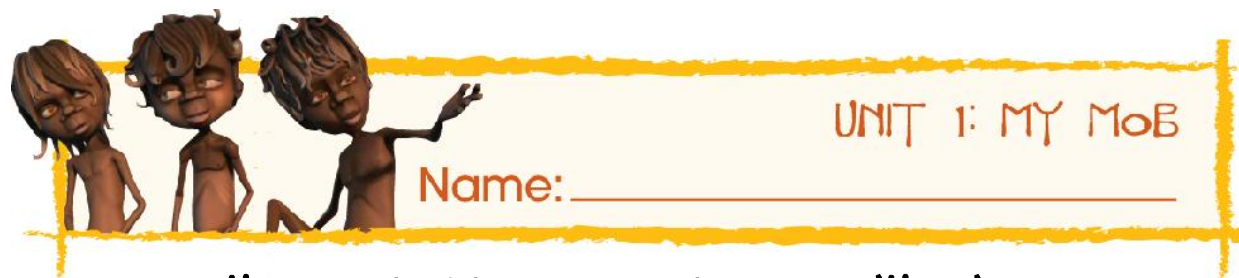


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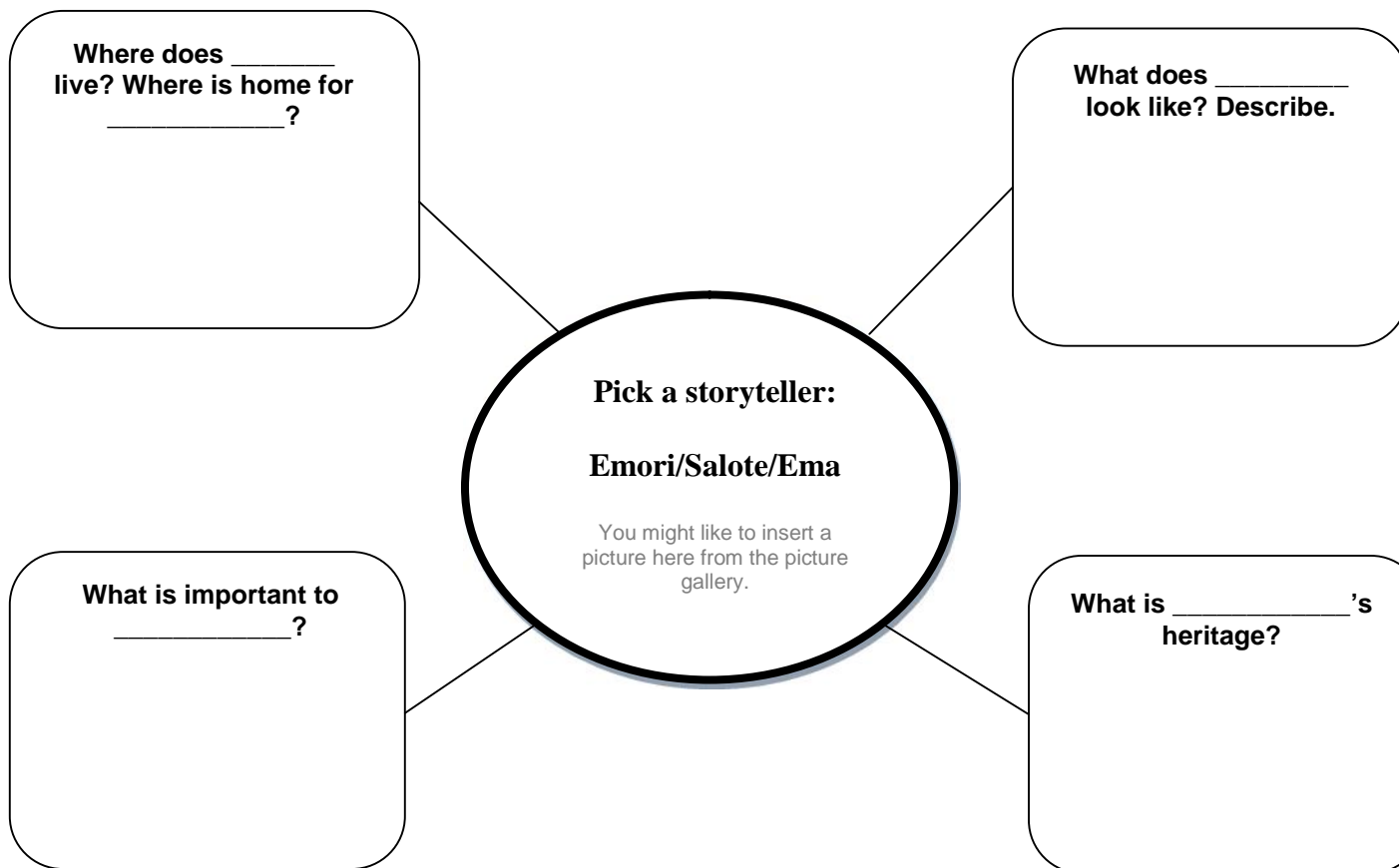
How do the Adnyamathanha people communicate?	
What do the featured Adnyamathanha people value?	
What do the featured Adnyamathanha people believe?	
How do the different Adnyamathanha people relate with each other? i.e. different roles and responsibilities	

MM3.3



INHAADI UTYU NGARLPURLA - WHO WE ARE

Part 1 – Choose a storyteller, write their name in the blanks and answer the questions.





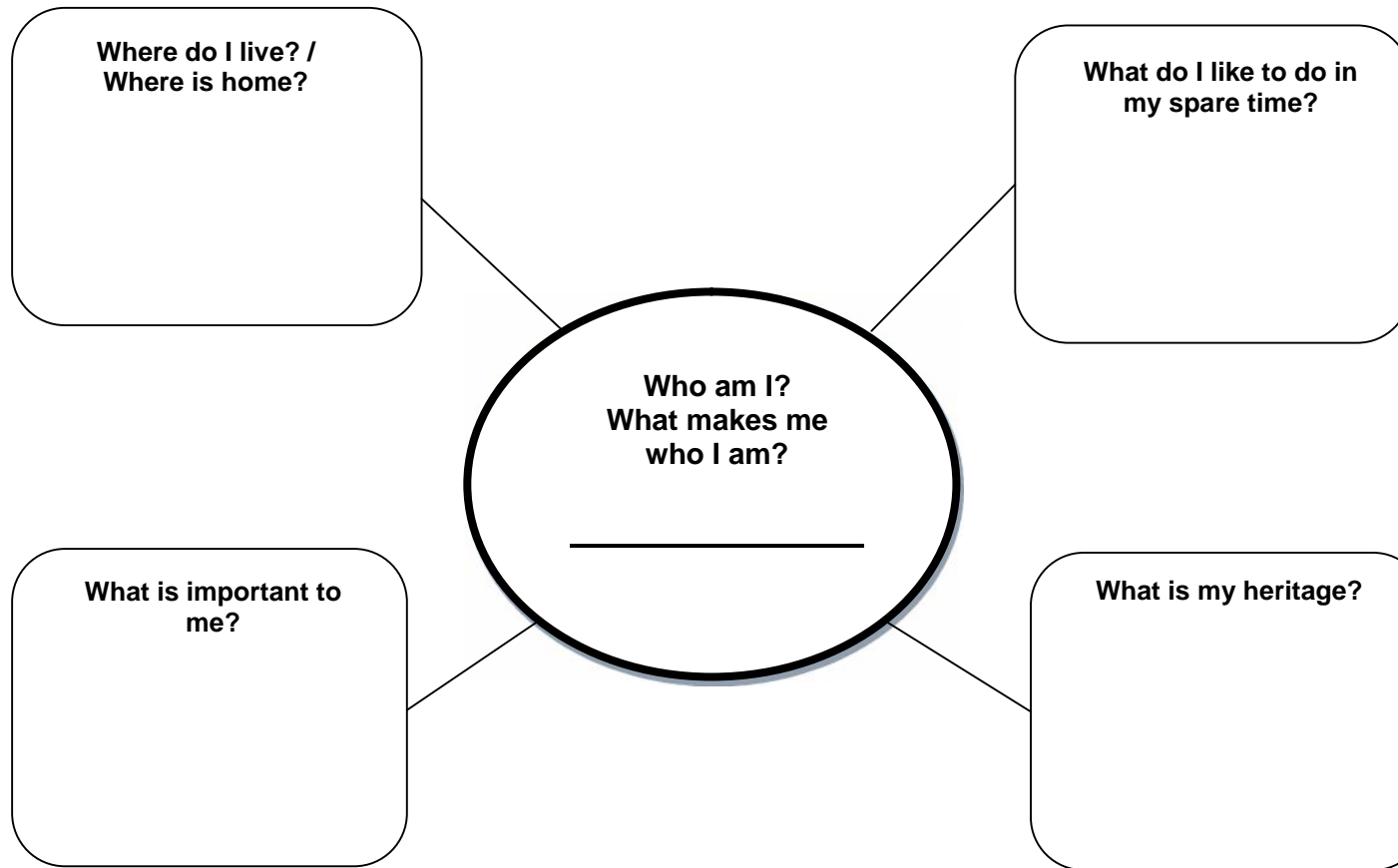
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MM3.3

INHAADI UTYU NGARLPURLA - WHO WE ARE

Part 2 – The following activity is to help you find out where you come from, and to identify some aspects of your family's culture and heritage. Write your name in the circle and answer each of the questions.





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MM3.3

INHAADI UTYU NGARLPURLA - WHO WE ARE

Part 3 – Write the name of the elder from your family and their relationship to you. e.g. Toni and she is my Nona, which means 'grandmother' in Italian.

**Where do they live?
Where is 'home'?**

**What does this person
like to do in their spare
time?**

**Does this person speak a
different language?**

**What is their heritage?
(Where were they
born?)**

**Why is this person
important to me?**

**What is their role within the
family?**

**Upload a photo or
draw a picture of
your family member
here.**

Name

Relationship

Communication

Verbal Communication

Verbal communication occurs when people use their mouths to speak or make sounds. Verbal communication is unwritten.

Often verbal communication is made up of words, or a mix of words and sounds. However, in some cases, verbal communication may also consist only of sounds. One example is the complex set of sounds that the Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert developed to use when hunting. They are able to communicate with each other in tones that do not alert and scare off their prey.

When there is a recognised structure of verbal communication, it is known as 'language'.

Verbal communication is the key-stone to what are known as 'orate' cultures. Traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are 'orate' in nature, whereby information is handed down from generation to generation in an oral manner – either by the spoken word or by song. In 'orate' cultures storytelling plays an important role in the passing down of information and messages from older to younger generations.

Non-Verbal Communication

Non-verbal communication is often referred to as 'body language'. People are able to convey ideas and feelings by the way they gesture with their hands, the way they look with their eyes and by the posture of their body.

Non-verbal communication plays an important role in our lives. It enhances the messages that are given in spoken language (verbal communication) but also provides another method of communication that doesn't rely on sound.

When there is a recognised structure of non-verbal communication, it is also known as 'language'. For example, sign languages, such as *Auslan*, have been developed to assist people with hearing difficulties to communicate.

Non-verbal communication is often used to silently convey a message (e.g. in a meeting a person may look at a colleague and wrinkle their nose, or raise eyebrows to convey thoughts and feelings of disapproval).

Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups developed highly sophisticated forms of communication in a non-verbal manner to utilise mainly when hunting.

Written Communication

Written communication is when people use writing (recognised letters or symbols) to convey ideas and information.

Written communication may also be made up with images, data or text and often involves many genres, styles and technologies to convey the message.

As with any type of non-verbal communication, if there is a recognised structure to the symbols, letters or images, it is known as 'language'.

Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups use symbols, drawings of animals, people and the land, in order to communicate their stories and convey messages.

Metaphysical communication

The word 'metaphysical' can mean a reality that relates to, or is outside of (i.e. transcends), what is noticeable to the senses. This means an existence beyond what we can visibly see in the universe, for example 'supernatural' or 'spiritual'.

Metaphysical communication is used to describe the communication that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have with their ancestral spirits. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are also connected spiritually to the land. Every element is part of a spiritual and social whole.

"Through totemism, everything - humans, animals, land, weather (sun, wind, rain), moon, sky, stars - belongs to a conceptual, spiritual and social whole. Thus, it is that Aboriginal societies across Australia have a culture that accords metaphysical primacy to place rather than time. Thus, while Europeans have ignored the Aboriginal notion of being in the world, of connectedness to place, kin, community, all species and the natural world, they have insisted on the perspective of time and history.

Stories, songs and ceremonies recreate The Dreaming, explain the laws left for the people by the supreme beings and fulfil sacred obligations to kin, the species and the landscape. The conceptual framework of this philosophy is expressed through ceremonies..."ⁱ

Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accept this form of communication as the 'norm' and believe it is an important aspect of how they communicate with their ancestral spirits.

There are many debates held around this topic. The commonly accepted features of metaphysical communication relate to intuitive thinking and the ability to transmit ideas by thought or mental processes.

ⁱ *Aboriginal Philosophy* by Vick Gieves, Faculty of Education and Arts, School of Humanities and Social Science, The University of Newcastle: <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/hss/research/publications/awaba/culture/aboriginal-wisdom-and-philosophy.html>

Cultural Identity

What is cultural identity?

When talking about cultural identity, we are referring to the identity of a group or a recognised culture, or the personal influence that one embodies from belonging to that group or culture. Generally speaking, a cultural group has shared values and goals.

A person's knowledge, beliefs and behaviour derive from their environment and through their social learning. There are common traits or identifiers that influence one's cultural identity. These include gender, race, history, nationality, language, religious beliefs and political beliefs.

With the immigration of many different cultures into Australia, society has become more and more multi-cultural, and one's cultural identity might be made up of various influences from many different cultures.

How do we explore or identify a group's cultural identity?

In order to explore the nature of a group's cultural identity, the following framework can be useful:

How does this cultural group's lifestyle define the following concepts?	
World View	How people interpret the world: what they believe in about life, the universe and how these beliefs give direction to living.
Cosmology	How they explain how Earth came to be.
Social Organisation	The protocols for social behaviour and consequences. This includes defining roles and responsibilities, e.g. family structure.
Meeting Needs	How both physical and spiritual needs are met.
Customs	The rituals and ceremonies that are important, e.g. story, song, dance, art.

Using this framework, we can attempt to explore the cultural identity of the Adnyamathanha people represented within the *Wadu Matyidi* animation and five Mini Docs.

Case Study: Adnyamathanha Cultural Identity

World View

The Dreaming is an important cultural element for all Indigenous Australians. It refers to a time when Ancestral Beings travelled across the land, creating life and key geographic features of the land. It is often told through story.

There is no single phrase in the English language that can begin to convey the complexity and the significance of The Dreaming, as each Indigenous group has its own distinct explanation.

The Dreaming contains many layers of knowledge, including:

- World View (cosmology, spiritual belief system)
- How to meet spiritual needs
- The Law (rules for living)
- Astronomical knowledge (mathematics related to seasons, cycles, etc.)
- Geographical knowledge
- Social organisation (kinships, moieties, relationship protocols)
- Survival needs (knowledge about how to meet basic human needs).

Cosmology

Akurra, an ancient serpent, is the ancestral spirit that shaped the landforms of the Flinders Ranges, the home of the Adnyamathanha people. Stories related to The Dreaming give direction to their living.

Social Organisation

The Adnyamathanha people traditionally have a complex system of social organisation. For example, 'moieties' called Matheri (the south wind) and Arraru (the north wind) underpinned the marriage system and all interactions in Adnyamathanha society. A person's moiety is inherited from their mother. For example, if the person's mother is Arraru, then that person is also Arraru. People have many responsibilities to their moiety.

Adnyamathanha people also have particular animals, considered their totems, which they should never hunt or eat.

The concept of family is connected to these traditional social structures and thus is quite different in nature to a non-Indigenous viewpoint. The Elders are the custodians of knowledge and possess ancient wisdom that has been handed down to them. They are to be respected.

Note: Terminology, for example 'kinship structures', often used to describe 'social and spiritual order', cannot adequately describe the complex, interwoven and 'layered' levels of understanding that is part of the Aboriginal psyche.

Meeting Needs

The Adnyamathanha people share a physical and spiritual connection with their Country in order to meet their needs.

- 'Physical' including:
 - Clothing (where there is a need to be protected from the elements)
 - Nourishment (food and water)
 - Transportation (the feet historically being the first form)
 - Shelter
 - Defence
 - Health and wellbeing.
- 'Spiritual' meaning:
 - To belong to, identify with and communicate within a social group (i.e. cultural connections)
 - Belief in superior Beings.

[The Adnyamathanha People](#), a Think Quest site project by students, provides a comprehensive study of the Adnyamathanha history, culture and lifestyle.

Customs, Ceremonies and Rituals

Respect, including respect for Country, respect for family and others, and respect for self is an important custom for the Adnyamathanha people.

Language is central to the identity of the Adnyamathanha people.

Many of the traditional ceremonies have been lost through dispossession of Country and their relocation.

The Rock Art of the area is essential to and helps define Adnyamathanha cultural identity.

Human Spiritual Needs - Howard Clinebell

Howard Clinebell, after years of pastoral care and psychological counselling, developed a list of seven common 'spiritual needs' that are considered to be part of human nature. These include:

- All people need love for it heals and gives people a sense of being strong
 - From others
 - From self
 - From a source greater than people, e.g. God, The Dreaming.
- Everyone needs to experience knowing that there is a greater energy force than just what they are able to sense.
- Everyone needs to know what they believe in, what is important, and this provides them with a sense of meaning and hope when faced with sad events.
- Everyone needs to be aware of what they consider to be a moral way of living, e.g. what is ethical behaviour, how to act in a just way, how to ensure that they act with honesty and truthfulness.
- Each person needs to reflect upon their own personality, their creative nature, their inner spiritual self/wisdom.
- All people need to develop a sense of connection with other people, and all things natural.
- All people need to be in touch with their spirituality to help them in times of grief, self-doubt, when feeling a sense of guilt. People's spirituality increases the way that they can enjoy life, look forward to the future with hope and how they feel about themselves.

Clinebell feels that everybody must pay attention to these needs to feel whole and fulfilled, making spirituality central to human wellbeing¹.

¹ Clinebell, H.J., *Well Being: A Personal Plan for Exploring and Enriching the Seven Dimensions of Life: Mind, Body, Spirit, Love, Work, Play, the World*, Harper Collins, 1992.

Language and Culture

What is language?

"Languages are used by social groups (families, clans, tribes, societies), to manage their relationships and cultural roles, obligations and inter-relationships"

Definition by Dr Orville Boyd Jenkins (Linguist)

Language is also defined as: *acquiring and using a structured system of communication.*

Definition by Wikipedia

When there is a recognised structure of verbal communication, it is known as 'language'.

When there is a recognised structure of non-verbal communication, it is also known as 'language'. For example, sign languages, such as *Auslan*, have been developed to assist people with hearing difficulties to communicate.

Non-verbal communication is often used to silently convey a message (e.g. in a meeting a person may look at a colleague and wrinkle their nose, or raise eyebrows to convey thoughts and feelings of disapproval).

Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups developed highly sophisticated forms of communicating in a non-verbal manner to utilise, mainly when hunting.

What is culture?

We learn our culture in social situations. As children grow up in a cultural group they learn what is expected from those around them. This includes:

- How to behave and how to relate with different people in the group
- What is thought as important to value
- How to meet their physical needs from the environment in which they live, e.g. food, clothing and shelter
- How to keep safe and well
- What to believe in (i.e. religious/spiritual knowledge)
- What customs or ceremonies to follow
- How to use symbols and images to represent knowledge of their physical and spiritual worlds.

As a result of people sharing beliefs and following traditions, patterns of living are developed that are different from other cultural groups.

Over time, cultures change and alter. They continually evolve depending upon what cultural groups of people experience, for example, new discoveries in technology, medicine, and the influence from other cultural groups. (Think about the variety of foods we enjoy in Australia as a result of immigration.)

Cultural features include:

- Ways of communication
- Art - various forms including Rock Art, painting and sculpture
- Music, Dance
- Food
- Clothing
- Ceremonies

- Religious beliefs
- Education (how people learn/are taught).

Stories are a very strong way of organising knowledge about culture. They help people recall history and teach their young.

How is language connected with culture?

Language is connected with culture in the following ways:

- Language is a strong aspect of culture, i.e. the core of culture
- Language is the carrier of culture
- Language is used to process information about cultural heritage and thus helps to develop an understanding of the group's World View.

When people share experiences through and around language, they form a basis for cultural identity and a sense of belonging to community.

Language is a major feature of most social events and interactions with others. For example, language is used in social situations and gives direction as to how relationships are formed and what social protocols to follow.

Through social instruction and the exchanging of cultural information via language, children learn how to behave and what to value and what to believe (i.e. perpetuating cultural morés).

In traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups oral language was, and still could be, the 'keeper' of history and tradition through the telling and re-telling over generations, of personal stories and stories related to The Dreaming.

Language is associated with 'place'. The birth place of their traditional language has spiritual connections for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The use of 'mother tongue' languages enriches cultural identity and builds connection with Country.

Reclaiming language maintains culture and enhances identity.

"Language is a living thing; it is the very core of our cultural identity. Sensing its power, colonizers have systematically sought to control or even eradicate it among those they colonize, often with great success."

The teaching of Indigenous languages, as is the case with the teaching of all languages, cannot and should not ever be divorced from its vibrant cultural heritage. As Hinton (2002) states, - learning your language of heritage also means learning about customs, values, and appropriate behaviour."

By Mark Warford, Buffalo State College in a paper entitled *Narrative Language Pedagogy and the Stabilization of Indigenous Languages*, January 2011.