TOPIC 1.2: ARE WE SPIRITUAL?

Extending Knowledge: Australian Indigenous Spiritualities

In this lesson students will explore the diversity of Australian Indigenous spiritualities.

Teachers: Before You Start!

1. Familiarise yourself with information about Indigenous spirituality at the Australian Museum site and in Teacher Background.
2. Consider booking a day at Ngutana-Lui Brisbane Catholic Education’s ATSI Cultural Studies Centre for students and staff to experience the richness and diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

For students to explore different Australian Indigenous spiritualities select from the following activities:

1. Explore the Creative Spirits website to investigate Indigenous spirituality and beliefs, then complete the following activities:
   a. Determine Indigenous attitudes and connectedness to the land
   b. Read the poem Spiritual Song of the Aborigine. Reread the lines of the poem that begin with I am or I’m. Record these and complete a twenty word summary of the poet’s spirituality.
   c. Spend 5 minutes outside by yourself in silence and focus on the natural environment. Reflect on how you feel about your own spiritual connectedness to the land and everything in it.

2. Create your own I am poem or artwork to express your spiritual connectedness to the land and creation. A mandala is a possible style or format for a reflective artistic response. It simply requires a circle. Click here for examples.

3. Investigate the diversity of Aboriginal seasons at the Australian Bureau of Meteorology site.
   a. Explore the Miriwoong Seasonal Calendar Or the Bininj/Mungguy calendar of Kakadu
   b. Listen to the podcasts to hear the different Australian Indigenous languages and connection between season, food and spirit.
   c. Create a circular chart showing weather patterns in your own area. Include drawings or words that could show useful information to someone living a traditional Aboriginal lifestyle there.

5. View Dreaming stories from different states. Note that the term Dreaming is not an Indigenous word and that the use of one word does not reflect the diversity of Aboriginal groups.
   a. Use evidence from the stories that identifies the diverse ways Indigenous groups and cultures live the Dreaming and make meaning of the deeper mysteries of life. This evidence can be presented digitally, graphically or in text.
Sources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture

Useful information on Indigenous perspectives found at [https://kweb.bne.catholic.edu.au/LandT/Priorities/ATSIEdu/Pages/default.aspx](https://kweb.bne.catholic.edu.au/LandT/Priorities/ATSIEdu/Pages/default.aspx)

Alternative learning sessions could be booked at Brisbane City Council’s Cultural Learning Centre.

Circular weather chart template.

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