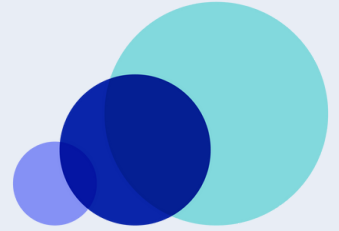


First Nations People Lesson



History: What created the disadvantage?

Long before the first British colonisers arrived in Australia, the land of Australia belonged to the Aboriginal people. They lived in harmony with nature and their customs and traditions were deeply rooted in their connection to the land.

But in 1770, the British came. They sailed in with their enormous timber ships with white billowing sails, and the Indigenous people watched in wonder as these strange beings stepped onto their land. At first, the Indigenous people welcomed the newcomers, offering them food and water and sharing their knowledge of the land.

However, it wasn't long before more and more British arrived. They lived differently to the Aboriginal people and began to take over the land. The British started to claim the land as their own and pushed the Indigenous people off the only home they had known. The Aboriginal people knew they had to fight back but were thoroughly overpowered and outnumbered by the colonizers.

The colonizers started to drastically change the land, tearing down forests and woodlands to make way for their farms. They built houses and towns and brought new species of animals that killed many native species. One of the worst things they brought with them was disease. Indigenous people had never encountered disease before, and it wasn't long before it spread throughout indigenous communities killing many. The colonisers were changing the country the Indigenous people had known for thousands of years. The country that they had such strong connections to, and which embodied their culture.

As the years progressed, life continued to change and deteriorate for the Indigenous people. The British viewed them as an inferior species and forced them to adopt their way of life, punishing them for speaking their own languages and practicing their own traditions. Their children were stolen from them and were taught to forget their culture.

Replaced with European values and training for them to work in colonial settlements. They forced Indigenous people to live on small plots of land called reserves, where they were confined and cut off from their ancestral homes. They were forced to work as labourers on the farms and cattle stations of the colonizers and were paid little to nothing for their labour.



Despite all of this, the Indigenous people never totally lost their connection to their land and their culture. They continued to fight for their rights and their freedom. It wasn't until 1967 that Indigenous Australians were considered citizens of Australia. Before then, they did not experience the rights of citizenship such as voting, social security, education etc. The scars of colonisation still run deep, and the Indigenous people of Australia continue to face many challenges as they work to build a brighter future for themselves and their communities.

Activity 1: Complete the following

1a

Use the story about colonisation to identify and describe the historical injustices experienced by First Nations people.



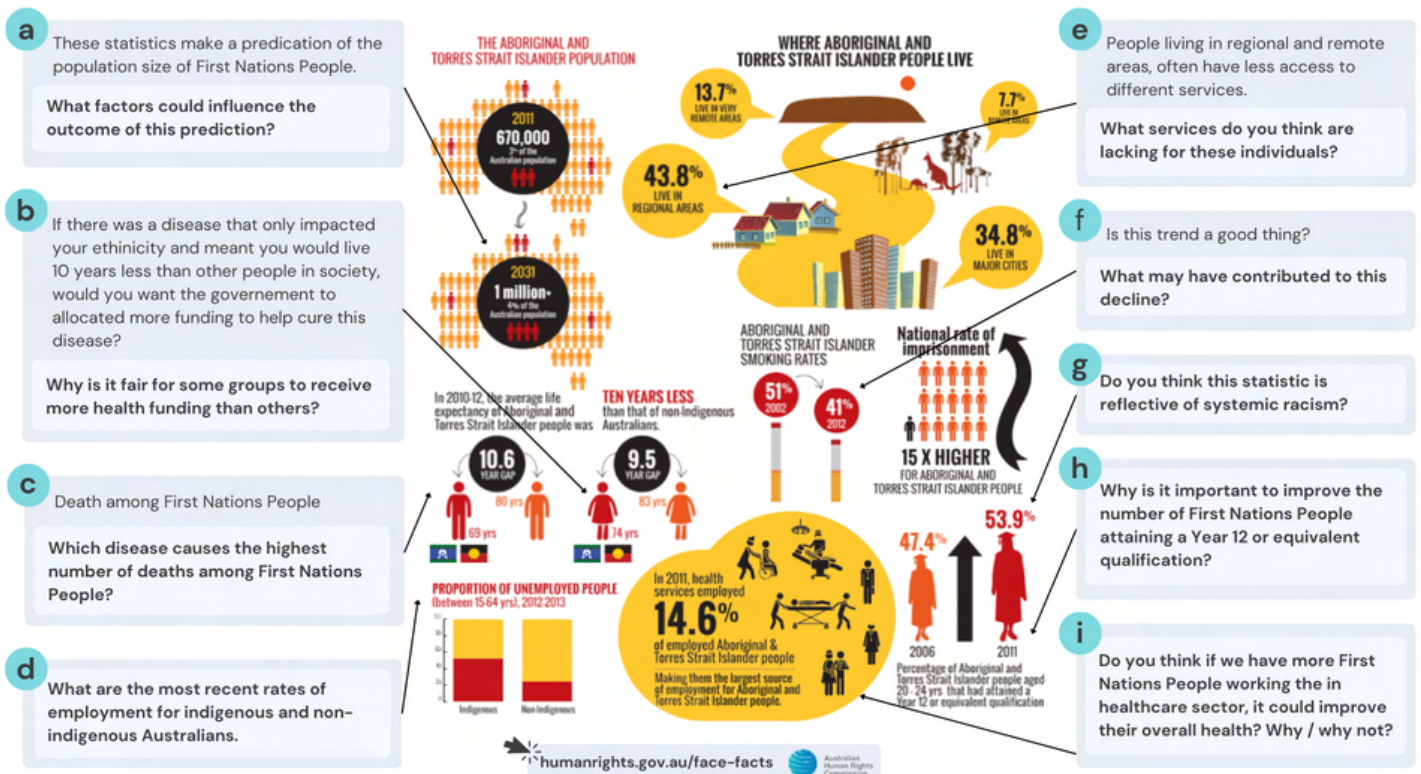
1b

Make an infographic to describe and communicate the historical injustices that have contributed to the disadvantage experienced by First Nations people today. (see activity 2 for Infographic example).

Activity 2: Answer the questions in the margins of the 2014 Face the Facts infographic.

Face the facts: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

Click the infographic to view in larger format or view via humanrights.gov.au



Face the facts: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

Click the infographic to view in larger format or view via humanrights.gov.au

2a

What inferences can be made about First Nations People mortality rates if these is a percentage growth in the population size of First Nations People?

2b

If there was a disease that only impacted your ethnicity and meant you would live 10 years less than other people in society, would you want the government to allocated more funding to help cure this disease? Why is it fair for some groups to receive more health funding than others?

2c

Which disease causes the highest number of deaths among First Nations People?

What could be some of the social determinants of health that account for the difference in life expectancy?

2d

Why are these statistics relevant to the disadvantage experienced by First Nations People? Support your answer with examples.



2e

Why is this decline a good thing? What may have contributed to this decline?

2f

What is systemic racism? Why would this statistic be reflective of system racism?

2g

Why is it important to improve the number of First Nations People attaining a Year 12 or equivalent qualification?

2h

Why is it important to improve the number of First Nations People attaining a Year 12 or equivalent qualification?

2i

Do you think if we have more First Nations People working in the healthcare sector, it could improve their overall health? Why / why not?



Make a Change

The National Agreement on Closing the Gap (the National Agreement) has 19 national socio-economic targets across areas that have an impact on life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Outlined below is one of these targets and outcomes:

Outcome

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieve their full learning potential.

Target

By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (age 20–24) attaining year 12 or equivalent qualification to 96 per cent.

The Gap

Nationally in 2021, 68.1 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20–24 years had attained Year 12 or equivalent qualification. This contrasts with 90.7% of non-Indigenous people.



Activity 3: In-class mini project



The Challenge:

In groups, create an idea that could help reduce the educational gap between First Nations People and non-Indigenous people. Your idea could be focused on engaging First Nations Students inside or outside the classroom. Explain how your idea would work and present it to the class.

Specifics: Your idea should focus on improving one or more of the following goals: Improving Attendance, Literacy and Numeracy and Year 12 attainment.

What is already happening: Currently, the government is trying to close the gap through several initiatives. These include:

- lifting student outcomes through funding;
- supporting girls in pursuing STEM education and careers;
- integrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into classroom practice;
- supporting attendance and attainment through ABSTUDY;
- and reforming remote delivery to be more flexible and tailored to community needs.

<https://www.niaa.gov.au/sites/default/files/reports/closing-the-gap-2019/education.html>

Alternative task:

Create a poster to encourage First Nations students to obtain their Higher School Certificate (complete their HSC).

Your poster could include:

- A catchy slogan or title;
- Engaging and eye-catching visuals;
- Communicate the benefits of completing the HSC;
- Study tips for students

3a

In groups, create an idea that could help reduce the educational gap between First Nations People and non-Indigenous people.

Explain your idea or showcase your poster here ...

Activity 4: Responding to Racism and Discrimination



Read this scenario and reflect on them by answering the questions which follow.

4a. One morning, Jack, a proud First Nations man, walked into his local coffee shop and was not expecting to be confronted by racism. He ordered his coffee, took a seat, and began to read the newspaper that was at the table. As he sipped his coffee, he couldn't help but overhear the conversation at the next table. "Did you hear about that Aboriginal guy who got arrested on TV last night? They're all lazy and just live off government handouts," said the customer. "Yeah, and they're always drunk or causing trouble," said another. Jack felt anger and frustration welling up inside him, but he knew it was pointless to confront them. He had heard these stereotypes before and knew that changing people's minds was an uphill battle.

i

Did Jack do the right thing by not confronting the customers?

ii

If you were Jack, how would you have responded?

iii

What could have been an effective response for Jack to give to the customers?



Read this scenario and reflect on them by answering the questions which follow.

4b. A First Nations man named David was walking home from a party late at night when he was stopped by the police. The police accused David of “looking suspicious” and after finding out that he had been drinking, begin to question him more aggressively. David, feeling intimidated and scared, began to argue with the police. Despite not having committed any crimes, the police arrest David for disorderly conduct and take him to the station. Later that night, a non-Indigenous man named James is also stopped by the same police. However, the line of questions is less aggressive with James and an argument doesn’t occur. James is allowed to continue walking home and told to “stay safe”.

i

Have you ever witnessed or experienced prejudice? How did it make you feel?

ii

How do you think incidents like this impact the relationship between First Nations people and law enforcement?

iii

Do you think that there are different standards of treatment by the police based on race or ethnicity? Support your answer using statistics.



iv

How can we recognise if we have unconscious prejudices?

v

What steps do you think can be taken to prevent situations like this from happening in the future?





Read this scenario and reflect on them by answering the questions which follow.

4c. A young First Nations woman named Lisa works in an office in Sydney. She is the only First Nations person in her workplace, and she sometimes feels like her colleagues do not fully understand her experiences and perspectives. Over time, Lisa notices subtle forms of racism in the workplace. Her colleagues may make offhanded comments or “jokes” about First Nations people or culture, assuming that Lisa will not be offended because she is “one of the good ones.” They sometimes exclude her from social activities or team events, assuming that she will not be interested in participating. Over time these incidents have a big impact on Lisa, making her feel isolated and undervalued in the workplace. She may feel like she cannot fully be herself or speak up when she experiences discrimination, for fear of being dismissed or ignored.

i

What is casual racism?

ii

Why is it offensive to say to someone that they are “one of the good ones” of their race?



Read the following scenario and reflect on them by answering the questions which follow.

4d. While completing her studies at university, a First Nations woman named Tarni also works part-time in a retail store. One day, in the break room, Tarni and a colleague are making small talk over lunch. The colleague asks Tarni where she is from and whether she is of Aboriginal descent. When Tarni confirms that she is of First Nations descent, the colleague responds with surprise, saying, "You don't look Aboriginal, do you still get benefits like free university?" Tarni is taken aback by the colleague's comment. She feels like the colleague is implying that Aboriginal people should look a certain way or conform to a particular stereotype. She also feels offended that her colleague thinks she doesn't have to pay for university.

i

It is a common misconception that First Nations people receive free university tuition. People who apply for scholarships and are successful are sometimes able to attend university without paying. Why might Tarni feel offended when the colleague assumed Tarni didn't pay for university?

ii

Why might Tarni feel offended when the colleague said, "you don't look Aboriginal"?



Read the following scenario and reflect on them by answering the questions which follow.

4e. Jake is a First Nations student in year 9. One school day while he was in history class, the teacher started a discussion about the history of colonization in Australia. As she talked about the negative impacts it had on Aboriginal communities, Jake noticed that some of his classmates are rolling their eyes and making dismissive comments. One student said, "Why should we care about what happened, it happened ages ago? They should just get over it already." Jake feels hurt and frustrated. He knows that his classmates are completely disregarding the struggles that First Nations people continue to face today, and it's clear that they have no interest in learning or understanding.

i

Why might a First Nations person still be affected by events of Australia's past?

ii

When were First Nations people recognised as citizens of Australia?

iii

How many years ago was this?

