

Brave New Clan – People 2: Family and Community – Years 4 to 6

Teacher preparation

Overarching learning goal: Students will understand that family is important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Students will recognise that definitions of family vary between people and cultures.

Teacher content information: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have complex systems of family relations, or kinship systems, that can vary between communities, but that are consistently central to the way in which culture and identity is passed on, and society is organised.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kinship systems can differ quite significantly from non-Indigenous understandings of family. They determine the formation, management and communication of relationships. Kinship systems also delineate the roles, rights, and responsibilities within relationships. For example, kinship systems may govern who marries who, as well as behaviour patterns in both ceremonial and everyday contexts.



"EVEN PEOPLE THAT AREN'T BLOOD RELATED TO US ARE OUR FAMILY." – KAYLAH

Skin systems are an example of a corresponding system that exists within many Aboriginal groups and interacts with kinship to govern



one's knowledge of where they fit into their wider family, and how they should relate to one another. This can transcend biological relations; for example, two women born into the same skin name may be considered 'sisters' even if they do not share the same biological mother and father.

Given the significance of family to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and to the passing on of their cultures and identities, Australia's history of separating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families has had devastating impacts that continue today.

About the films: *Who We Are: Brave New Clan* follows the lives of six exceptional young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who share stories about their communities, history and cultures in contemporary Australia. The films engage teachers and students in discussions about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity and allow students to examine the influences of family, kinship, community, Country/place, culture, spirituality, history and modern mainstream Australian society on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Further information about using these resources:

- [About Who We Are - Brave New Clan](#)
- [Who We Are - Brave New Clan - Supplementary Resources](#)



TALK WITH ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDENTS, STAFF, FAMILIES OR COMMUNITY MEMBERS WHEN PLANNING TO USE THE WHO WE ARE: BRAVE NEW CLAN LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE CLASSROOM. YOU COULD INVITE MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITY TO SHARE STORIES ABOUT THEIR CULTURE AND EXPERIENCES. THIS WILL ENRICH THE LEARNING EXPERIENCES OF STUDENTS AND IS ESPECIALLY MEANINGFUL WHEN LOCAL PERSPECTIVES ARE SHARED FROM THE PLACE STUDENTS ARE LIVING AND LEARNING.

Ground rules: You may have already created a set of ground rules during the Tuning In lesson. Remind students of these ground rules before commencing this lesson.

If you haven't created a set of ground rules, explain to students that due to the sensitive nature of some of the content in *Who We Are: Brave New Clan*, setting classroom ground rules before commencing this lesson is an important step in creating a safe space and helping develop mutual respect and understanding between the members of your classroom community.

Ground rules might include:

- Own your contributions: Use "I think" rather than "you should".
- Be respectful: each person has their own beliefs and values
- Value diversity: each person has their own world views, experiences and opinions
- Listen politely: each person has a right to contribute without pressure or intimidation
- Act with honour and courage: be brave in sharing experiences, ideas and opinions
- Appreciate privacy: each person has the right to uphold their privacy
- Act responsibly: share feedback with thoughtful consideration and a positive attitude towards others



"FAMILY IS
EVERYTHING."
— JOSH

Teaching sequence

- 10-20 minutes - Preparation
- 10 minutes - Watching and Responding to the Film
- 15 minutes - Think Pair Share
- 15 minutes - Skin Groups: Film and Discussion
- 15 minutes - Family Photos
- 5 minutes - Reflection

Work through this resource material in the following sequence:

Preparation: Ask students to bring a family photo to this lesson that can be pasted/printed onto an A4 sized piece of paper. Alternatively, students can draw a picture of their family prior to starting this lesson.

Step 1. As a class, watch the *Who We Are: People* film (also available on the Student Worksheet). Focus student viewing by asking them to look for references to 'family and community' (students can use the Student Worksheet to record their observations):

Who We Are: People (https://youtu.be/TxPWd_0z3Ng)

Once complete, engage students in a discussion around the following



questions:

- How do the hosts of the film talk about family and community?
- What did you find interesting about the ways family and community were referred to in the film?
- How are the experiences of family discussed in the film similar or different to yours?

Step 2. Working in pairs, invite students to use what Josh says (1:59) and the shots of Josh with his family (0:18) to participate in a 'Think, Pair, Share' routine around the following question (students can use the Student Worksheet to record their ideas):

- What does family mean to Josh and why?

THINK PAIR SHARE

THINK PAIR SHARE IS A COLLABORATIVE LEARNING STRATEGY IN WHICH STUDENTS WORK TOGETHER TO SOLVE A PROBLEM OR ANSWER A QUESTION.

THINK – STUDENTS INDEPENDENTLY THINK ABOUT AN ISSUE OR QUESTION AND RECORD THEIR THOUGHTS.

PAIR – STUDENTS WORK IN PAIRS TO DISCUSS THEIR IDEAS AND RECORD NEW THOUGHTS.

SHARE – STUDENTS SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS WITH THE WHOLE GROUP OR WITH OTHER PAIRS TO REACH CONSENSUS.

Step 3. Still working in pairs, invite students to take note of how Kaylah talks about her families (2:14); the family from her dad's side and the family from her mum's side. Using what Kaylah says and the shots of Kaylah's families ask students to work in pairs to answer the following question:



- In your own words, describe what family means to Kaylah.

Invite pairs to team up with another pair to share their responses.

Step 4. Watch this film about 'family and kinship' with your students and engage them in a discussion on their thoughts using the points below:

Family and kinship (<https://youtu.be/mNtPcW4t1PY>) - from [Reconciliation Australia](#)

- What do you understand by the term 'kinship'?
- How did this film help you understand the family structures presented in the *Who We Are: Brave New Clan* films?
- What questions did this film leave you with?

Extend: Use questions proposed by students to guide further enquiry. You could consider inviting an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander guest into your classroom to talk further about family. Please note that as colonisation has had numerous and continuing impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, family can be a sensitive subject for some. It is important to leave it up to your guest to speak about what he or she feels comfortable sharing. It is also a good idea to notify parents that you will be talking about family in class, as topics such as the Stolen Generation may be difficult for some students and parents to hear about.



NOTE: NOT ALL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF OR ACTIVELY PRACTICE THINGS LIKE SKIN GROUPS OR TRADITIONAL HEALING. THERE IS GREAT DIVERSITY IN SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE, JUST AS THERE IS FOR NON-INDIGENOUS PEOPLE. YOU SHOULD LEAVE IT UP TO YOUR INVITED GUEST TO SPEAK ABOUT WHAT HE OR SHE WOULD LIKE TO OR IS COMFORTABLE TO SHARE.

Step 5. Now explain to students that they will be exploring their own families.

NOTE TO TEACHERS: BE MINDFUL THAT SOME STUDENTS CAN FEEL OVERWHELMED WHEN ASKED TO TALK ABOUT THEIR FAMILIES.

Working independently, invite students to access their family photo or the drawing of their family. Students should then draw a frame around the photograph. In the space above or under the photograph, students should write their answers to the following questions:

- Who are the members of your family?
- What does family mean to you?

Invite student volunteers to share their family photos or drawings with the class.



Reflection

Invite students to reflect on their learning using the KWL activity on the Student Worksheet. This activity encourages students to reflect on what they **K**now about the topic, what they **W**ant to know about the topic, and what they **L**earnt about the topic.

Extension

Remind students that in the *Who We Are: People* film Josh (0:18) and Kaylah (2:15) gather their families together to take family photographs. Invite students to answer the following question:

- Why do you think the filmmakers have included these segments in the film?