Fertile Question: How can religious diversity advance Australia fair?

Core Content Area 2: Australia’s Religious Diversity

Topic 2.2: How did it all begin?

Depthing Understanding: Early Christian Missions

Focus

In this lesson students will explore and critique different points of view about the effects of Missions on Aboriginal people in colonial Australia.

Teachers: Before you start!

- Familiarise yourself with the websites and film referred to in the lesson.

For students to explore the establishment of Missions for Aboriginal people select from the following activities.

Students:

- explore the Voices of the Mission website. Choose one mission to explore in depth. (Lake Condah Mission is a good example.)
  - Identify the diverse points of view presented on the effects of the Christian Missions on Indigenous Australians.
- read the article “Breaking Open the Word for Aborigines”.
  - Complete a PMI (plus minus interesting) chart either on your own, or with a partner on the major points in the article.
  - Discuss as a class the spirituality of Rev Rosendale and his efforts to connect with his Christian Aboriginal congregation.
- explore the Hermannsburg Historic precinct website noticing that original Aboriginal language of Aranda is local language. Reflect on the contribution that some early Christian Missions made to the preservation of Indigenous Australian languages.
- view excerpts of the film Rabbit Proof Fence. Analyse and critique the rationale for and motivation behind the work of the Missionaries, taking into consideration the world views of the key stakeholders.
- express on a class graffiti chart or on Wallwisher the thoughts, feelings, frustrations, inspirations, intentions, dreams, pain, joy, forgiveness etc of the key stakeholders involved with the issues surrounding Aboriginal missions in Australia.