



# Curriculum

**Module 9**

**Indigenous Australians**

**Module Overview**

**Lower – Middle Primary (Years 3-7)**

**Developed by: Mayrah Driese**



Queensland Government  
Education Queensland



Independent Schools  
Queensland



Earth Charter  
Australia



Brisbane Catholic  
Education



Queensland Catholic  
Education Commission



## **A few words from the Patrons of Brink Adventures...**

“The Brink Innovative Education Project will foster greater understanding between countries and cultures while broadening school students’ understanding of the world around them. I applaud Brink Adventures for promoting the value of education and fostering closer ties between young people across the world.”

“By integrating technology and adventure into a real-life context, Brink Adventures delivers a progressive form of education that excites and inspires young imaginations, acting as a springboard for further investigation and learning.”

***The Hon Anna Bligh MP***  
*Queensland Premier*

“The amazing Brink Adventures give students a fantastic chance to follow environmental adventure stories in diverse locations where immense challenges are a fact of life. Our knowledge of what is going on around us is essential for better understanding and participation in our world and Brink Adventures provides a terrific opportunity for students to jump into that journey.”

***The Hon Peter Garrett AM MP***  
*Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts*

“I am very pleased to lend my support to the Brink Adventures Innovative Education Project. The intrepid journeys undertaken by the Brink Adventures team members offer teachers and students a fresh and valuable way to learn about our increasingly globalised world. These extraordinary expeditions across time, space and cultures are mirrored in many classrooms, providing a vivid real-life framework for the curriculum in Studies of Society and Environment.”

***Dr Brian Hoeppe***  
*School of Cultural & Language Studies in Education*  
*Queensland University of Technology*

## **A few words from the media...**

“This project is a fantastic example of education for global awareness and environmental sustainability. By following Brink Adventures, students learn far more about the world in which we live than they would from text books. Young people are encouraged to respect the natural environment and they develop an understanding of the importance of their active global citizenship, as they explore the values and programs of Oxfam Australia and learn by Kendon's example.”

*Sabrina Sideris*  
***University for Peace, Peace and Conflict Monitor***

## **International recognition...**

During an Earth Charter Award Ceremony in Amsterdam, Netherlands, Brink Adventures were granted the International Earth Charter Maximo T. Kalaw, Jr. Award for an outstanding educational initiative displaying:

- Creativity and innovation
- Long-term benefits
- A significant impact on the awareness of people and their engagement in sustainable development.

## **INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS - MODULE OVERVIEW**

### **Rationale**

Brink Adventures brings attention to Australia and the indigenous peoples who have lived there for more than 40,000 years. This module encourages students to actively investigate the relationships between people and the natural environment, as told through Aboriginal stories. Students will develop a deeper understanding of aspects of Australian indigenous culture and will use this knowledge to create stories about their relationships with the environment. Their stories will promote the values of the Earth Charter and highlight the interconnectedness of human beings and the environment. Brink Adventures provides an authentic context for student learning as the expedition team travels through some of the indigenous communities in central Australia.

### **Brink Adventures**

The Brink Adventures Innovative Education Project provides an opportunity for students to learn from other cultures, promoting an understanding of, and a fascination for the complex world around them. It encourages an awareness of, and a respect for the natural environment, while emphasizing the students' role as active global citizens. With the aid of modern technology LIVE expeditions happening around the globe are experienced by Australian schools through satellite link ups and regular on-line journals, complementing a professionally developed web-based curriculum that is tailored specially to the adventure. By integrating technology and adventure into a real-life context, the Brink Innovative Education Project delivers a progressive form of education that excites and inspires young imaginations, providing an invaluable platform for further investigation and learning.

### **The Earth Charter**

The Earth Charter provides the background and the decision making filter for Brink Adventures. The values and principles of the Earth Charter constitute a relevant and multi-layered opportunity for students to challenge and form their own ideas of democratic process, social justice, ecological and economic sustainability and peace. In particular, this module contributes to the understanding that every human being is part of the interconnected fabric of life and therefore is entrusted with the responsibility of caring for the Earth for present and future generations. The traditions of Indigenous Australians reflect the importance of stewardship and the Earth Charter encourages all people to learn from the wisdom of indigenous cultures as a way of maintaining a sustainable way of life, in harmony with the Earth.

### **Keeping in touch with Brink Adventures**

Schools can keep in touch with Brink Adventures through their website at [www.brinkadventures.org](http://www.brinkadventures.org). Using the website, teachers and students can read updates of the team's journal or join the Brink Adventures Schoolroom and register for "epals" or pen pals along the expedition route. The website also contains information about the places visited by the team.

## Module outline

*Indigenous Australians* is a multi-level module that caters for students in the Primary phase of learning (Years 3-7). The activities span a range of levels so teachers may choose to vary the activities to accommodate different conceptual levels and literacy levels, addressing individual differences in learning groups. The main focus of the module is to provide students with an opportunity to acquire knowledge about Aboriginal stories and the interconnected nature of the relationship between indigenous Australians and their environment. As they engage with the various learning experiences in the module, students will reflect on their own relationships with the environment, ultimately presenting their responses through art and story to raise awareness of the need to take care of the Earth for present and future generations.

**NOTE: Unlike previous modules, the Indigenous Australians curriculum will require access to a map of Australia that shows an interpretation of the hundreds of Aboriginal language groups that exist across Australia<sup>1</sup> and a selection of Aboriginal art books from a variety of language areas. These books should have a cross section of visual, performing and cultural arts practices.**  
[http://www.samuseum.sa.gov.au/page/default.asp?site=2&page=TIN Tribal](http://www.samuseum.sa.gov.au/page/default.asp?site=2&page=TIN_Tribal)

As an orientation to this module it is suggested that students could be engaged in a range of learning experiences to introduce them to Brink Adventures. Depending on the learning context, teachers may need to make minor modifications.

There are three components to this section:

1. An introduction to the Brink Adventures website <http://www.brinkadventures.org/default.asp>
2. A look at the logistics of planning the expedition
3. Using mapping skills to follow the progress of the adventurers

All components can be addressed with students from a range of year levels, with the complexity adjusted accordingly. If teachers choose to assess work in this section it is suggested that parts one and two draw on aspects of English, especially text types – websites, email, journals and interviews. In section three, mapping activities can be designed and assessed using aspects of Studies of Society and Environment.

Component	Suggested teaching and learning activities	Resource sheets
Introduction to the Brink Adventures website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Taking a tour of the website</li><li>• Sending the team an email</li><li>• Reading their journals</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A website quiz</li><li>• How to send an email</li><li>• Journal reflections</li></ul>
Planning an expedition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Planning for adventure</li><li>• Reading an interview with the team</li></ul>	
Mapping the journey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Following the expedition in the classroom</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A map of the route</li></ul>

<sup>1</sup> It is important to note that most of these maps have been developed by non-Indigenous researchers and therefore can only be used as a “representation” of these language areas.

## Indigenous Australians – Inquiry Focus Questions

1. How is the purpose of Brink Adventures linked with the Earth Charter?
2. What stories have been shared by the members of Brink Adventures?
3. What is the focus of Brink Adventures within Australia? What is the travel route? What communities have been visited?
4. How can we make a story about Brink Adventures?
5. Who are Aboriginal people?
6. How do Aboriginal people tell stories?
7. What is the purpose of these stories?
8. How is art used to tell stories? How do Aboriginal people use art to tell stories?
9. How can I tell stories about the environment through my artwork?
10. How can I promote the Earth Charter and Brink Adventures?

## Essential Learnings

### SOSE

#### YEAR 3 JUNCTURE – TIME, CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

Changes and continuities are identified through events, people's contributions and the stories of local communities.

- Aboriginal people's and Torres Strait Islander people's continuous association with the land and the sea can be seen in stories and events that pre-date European colonisation
- Contributions of individuals and groups to communities can be identified by symbols and stories

#### YEAR 3 JUNCTURE – CULTURE AND IDENTITY

Local communities have different groups with shared values and common interests.

- Groups and communities are identified by practices, symbols and celebrations that reflect their values, beliefs and sense of belonging
- Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples are Australia's Indigenous peoples and their influences are evident and valued in Australian communities
- Stories about significant events and individuals reflect cultural diversity in local and other Australian communities
- Citizenship involves belonging to groups and communities and valuing different contributions and behaviours such as caring for other members

## **SCIENCE**

### YEAR 3 JUNCTURE – SCIENCE AS A HUMAN ENDEAVOUR

Science is a part of everyday activities and experiences.

- Australian Indigenous knowledge of natural phenomena has developed over time as a result of people observing, investigating and testing in everyday life

## **SOSE**

### YEAR 5 JUNCTURE – TIME, CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

Changes and continuities are represented by events and people's contributions, and are viewed differently by different people.

- British colonisation of Australia is connected with particular events and changes, including European exploration, the landing of the First Fleet, proclamation of terra nullius, establishment of penal and free settlements, contact with the Indigenous population and the development of industries.
- Individuals and groups have made significant contributions to change and maintain Australian communities, heritages and identities
- Events can be viewed differently according to a range of cultural, gender and socioeconomic viewpoints

### YEAR 5 JUNCTURE - CULTURE AND IDENTITY

Communities contain cultures and groups that contribute to diversity and influence cohesion.

- Groups in Australian communities contribute to cultural diversity by celebrating differences and commonalities
- Australian society has responded to different cultures in positive and negative ways
- Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people have distinctive social organisation, languages and lifestyles

## **SCIENCE**

### YEAR 5 JUNCTURE - SCIENCE AS A HUMAN ENDEAVOUR

Science relates to students' own experiences and activities in the community.

- Cultures from around the world, including those of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people, have contributed to scientific understanding

## **SOSE**

### YEAR 7 JUNCTURE - TIME, CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

Changes and continuities are linked to particular events and the achievements of individuals and groups that attract different interpretations.

- Events from pre-colonisation to Federation, including Indigenous heritages, European colonisation, frontier conflicts, the development of the economy, and the Federation movement, have established the Australian nation and contributed to Australian identities.
- Australia's relationship with its Asian and Pacific neighbours is linked to events over a range of time periods, including events associated with the "White Australia" policy, refugees and immigration, free-trade agreements and military alliances.
- National traditions, celebrations and commemorations have evolved to reflect public sentiment and the perspectives, values and interpretations of different groups

### YEAR 7 JUNCTURE - CULTURE AND IDENTITY

Cultures and identities consist of material and non-material elements and are affected by cross-cultural contacts.

- Material and non-material elements influence personal identity and sense of belonging of groups
- Perceptions of different cultures and groups are influenced by local, national and world events and by representations in the media
- Aboriginal people's and Torres Strait Islander people's diverse social organisation, languages and lifestyles reflect the importance of "country" — land, sea and places
- Contact between Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures in Australia and in other places have had significant effects on language, culture, land ownership, health and education of Indigenous people
- Accessing Indigenous knowledge involves the protocols of consultation with the local Aboriginal community and/or the Torres Strait Islander community.

## **SCIENCE**

### YEAR 7 JUNCTURE - SCIENCE AS A HUMAN ENDEAVOUR

Science impacts on people, their environment and their communities.

- Different cultures, including those of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people, have contributed to science and scientific practice

## Assessment opportunities

Throughout the module, students will have a range of opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, values and understandings across aspects of SOSE and Science, with targeted demonstrations from the following tasks:

1. The construction of a small picture book describing the story of Brink Adventures – a map of both the journey and the experiences of the Brink Adventures Team
2. The creation of various artworks depicting student interpretations of the relationship between indigenous Australians and the environment, as told through Aboriginal stories
3. The development of a story reflecting students' personal relationships with the environment and their role in protecting the Earth for present and future generations.