



# FISHING WITH YOUR FEET

## Kuti Fishing on Ngarrindjeri Country

Teacher resources - Lesson plan



Recycle me



## Australian Curriculum Objectives

### Geography - Years 7&8 (Stage 4)

#### [AC9HG7K03](#)

the economic, cultural, spiritual and aesthetic value of water for people, including First Nations Australians

#### [AC9HG8K03](#)

the spiritual, aesthetic and cultural value of landscapes and landforms for people, including Country/Place of First Nations Australians

#### [AC9HG7K05](#)

factors that influence the decisions people make about where to live, including perceptions of the liveability of places and the influence of environmental quality

#### [AC9HG7K07](#)

the cultural connectedness of people to places and how this influences their identity, sense of belonging and perceptions of a place, in particular the cultural connectedness of First Nations Australians to Country/Place

#### [AC9HG7S04](#) / [AC9HG8S04](#)

draw conclusions based on the analysis of the data and information

#### [AC9HG7S06](#) / [AC9HG8S06](#)

create descriptions, explanations and responses, using geographical knowledge and methods, concepts, terms and reference sources


#### Activity 5

#### [AC9HG7S02](#) / [AC9HG8S02](#)

collect, organise and represent data and information from primary research methods, including fieldwork econdary research materials, using geospatial technologies and digital tools as appropriate

#### [AC9HG7S05](#) / [AC9HG8S05](#)

identify a strategy for action in relation to environmental, economic, social or other factors, and explain potential impacts



This lesson supports learning under cross-curriculum priorities: **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures**

[A\\_TSICP1](#)

First Nations communities of Australia maintain a deep connection to, and responsibility for, Country/ Place and have holistic values and belief systems that are connected to the land, sea, sky and waterways.

[A\\_TSIC1](#)

First Nations Australian societies are diverse and have distinct cultural expressions such as language, customs and beliefs. As First Nations Peoples of Australia, they have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural expressions, while also maintaining the right to control, protect and develop culture as Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property.

[A\\_TSIC2](#)

First Nations Australians' ways of life reflect unique ways of being, knowing, thinking and doing.

This lesson supports learning under cross-curriculum priorities: **Sustainability**

[SS2](#)

Sustainable patterns of living require the responsible use of resources, maintenance of clean air, water and soils, and preservation or restoration of healthy environments.

[SW1](#)

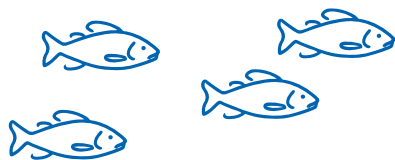
World views that recognise the interdependence of Earth's systems, and value diversity, equity and social justice, are essential for achieving sustainability.



In this lesson for ages 12-14+, learners will learn about pipi, or *kuti* fishing practices by the Ngarrindjeri people in South Australia. Students will explore concepts of natural resource values, care for Country, and sustainable fishing.

### Key terms

- Sea Country
- Ngarrindjeri
- Kuti / Pipi
- Landscapes, Waters
- Sustainable Fishing
- Cultural Connection
- Values
- Liveability



### You will need

- Access to the video [Back to Country: A Kuti Co. Story](#)
- Access to [scenic video from the Coorong](#)
- Printed copies of the worksheets (pages 9-10)
- Writing materials / Speech cards for a debate
- Access to [Ngarrindjeri Nation Yarluwar-Ruwe Plan](#)
- Recipe ingredients to cook pipis (extension activity)

### Key questions

- What are the economic, material, cultural, spiritual, aesthetic and recreational values of Ngarrindjeri Sea Country (lands and waters)?
- Is the Coorong region a liveable place?
- How do kuti fishers care for Country?
- How do kuti fishers practice sustainable fishing?

### Class Activities

- Learners will watch a short video about kuti fishers at Goolwa, Coorong region, South Australia
- Learners draw a diagram of the Coorong Sea Country and identify different kinds of land and water values of the region
- Learners read about the sustainable management of landscape values by the Ngarrindjeri people.
- Learners hold a debate on the topic of: Is the Coorong region a liveable place?
- Learners discuss how kuti fishers care for Country
- Learners write a report on sustainable kuti fishing in South Australia





## Appropriate Terminology



Language is a powerful tool for communication. The words we use are active, and can impact on the attitudes of those we speak to. Reconciliation Australia has created [the following guidance](#) around appropriate and respectful terminology to use when teaching about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures. Below is an abridged version of this guidance, however teachers are encouraged to read the entire document at <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/inclusive-and-respectful-language.pdf>

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Using 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' is most often considered best practice.

- 'Aboriginal' (and less commonly accepted variants such as 'Aboriginals' or 'Aborigines') alone is also not inclusive of the diversity of cultures and identities across Australia
- As a stand-alone term, 'Aboriginal' is not inclusive of Torres Strait Islander peoples, and reference to both peoples should be spelt out where necessary.

### First Nations and First Peoples

Other pluralised terms such as 'First Nations' or 'First Peoples' are also acceptable language, and respectfully encompass the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identities.

### Acknowledging diversity

Pluralisation should extend to generalised reference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 'histories,' 'perspectives,' 'ways of being,' 'contributions,' and so forth. This acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are not homogenous

### Indigenous

In some parts of the country, the term 'Indigenous' can be considered offensive. That is, it has scientific connotations that have been used historically to describe Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as part of the 'flora/fauna' rather than the human population of Australia. It can be seen as a problematically universalising or homogenising label for what are, in reality, highly diverse identities.

### Unacceptable terms

Assimilationist terms such as 'full-blood,' 'half-caste' and 'quarter-caste' are extremely offensive and should never be used. Other terms which carry negative connotations and should never be used include Aborigines, native/native Australians, disadvantaged, lost (e.g. Lost language, cultures)



# Lesson plan: Fishing with your Feet

## Starter (10 mins)

Begin this lesson with an Acknowledgement to Country. You can find out which country you are on by using the [AIATSIS Map of Indigenous Australia](#). Note: The difference between a Welcome to Country and an Acknowledgement to Country is that a Welcome is only given by a First Nations person who is local to the country you are on. A person of any background can make an Acknowledgement to Country.

Explain to students that they are going to learn about First Nations fishing and cultural practices on Ngarrindjeri Sea Country, South Australia.

## Main Activities

Complete one or more of the activities below,

### Activity 1 - Land & Water Values (20 mins)

Show students this [video of scenic footage from the Coorong](#) as inspiration (0:59). Ask students to draw a diagram of the lands and waters that they see in the video, and label each of the unique natural features (such as sand dunes, river, ocean, vegetation, shell midden etc.) using the worksheet on page 9. Next, show students the short film [Back to Country: A Kuti Co. Story](#) (6:30).

Students work individually or in pairs to fill in the worksheet on page 10, mapping the economic, material, cultural, spiritual, aesthetic and recreational values of Sea Country for the Ngarrindjeri people. Discuss as a class, what was difficult about categorising the different values of Sea Country? Why?

### Activity 2 - Tens of thousands of years looking after Yarlularu-Ruwe (15 mins)

Students read pages 11-12 of the [Ngarrindjeri Nation Yarlularu-Ruwe Plan](#) to diver deeper into an understanding of the values that Ngarrindjeri Sea Country provides. Students add what they have learned to their mindmap of values (page 10).

### Activity 3 - Liveability of Place (20 - 60 mins)

Students reflect on the values of Ngarrindjeri Sea Country identified in Activities 1 and 2, to consider how such values influence the choices people make about where to live. Split students into groups to have a debate on the question: Is the Coorong region a liveable place? Alternatively, students could work individually to write 500 words in answer to this question.

Considerations might include: Access to food, transport, environmental quality (clean air, water), work opportunities, cultural connections, recreation activities, aesthetic beauty etc.





#### Activity 4 - Caring for Sea Country (15 mins)

Re-watch the video [Back to Country: A Kuti Co Story](#) from the time code 2:59 to 3:55, or read the following quote from Anthony to the class:

*I remember Summer years and years ago when we were kids, the whole family would do 3 or 4 boat trips across the Coorong, down a bit further towards Parker. We'd come across and grab a feed. And all the little ones - all the Aunties and Uncles would be like "No you must put them back in, because that's the next lot that's gonna grow up and have more". So having that bond as a kid was great, so now every time I get a chance, if I've gotta come over and do maintenance on vehicles I bring my kids over and do it as a day trip. So we go and hike the dunes, teach them how to cockle, then on the way home we'll end up running the net and get a quick feed of fish, and so then we've got cockles and fish for tea. We only take whatever we need, so if there's a family of 5 we only take about 300g and that's it, that'll do.*

Discuss as a class, How do Anthony and his family care for Sea Country?

Discussion points may include:

- Anthony and his family put back the small fish that they catch, allowing them to grow bigger and reproduce
- They only take as many cockles and fish as they need for dinner, not taking too much so that there are some left for other people, birds and animals to eat
- They visit the Coorong as a family, and teach the young children how to fish, sharing stories about the land, so that they can visit, see changes, and look after the Country in the future.

#### Activity 5 - Sustainable Fishing Research Project (Advanced)

Students conduct an independent research project using a mix of sources on the subject of Sustainable Kuti Fishing on Ngarrindjeri Country. The report should focus on **commercial** fishing practices only, and include the following sections:

- Introduction
- History of Kuti Fishing on Ngarrindjeri Country
- Kuti Fishing Today - Goolwa PipiCo. & Kuti Co.
- Sustainable practices of Kuti Fishing
- Risks to Sustainable Kuti Fishing
- Proposed Actions for Sustainable Fishing in the Future
- Conclusions
- References

Reports should be a maximum of 1500 words.





### Activity 5 (Continued).

Helpful resources may be include:

- [Back to Country: A Kuti Co. Story](#)
- Report: [Ngarrindjeri Nation Yarluwar-Ruwe Plan](#) - pages 24-25
- News article: [How the ancient 'pipi shuffle' is supplying modern dining](#) - Australian Financial Review, September 2022
- Web page: [Why harvest pipis just to let them go?](#) - Goolwa PipiCo.
- Factsheets: [Lakes and Coorong Fishery Factsheets](#)
- Shorthand story: [Shuffling for Sustainability](#) - Marine Stewardship Council

### Discussion (10 mins)



No matter where we live we are all connected with Country, and all waters on the land eventually flow into the ocean.

Discuss as a class,

- *What are some of the interesting knowledges we learned about Ngarrindjeri fishing culture?*
- *Why are the lands and seas at the Coorong, South Australia significant to Ngarrindjeri people?*
- *How are we connected to Ngarrindjeri Country?*
- *How can we all help to care for Sea Country?*







## Extension Activities

### 1. Do the pipi shuffle - Physical Health and Education

Watch the video to see how kuti fishers catch kuti / pipis with their feet. Take students outside, ideally to a place with sand (e.g. beach, river bank, or sand pit). Practice the pipi shuffle together, and see what you can feel with your feet. Discuss as a group, why might this movement be effective for harvesting pipis? What other movements might be used to fish for pipis?



### 2. Weaving with Cedric - Visual Art

Organise a cultural weaving lesson with Ngarrindjeri artists Cedric Varcoe or Ellen Trevorrow. Students will use native grasses or rafia to learn weaving skills, as used by the Ngarrindjeri people for fishing nets, baskets, and other crafts. For assistance coordinating a workshop, please contact [alexis.farr@msc.org](mailto:alexis.farr@msc.org).



### 3. Cooking with pipis - Design & Technology (Food and Fibre Production)

Use one of the simple recipes below to make your own sustainable seafood dish. You can buy MSC-certified sustainable pipis from Goolwa Pipi Co. at a [supplier near you](#).

- [Wild black pepper pipis](#)
- [South Australian pipis with saffron butter](#)

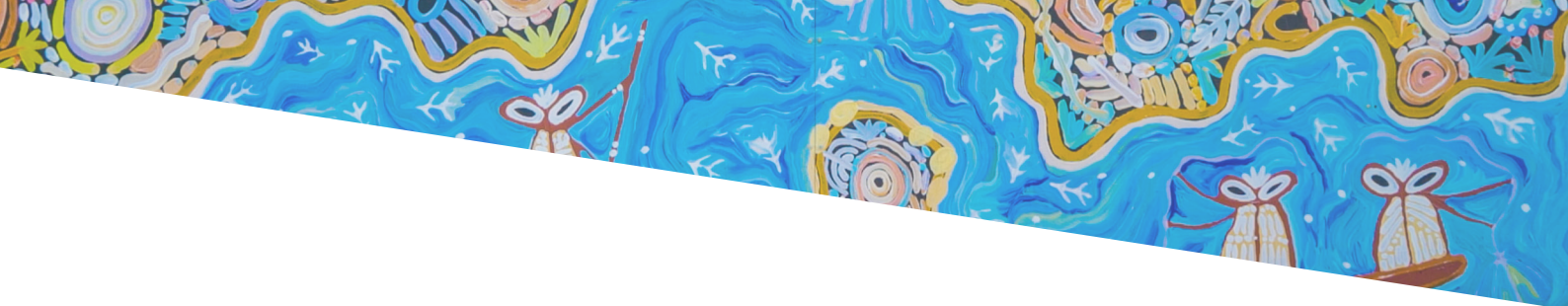
Students write one paragraph that describes the flavour, smells and tastes of the kuti, eaten by Ngarrindjeri people for over 19,000 years.



## Activity 1

Draw a diagram of Coorong landscape and waters (Ngarrindjeri Sea Country) that you see in the video. Label each of the different natural features that you see (e.g. sand dunes, river mouth, ocean, shells, vegetation etc.)

A large empty rectangular box for drawing a diagram of the Coorong landscape and waters.



## Activities 1 & 2

### **Economic & Material values**

*e.g. River used for fishing*

### **Cultural & Spiritual values**

*e.g. Grasses used for weaving*



*e.g. Ocean for swimming*

### **Aesthetic & Recreational values**

*e.g. Vegetation provides shade for small animals*

### **Ecological values**

