

Geography Alive: Aboriginal use of fire (Lesson 4)

Lesson 4: Aboriginal use of fire		
Content focus: In this lesson students focus on Aboriginal Australian's frequent and planned use of fire as a way of managing country. They also reflect on how the use of fire changed the landscape of Australia over time.		Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Worksheet 4: Aboriginal use of fire
Key inquiry questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why did Aboriginal Australians use low-intensity fire as a land management tool?• What impact did the use of fire by Aboriginal Australian's have on the Australian landscape?• What can contemporary Australian's learn about fire management from Aboriginal Australians?	Outcomes: <i>A student:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identifies the reasons Aboriginal Australian's used low-intensity fires.• describes the impact that low-intensity fires had on the Australian landscape.	Lesson sequence: Step 1: Read through the text-based elements of the worksheet with the students. Draw the students' attention to the following ideas: Fire has been an important element of the Australian landscape for tens of thousands of years; Aboriginal Australians developed a way of life well suited to the environment in which they lived; Their main tool was low-intensity fire; they made frequent and planned use of fire to keep the country more open and easy to travel through, to promote the growth of fresh green grass and herbs that would attract animals, as a means of signaling and hunting, and for the more obvious purposes such as warmth and cooking; and over time the use of fire by Aboriginal people changed the Australian landscape. Step 2: Ask students to study students to Figure 1. What can you see in the painting? What are the Indigenous Australians doing in the painting? What might be the relationship between the use of fire and the activities of Indigenous Australians? Step 3: Students complete Activities 1–4. Step 4: Use questioning to ascertain level of student understanding.