



Tell Me a Story

Learning Resource

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'Tell Me a Story' is a major exhibition at Town Hall Gallery celebrating the ancient art of storytelling.

Humans have always drawn on the social and cultural practice of sharing narratives to better understand the world we live in, developing techniques and customs to hold memory, commemorate experiences, and record knowledge. The featured artists aim to deepen our understanding of the human psyche, our past and future, and our relationship to natural and constructed environments.

Detailing accounts of love, conflict and the everyday, 'Tell Me a Story' reveals the enduring power of the story to secure bonds between people and communities across space and time.

This exhibition provides a range of thought-provoking contexts which offer opportunities to explore contemporary issues around storytelling as history keeping and celebrating different cultural traditions and legacies.

This learning guide is aimed at supporting students and teachers to engage in discussion and activities before, during and after a visit to the 'Tell Me a Story' exhibition.

Through images and information about the artists and artworks, students are encouraged to participate in discussion and research to enhance their understanding of key themes around the purpose of storytelling.

Featuring: Kate Beynon, Kathleen Gonzalez Villamizar, Jumaadi, Sancintya Mohini Simpson, Aunty Kim Wandin, Lewis Wandin-Bursill and items from the Boroondara Library Service collection.

This resource includes:

- 1. Preparation for teachers**
- 2. Learnings and the Victorian Curriculum**
- 3. Curriculum Links: Levels 3–6 Learning Areas and Capabilities**
- 4. Discussion points and activities relating to some of the featured artists and artworks**



More Information:

For more information about the Learn with Boroondara Arts program, education resources and activities, please contact us:



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1. PREPARATION FOR TEACHERS

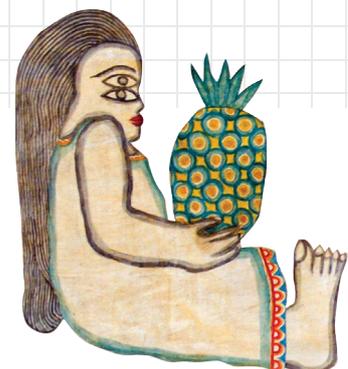
STRUCTURING YOUR TOUR:

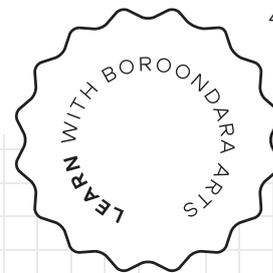
This document includes a description of work from some of the artists featured in the exhibition, questions to ask your students followed by information which can help you inform their responses and conclude the conversation when your class is ready to move on.

There are six artists featured in 'Tell Me a Story' and historical items provided by the Boroondara Library Service. Allocate up to 15 minutes to discuss each artist with your class and adjust as required.

The curatorial team have provided recommendations for which artists to focus on depending on how much time you have allocated to view 'Tell Me a Story' with your class:

Tour Length	Recommended Structure
35–55 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Walk through the exhibition with your class and allow students time to contemplate the exhibition independently (5–10 minutes) 2. Jumaadi (10–15 minutes) 3. Kate Beynon (10–15 minutes) 4. Aunty Kim Wandin and conclusion (10–15 minutes)
45–70 minutes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Walk through the exhibition with your class and allow students time to contemplate the exhibition independently (5–10 minutes) 6. Jumaadi (10–15 minutes) 7. Kate Beynon (10–15 minutes) 8. Aunty Kim Wandin (10–15 minutes) 9. Sancintya Mohini Simpson and conclusion (10–15 minutes)





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2. LEARNINGS AND THE VICTORIAN CURRICULUM

This guide is designed to navigate the artwork in 'Tell Me a Story'. It has direct connections to the Victorian Curriculum F-10: Levels 3–6

There are three components to this activity which involve:

- Visual arts
- English (Speaking and Listening), and
- Critical and creative thinking
- Media arts

LEVELS 3 AND 4

[HTTPS://VICTORIANCURRICULUM.VCAA.VIC.EDU.AU/LEVEL3](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/level3)

[HTTPS://VICTORIANCURRICULUM.VCAA.VIC.EDU.AU/LEVEL4](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/level4)

Visual Arts

In Levels 3 and 4, students explore how and why artists, craftspeople and designers realise their ideas through different art forms. They enhance their perceptual skills by observing the world around them and expressing these observations through different practical applications of art making. Through observational, imaginative, and sensory investigations, students become more knowledgeable and discerning about their practices as a visual artist.

Critical and Creative Thinking

In Levels 3 and 4, the curriculum focuses on developing the knowledge, skills and understanding to improve and monitor thinking. Students learn and consider the advantages of different thinking techniques. Students learn

there are different ways to respond to problems, visualise thinking and think more effectively.

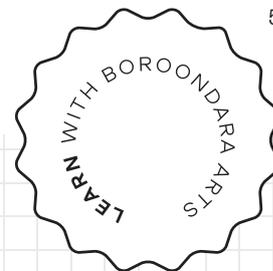
English

In Levels 3 and 4, students communicate with peers and teachers from other classes and schools in a range of face-to-face and online/virtual environments.

Media Arts

In Levels 3 and 4, students extend their understanding of key concepts of media arts such as the use of media technologies, story principles of structure, intent, character and settings, and use the media arts elements of composition and sound. They consider themselves as audiences and explore the characteristics of audience types.





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2. LEARNINGS AND THE VICTORIAN CURRICULUM

LEVELS 5 AND 6

[HTTPS://VICTORIANCURRICULUM.VCAA.VIC.EDU.AU/LEVEL5](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/level5)

[HTTPS://VICTORIANCURRICULUM.VCAA.VIC.EDU.AU/LEVEL6](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/level6)

Visual Arts

In Levels 5 and 6, students explore how and why artists, craftspeople and designers realise their ideas through different visual forms, practices, and processes. They develop conceptual and expressive skills.

Critical and Creative Thinking

In Levels 5 and 6, the curriculum focuses on developing the knowledge, skills and understanding to test the strength of thinking. Students develop their capacity to deliberately manage their thinking. Students explore common errors that can occur in thinking.

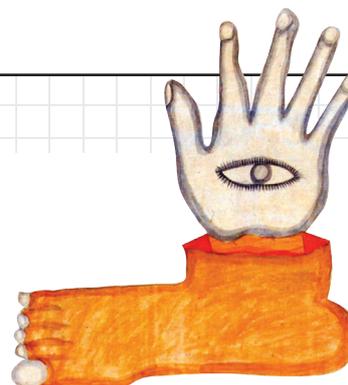
English

In Levels 5 and 6, students communicate with peers and teachers from other classes and schools, community members, and individuals and groups, in a range of face-to-face and online/virtual environments.

Students engage with a variety of texts for enjoyment. They listen to, read, view, interpret and evaluate spoken, written and multimodal texts in which the primary purpose is aesthetic, as well as texts designed to inform and persuade. These include various types of media texts including newspapers, film and digital texts, junior and early adolescent novels, poetry, non-fiction, and dramatic performances.

Media Arts

In Levels 5 and 6, students develop their use of structure, intent, character and settings by incorporating viewpoints and genre conventions in their media art works. They explore and use media technologies and media elements such as time, space, sound, colour, movement and lighting, and evaluate the use of these elements in the media artworks they make and view.





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3. CURRICULUM LINKS: LEVELS [3–6] LEARNING AREAS AND CAPABILITIES

VISUAL ARTS

Levels 3 and 4

- Identify and discuss how ideas are expressed in artworks from a range of places, times, and cultures, including artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (VCAVAR028)

Levels 5 and 6

- Identify and describe how ideas are expressed in artworks by comparing artworks from different contemporary, historical and cultural contexts, including artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (VCAVAR032)

CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING

Levels 3 and 4

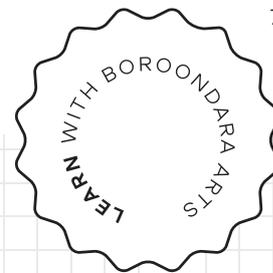
- Construct and use open and closed questions for different purposes (VCCCTQ010)
- Investigate different techniques to sort facts and extend known ideas to generate novel and imaginative ideas (VCCCTQ012)

- Examine and use the structure of a basic argument, with an aim, reasons, and conclusion to present a point of view (VCCCTR013)
- Investigate why and when the consequences of a point of view should be considered (VCCCTR015)

Levels 5 and 6

- Examine how different kinds of questions can be used to identify and clarify information, ideas and possibilities (VCCCTQ021)
- Investigate common reasoning errors including contradiction and inconsistency, and the influence of context (VCCCTR024)
- Consider when analogies might be used in expressing a point of view and how they should be expressed and evaluated (VCCCTR026)
- Examine the difference between valid and sound arguments and between inductive and deductive reasoning, and their degrees of certainty (VCCCTR027)





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3. CURRICULUM LINKS: LEVELS [3–6] LEARNING AREAS AND CAPABILITIES

ENGLISH

Levels 3 and 4

- Understand that successful cooperation with others depends on shared use of social conventions, including turn-taking patterns, and forms of address that vary according to the degree of formality in social situations (VCELA271)
- Learn extended and technical vocabulary and ways of expressing opinion including modal verbs and adverbs (VCELA273)
- Listen to and contribute to conversations and discussions to share information and ideas and negotiate in collaborative situations and use interaction skills, including active listening and clear, coherent communications (VCELY275)
- Understand differences between the language of opinion and feeling and the language of factual reporting or recording (VCELA305)
- Discuss literary experiences with others, sharing responses and expressing a point of view (VCELT306)

Levels 5 and 6

- Use comprehension strategies to analyse information, integrating and

linking ideas from a variety of print and digital sources (VCELY319)

- Understand how to move beyond making bare assertions and take account of differing perspectives and points of view (VCELA335)
- Present a point of view about particular literary texts using appropriate metalanguage, and reflecting on the viewpoints of others (VCELT336)
- Clarify understanding of content as it unfolds in formal and informal situations, connecting ideas to students' own experiences, and present and justify a point of view or recount an experience using interaction skills (VCELY337)
- Use comprehension strategies to interpret and analyse information and ideas, comparing content from a variety of textual sources including media and digital texts (VCELY347)
- Participate in and contribute to discussions, clarifying and interrogating ideas, developing and supporting arguments, sharing and evaluating information, experiences and opinions, and use interaction skills, varying conventions of spoken interactions according to group size, formality of interaction and needs and expertise of the audience (VCELY366)





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3. CURRICULUM LINKS: LEVELS [3-6] LEARNING AREAS AND CAPABILITIES

MEDIA ARTS

Levels 3 and 4

- Investigate and devise representations of people in their community, through settings, ideas and story structure in images, sounds and text (VCAMAE025)

Levels 5 and 6

- Explore representations, characterisations and viewpoints of people in their community, using stories, structure, settings, and genre conventions in images, sounds and text (VCAMAE029)



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4. DISCUSSION POINTS AND ACTIVITIES RELATING TO THE FEATURED ARTISTS AND ARTWORKS

JUMAADI, 'LOVE WILL FIND ITS WAY'

With your class, stand in front of this artwork and use the discussion prompts on the following page.



IMAGE CREDIT: Jumaadi, 'Love will find its way', 2019, acrylic on cloth, 150 x 285cm, image courtesy of the artist and King St Gallery on William. Photography by Agung.



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JUMAADI, 'LOVE WILL FIND ITS WAY'

Born in Indonesia, Jumaadi came to Sydney in 2000. Due to his close ties with both Indonesia and Australia, Jumaadi's imagery traverses the histories and narratives that weave between the neighbouring countries. His artwork contains a rare insight into this cross-cultural dialogue and acts as a reflection on his life between these two 'worlds'.

Jumaadi's works are inspired by the ancient practice of finding relief in the communal bond and joint rituals of storytelling, listening, and fabulation. His cotton cloth paintings follow the craft and iconographic tradition of Balinese narrative temple paintings in which two-dimensional characters and landscapes are arranged in flat compositions that recall puppets in a shadow play or the reliefs of Javanese Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms.

Jumaadi places different shapes near each other to create narratives or suggest various meanings. 'Like a tree and a shoe, like a man and a snake, like a durian and an ant, like earth and sky and clouds,' Jumaadi says.

On display is a series of large-scale acrylic works on cloth, that connect histories, communities, and spiritual practices, exploring ideas of communality through narratives of migration and visitation.

ASK YOUR CLASS:

Describe the size of the work. How does the size of the artwork make you feel?

It is very big and there are lots of characters in it doing different things.

The large scale is intended to immerse the viewer, emphasising how many different people and communities exist all around the world. History is being created right now all around us!

Look closely at the characters in this piece. What kind of stories do you see happening?

Jumaadi is interested in storytelling as an act of bonding with his community and their history. Each character in his paintings is doing something interesting. You can see people travelling by boat together, eating food, riding animals, and taking care of children. The artist wants us to imagine the actions of the characters, what they feel, and how they would tell people about their day.





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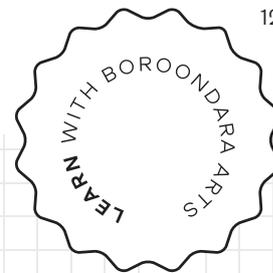
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4. DISCUSSION POINTS AND ACTIVITIES RELATING TO THE FEATURED ARTISTS AND ARTWORKS

KATE BEYNON, 'LUCKY CHARMS: SELF-PORTRAIT WITH SON RALI'

With your class, stand in front of this artwork and use the discussion prompts on the following page.





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KATE BEYNON, 'LUCKY CHARMS: SELF-PORTRAIT WITH SON RALI'

The diverse cultural backgrounds of Kate Beynon's family – including her Cantonese-Malaysian, Celtic/Welsh and Nordic ancestries, alongside the Afro-Caribbean and First Nations Pima-Mexican ancestries of her husband and sons – inform her conceptual and artistic practice. Inspired by female Surrealists, Beynon's work also draws from an eclectic range of pictorial traditions including graphic novels, animation, film, calligraphy, textile design and fashion.

Kate is exhibiting a series of suspended Supernatural charms and number of small paintings including self-portraits and double-portraits featuring the artist and her son, each informed by the artist's interest in mixed cultural identity and auspicious imagery.

ASK YOUR CLASS:

Why do you think the artist has painted a portrait of her and her son?

Family portraits celebrate family, their legacy, and a record of history. They might be displayed in the home or kept in a scrap book. For as long as art and photography have existed, an important way history has been kept has been through portraits, often of people and their families.

The artist has painted herself and her son to capture her family and the symbolism and motifs from their mixed cultural background. This piece celebrates the artist's family, ancestors, and culture.

What symbols can you find in this portrait? Why do you think the artist has included them?

The portrait shows the artist and her son wearing t-shirts and jewellery that feature a variety of cultural images.

Some images include:

- The Aboriginal flag in a love heart brooch
- Eye on the hand of the Goddess, which is a Sheng talisman
- Peony flower, a symbol of beauty, youth and nature from the Qing dynasty
- Lotus paper headdress
- The endless knot symbol (blue icon on shirt), a cross-cultural symbol featured in Chinese and Celtic knot designs, symbolising enduring love, friendship and companionship

All these images represent a part of the artist and her family's ancestry.





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4. DISCUSSION POINTS AND ACTIVITIES RELATING TO THE FEATURED ARTISTS AND ARTWORKS

AUNTY KIM WANDIN, 'WILIN-WILIN (DISH) WITH WEAVE'

With your class, stand in front of this artwork and use the discussion prompts on the following page.





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AUNTY KIM WANDIN, 'WILIN-WILIN (DISH) WITH WEAVE'

Aunty Kim Wandin is a Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung woman living in Healesville in the Yarra Valley. The artist collects reeds and other fibre plants on Country to create baskets, eel traps and other woven objects. Aunty Kim Wandin's weaving practice builds upon countless generations of practice, applying cultural, technological knowledge that has been utilised for thousands of years. Matrilineal practices, cosmologies, familial connections, and cultural memory are woven into each work.

Aunty Kim says, "Our Identity is embedded in country and using plants, creating a strong presence of Aboriginal people here on Wurundjeri Country. Being able to keep the tradition of basket making alive drives me and sharing it and passing it on other family members. My aim is to create a change in the way people view baskets where traditional art can be seen as sculpture."

ASK YOUR CLASS:

What is this artwork made from and can you see how it been made? What do you think it's used for?

Aunty Kim has used dried grass to weave this basket. Aunty Kim harvests, prepares, and weaves natural materials sourced on Wurundjeri Country into eel traps and baskets used for gathering food and carrying babies. In many freshwater and saltwater communities throughout this country, woven fish traps have cultural and spiritual significance. They're made with sustainable resource collection and have ceremonial purpose.

Do you think the practice of weaving is new or is it a tradition?

Aunty Kim Wandin's weaving practice applies cultural, technological knowledge that has been utilised for

thousands of years. By keeping this tradition, the artist is connecting to her culture and her ancestors and passing on this knowledge and skill to future generations.

Aunty Kim says, "I am a Wurundjeri/ Woiwurrung Woman. My traditional family name is 'Wandoon' which means 'spirits of the water.' My family and I still live on Country.

The art of using reeds to make eel traps and baskets is a tradition handed down to me by my Nanna Ollie, who was taught by Granny Jemima (at Coranderrk). I am intending to pass this on to my own granddaughter when the time is right.

I collect my reeds on my Country and hang them to dry in the sun. When they are dried I soak them in water to make them flexible and ready to use."





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4. DISCUSSION POINTS AND ACTIVITIES RELATING TO THE FEATURED ARTISTS AND ARTWORKS

SANCINTYA MOHINI SIMPSON'S, 'LANGUAGE OF INDENTURE'

With your class, stand in front of this artwork and use the discussion prompts on the following page.





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SANCINTYA MOHINI SIMPSON'S, 'LANGUAGE OF INDENTURE'

Sancintya Mohini Simpson is an artist and researcher. She describes herself as a biracial person, a first-generation Australian of Indian-Anglo descent. Members of her mother's family were indentured workers from India, who were sent to work on sugar plantations in South Africa.

"From the impact of colonisation there's this history of trauma, we see it here in this country, we see it globally, and for me, I've seen that in my family. Healing is something that needs to happen, but how do we do it? Acknowledging these women and these histories is a big part of that process." (Sancintya Mohini Simpson, The Art Show, 2018)

'The Language of Indenture' is a video piece of the artist sitting with her mother during a heatwave on a summer's afternoon, talking about language, culture and loss. The artist has referenced the sounds of experimental documentary and ethnographic imagery and captioning. Putting the songs of Indians indentured in South Africa in the central position, she creates a new archive of how language has shifted, been lost and rewritten.

ASK YOUR CLASS:

Do you have conversations with your family members about their upbringing? Do you know the language you speak because of your family members or because you learned it through school? What else have you learned about your history through conversations and storytelling with your family?

These questions are a good place to begin thinking about the importance of oral histories. Answers from students will be varied.

Listen to the conversation between these two people. What is their relationship and what are they talking about with each other?

Sancintya has recorded a conversation with her mother about her upbringing, and her parents' and grandparents' languages spoken at home. She wanted to record this conversation to learn about her mother and her family's history. Language is very valuable because it helps people stay connected to and celebrate their culture. Conversations with family are an important part of learning about your personal history. These stories can be passed on to future generations.





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SANCINTYA MOHINI SIMPSON'S, 'LANGUAGE OF INDENTURE' (CONTINUED)

**What can you see from the video?
What has the artist added on top of
the mother's back and why?**

The video shows the artist's mother's back, but the artist has also laid a video of the ocean over the top. The mother said she grew up in South Africa, which has lots of beaches. Her ancestors from India likely travelled the ocean on a boat to get to South Africa. The ocean shows where the mother and her ancestors come from.

There are mangoes next to the mother's back. The artist and her mother live in Brisbane where mango trees grow in backyards. This shows where the artist and her mother live now.

There are also subtitles for another language. This is to honour the language passed down through the artist's ancestors.

