GTANSW and RivSSTA present

INSPIRE COLLABORATE LEARN

Mini Conference

Friday 17 November @ Wagga Wagga Country Club
Plumpton Road, Wagga Wagga

Conference Program

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<th>TIME</th>
<th>SESSION</th>
<th>PRESENTER(S)</th>
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<tr>
<td>8.15am – 8.45am</td>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>RivSSTA and GTANSW Executive</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.45am – 9.00am</td>
<td>Acknowledgement of Country and Opening of Conference</td>
<td>Susan Caldis and Lorraine Chaffer</td>
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<td>9.00am – 9.45am</td>
<td>KEYNOTE: Programming</td>
<td>David Latimer</td>
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<td>9.50am – 10.50am</td>
<td>WORKSHOP 1: Using Inquiry Based Learning</td>
<td>Dr Grant Kleeman</td>
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<td>10.50am – 11.10am</td>
<td>MORNING TEA</td>
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<td>11.10am – 12.10pm</td>
<td>WORKSHOP 2: Using Spatial Technologies</td>
<td>Lorraine Chaffer</td>
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<td>12.15pm – 1.15pm</td>
<td>WORKSHOP 3: Designing an Integrated Unit of Work</td>
<td>Lorraine Chaffer</td>
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<td>1.20pm – 1.45pm</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
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<td>1.50pm – 2.50pm</td>
<td>WORKSHOP 4: Designing Constructively Aligned Assessment Tasks</td>
<td>Susan Caldis</td>
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<td>2.50pm – 3.00pm</td>
<td>Plenary and Close</td>
<td>Susan Caldis</td>
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COST: $150 per participant  
EVENT ACCREDITATION: in process

Participants will receive a google drive link to access presentations associated with the conference program and to share resources. Participants are invited to bring assessment tasks and programs to review as required in response to key messages from workshop sessions.

Further details will be posted to the GTANSW website as they are finalised...

www.gtansw.org.au
Part 1: Aboriginal Land Care

Author Jens Korff, Creative Spirits

Over the next four issues articles by Jens Korff, owner and author of Creative Spirits, will form a series titled Aboriginal Australia. This series will contain information relevant to many sections of the K–10 Geography Syllabus

Part 1: Aboriginal Land Care
Part 2: Aboriginal Fire Management
Part 3: Indigenous Protected Areas
Part 4: Threats to Aboriginal Land

SYLLABUS LINKS

Cross Curriculum Priority Area
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and cultures

Stage 1: Features of places / People and Places
Students investigate:
– features of places and how they are cared for
– activities that occur within places

Stage 2: The Earth’s Environment
Students investigate:
– sustainable practices that protect environments, including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

Stage 3: Factors that shape places
Students investigate:
– the ways people change the natural environment in Australia and another country

Stage 4: Landforms and Landscapes
Students investigate:
– ways people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, manage and protect landscapes

Stage 5: Sustainable Biomes / Environmental change and management
Students investigate:
– the human alteration of biomes to produce food, industrial materials and fibres and the environmental effects of these alterations
– environmental management, including different worldviews and the management approaches of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
Traditional care for the land

Before the invasion Aboriginal people created a complex system of land management. There was no ‘pristine wilderness’, rather a patchwork of burnt and re-grown areas. Fire was their biggest ally (Part 2 will examine this practice in detail).

In using fire Aboriginal people could plan and predict plant growth and with it attract animals for hunting. They converted the land to grasslands for the “maintenance” of animals, plants and fresh drinking water, according to Bill Gammage’s award-winning book *The Biggest Estate on Earth*.

Gammage explains that Aboriginal people not only thought of kangaroos when laying out their burn patterns, but also of possums, wombats, birds, insects, reptiles and plants. “Once you have started to lay out country to suit a species, you are on the way to an extraordinarily complex arrangement of the land, which you must maintain very carefully, and over many generations,” he says. Burn patterns also need to consider plant cycles.

The research draws some striking conclusions [8]:

- No uncontrolled fires. Uncontrolled fire could wipe out food sources—Aboriginal people had to prevent them or die. Evidence strongly suggests that no devastating fires occurred.
- Aboriginal people were farmers. (see section below)
- Customised templates. Aboriginal people developed specific templates to suit the land, plants and animals. They knew which animals preferred what, e.g. kangaroos preferred short grass, native bees preferred desert bloodwood etc. Managing the land with fire required them consider these dependencies.
- No pristine wilderness. More trees grow in areas now known as national parks than did in 1788.

Aboriginal people were farmers

Researchers found that Aboriginal people grew crops of tubers such as yams, grain such as native millet, macadamia nuts, fruits and berries. People reared dingoes, possums, emus and cassowaries, moved caterpillars to new breeding areas and carried fish stock across country [8].

There is “strong evidence” of “sophisticated farming and agriculture practices”. Early explorers watched women harvesting yams, onions, and cultivating the land [11], creating reserves of flour and grain.

Bruce Pascoe’s book *Dark Emu* challenges the notion that Aboriginal people were hunter-gatherers and did not settle down.

Modern care & bush rangers

Caring for the land does not necessarily mean only the traditional way. Modern carers for land, such as rangers, can both continue traditions (deep knowledge about country passed on from generation to generation), as well as apply modern technologies and innovative land management practices.

Combining traditional methods and contemporary practices can in fact get the best results for the environment, for example in Indigenous Protected Areas. (Part 3 will examine these areas in detail).

The success of Aboriginal ranger programs is largely credited to the Aboriginal ownership of the work, guided by the local authority of Aboriginal elders. [12]

Traditional owners often work in partnership with government departments and other non-Aboriginal organisations to conserve and care for land.

In such mutual relationships, traditional owners and rangers perform a multitude of tasks: [1, 2, 3, 4, 12]
ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIA SERIES

**FACT BOX**

In 2012, Aboriginal people managed 20% of Australia’s land [4]. More than 3 million adult kangaroos and 1 million joeys are “harvested” each year in Australia for human and pet consumption. This is considered the “largest commercial kill of terrestrial wildlife on Earth” [7]. For many Aboriginal tribes kangaroos are a sacred animal.

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**Spiritual & cultural works**
- protect and maintain cultural sites, stories and songlines,
- recognise important cultural areas,
- perform cultural or customary activities,
- supply meat from crocodile and feral buffalo to the local community.

**Environmental works**
- record sites of resource use and special features,
- create seasonal harvest calendars,
- survey catchments,
- hunt for feral animals such as foxes, camels or cats which threaten the delicate ecosystem of the bush,
- record (new) plants,
- protect biodiversity,
- remove seeds and weeds including invasive pests like African buffel grass,
- remove rubbish left by tourists at camping spots, and ghost nets and other marine debris from seas and beaches,
- help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and earn carbon credits,
- return threatened species to their native habitat (439 animal species were threatened in 2012, up from 353 in 2001; 1344 plant species were threatened in 2012, a 20% increase from 2001 [5]),
- manage controlled burns and set fire breaks to prevent devastating bush fires and protect outstations and sacred sites,
- conduct fisheries surveillance and compliance patrols,
- help with sustainable water management, including animal rescue.

**Educational works**
- teach government departments and tourists about their connection with the land, the seasons and bush foods,
- assist with providing cross-cultural education and capacity building within their communities,
- take Aboriginal children out on country so they can learn from their elders.

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**Footnotes**

[1] ‘Land is linked to well-being’, Koori Mail 496 p.35
[2] ‘Caring for their country’, Koori Mail 485 p.27
[4] ‘Caring for country’, Koori Mail 519 p.64
[12] ‘Funding for indigenous ranger programs must be doubled, report says’, SMH 15/11/2015

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**CREATIVE SPIRITS**

https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/land/aboriginal-land-care#ixzz4pzkQDZOT

Join Creative Spirits’ newsletter, valued by many teachers for helping them with their work – https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/land/