

**Contemporary Multi-modal Historical Representations and the Teaching of Disciplinary Understandings in History**

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**Abstract:** Traditional privileging of the printed text has been considerably eroded by rapid technological advancement and in Australia, as elsewhere, many History teaching programs feature an array of multi-modal historical representations. Research suggests that engagement with the visual and multi-modal constructs has the potential to enrich the pedagogy and make the classroom encounters significant and relevant to students' world life outside and beyond school. However, these multi-modal creations of the past are often compromised with agendas and pressures beyond traditional historical evidence, research and writing. This leaves the history teacher to navigate the tension that arises from the cognitive, affective and "beyonds the classroom" appeal of these historical representations and the quest to teach evidence-based, memorable history. This pedagogical dilemma was the focus of an Australian research project that used survey, interview and case study to investigate the utility of these historical-based contemporary representations in the teaching of disciplinary concepts in the History classroom. This paper presents a synoptic model of the broad research findings and uses case studies to provide examples of effective pedagogies. The unit plans from the case studies are also appended.

**Key words:** History, historical concepts, contemporary historical representations, historical understanding

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**Introduction**

Acknowledging that the traditional privileging of the printed text has been considerably eroded by rapid technological advancement, engaging History teacher practice in Australia, as elsewhere, sees an array of multi-modal sources peppered throughout History teaching programs. Research suggests that engagement with the visual and multi-modal constructs has the potential to enrich the pedagogy and make the classroom encounters significant and relevant

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to students' world life outside and beyond school (Kalantzis et al, 2016; Grushka & Donnelly, 2010; Walsh 2010; Anstey & Bull, 2006; Kalantzis & Cope, 2005). Yet these multi-modal creations of the past are flawed with agendas and pressures beyond traditional historical evidence, research and writing. The history teacher must navigate the tension that arises from the cognitive, affective and "beyond the classroom" appeal of these historical representations and the quest to teach evidence-based, memorable history.

This pedagogical dilemma was the focus of an Australia-wide research project that used survey, interview and case study to investigate the utility of these historical-based representations in the teaching of school History and aimed to assess their effectiveness as sites for teaching conceptual understandings about the nature of history. "Contemporary historical representations" is the term used in this paper for the varied array of recent creations that are set in or based on the past times, objects, people or events, and so create a version of history. These range from: printed works such as historical fiction novels, and picture books and graphic novels which integrate image and text; to filmic representations that feature multiple modalities (sound, movement and narrative); and to forms that allow for an embodied experience and interactivity such as museums, computer games and simulations. The findings from the research project demonstrate that by presenting "experiences" in history, these representations can be used to teach rich lessons about the nature of historical inquiry and the subversion and redrafting of history in contemporary media but that much of this impressive potential is lost without the expert guidance of the teacher. This paper presents a synoptic model of the broad research findings and uses case studies to illustrate the recommendations for effective pedagogies. The unit plans from the case studies are also appended.

### **Critical literacy and contemporary historical representation texts**

The basic concept of literacy has been deepened and broadened in response to an educational shift, from traditional notions of teaching and learning as knowledge transmission and reception, to a more learner-centred model that positions the learner as actively constructing knowledge and understandings (Spooner, 2015; Killen, 2007; Twomey Fosnot & Perry, 2005). Instead of simply reading and writing, being literate today encompasses multiple literacies and various skills and capabilities. In addition to skills with printed text, a literate person is increasingly required to master some degree of visual, media, digital and internet literacy and the ability to move with fluidity between communication platforms and devices. It is these capabilities which allow individuals to act and participate fully as citizens in their own culture and society (Landsberg, 2015; Virta, 2007).

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Similarly in History, the term “historical literacy” has moved beyond the memorisation of names, events and dates and is commonly used for higher-order capacities related to historical thinking, understanding and research (Metzger, 2007; Seixas, 2006; van Drie & van Boxtel, 2004; Taylor & Young, 2003; Wineburg, 2001). Lee (2005) interprets historical literacy in the context of historical understanding linking to the development of historical consciousness, which he defines, following Rűsen (1993), as an instrument with which individuals can create their own frameworks for understanding the past. For history educators critical analysis of sources provides insights into agenda and the problematic nature of knowledge in history.

Critical literacy is one of the basic tools for studying history as it facilitates an appreciation of the power and hidden ideological messages underlying the texts (Apple, 2000) and allows the reader to move to the sophisticated levels of understanding. It is argued that the students’ lifeworlds are populated with representations of the past and they need to be skilled in critical historical literacy to evaluate their validity and trustworthiness.

### **Constructivist history student**

The teacher-centred historical narrative grounded in the “resilient encyclopaedic epistemology” (VanSledright, 2002, p.144) needs to be relegated if historical understanding is the aim of history education. In its stead, a more constructionist paradigm with an emphasis on historical inquiry seeks to give students experience in creating historical interpretation using their historical imaginations and a complex web of evaluation and synthesis skills. The task is not a simple one. Historical inquiry is a complex process involving analysing and interrogating individual sources of evidence; synthesizing their meaning and interrelationships; while simultaneously constructing and integrating this new knowledge into existing narratives. To inquire historically is to engage in purposeful and reflective mental activities that focus on the strategic exploration of multiple perspectives through evaluation of reliability and perspective and the generation of interpretations and understandings (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Wineburg, 2001). It has been shown that, with sustained classroom instruction and experience, students are capable of developing a more sophisticated understanding of how history constructed by focusing on factors that influence creation such as intention, purpose and audience (Kohlmeier, 2005; Hoodless, 2004; Ashby, 2004; Barton 2001; Foster & Yeager, 1999). VanSledright argues that these historical skills produce educated citizens “who can detect snake-oil spin and reveal a disguised agenda” (VanSledright, 2002, p.144), a valuable skill in modern democracies.

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**Research design and analysis**

This paper reports on an Australian research project that examined the use of contemporary historical representations in the teaching of History and if and how the use of these enhanced learning outcomes as regards to historical understanding. The project built on the findings of an earlier project that focused on the applications of feature films in History teaching (Donnelly, 2014).

The project was designed in three phases. The majority of participants were from the most populous Australian state of New South Wales with smaller contributions from Queensland, Tasmania and Victoria. Initial data was gathered from a survey focused on teacher practice (n = 205). The teacher practice survey investigated the use of historical representations in the history classroom in terms of use, implementation strategies and the conceptual frameworks underpinning pedagogical decision-making. The second phase of data gathering took the form of thirty semi-structured teacher interviews. The selected group volunteered from the surveys and were from a variety of teaching contexts, and had a diverse range of experiences and attitudes with using historical representations in their teaching of history. Case studies formed the last phase of the project (n = 10). These were selected from the teacher interviewees' group on the basis of exemplifying distinctive approaches in their use of a variety of historical representations. The case studies took the form of classroom observation, document analysis and in-depth interviews. The data was coded and, using NVivo software, analysis was undertaken by the development of "trees" of inter-related ideas and themes. The findings discussed here are drawn from the three phases of the project.

The sample of volunteer practising History teachers was drawn from a range of contexts with participants from government (53%) and non-government sectors (47%) and from all of states of Australia. The participants taught in schools ranging from small (12%), medium (38%) and large (50%), and with varied teaching experience. 56% of the teachers reported that they were highly experienced (over 10 years teaching experience) while 25% described themselves as "mid-career" and 18% having up to 5 years' experience. While the researcher acknowledges that History teachers who volunteer to be involved in a project researching historical representations are likely to be those interested in the area and that some will be enthusiasts, it is claimed that the sample is representative of a group of motivated practitioners.

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After a brief description of some general findings, this paper presents a model that epitomises the findings and illustrates the modes of “experiences” that were found to be used by some teachers to teach understandings about the nature of history. Two of the case studies are described in this paper with reference to one the “experiences” (see Figure 1) and brief teaching programs are appended to this article to illustrate how the learning sequences were implemented. The featured case studies are Mr Green’s encounter with the post-modern picture book *The Rabbits* (Marsden & Tan, 1998), and Mr Hunter’s use of the Ancient Egyptian exhibition at the Nicholson Museum at the University of Sydney.

### **Findings and discussion**

The findings reveal that film is the most commonly used historical representation in History classroom, with YouTube clips and documentaries reported by most as weekly selections. Real and virtual museum exhibitions were reported to be used less frequently but were popular inclusions in teaching programs once or twice a term (there are four term in the school year in Australia). Historical fiction and graphic novels were less frequently used with time restrictions cited as a negative. Several teachers commented that were able to integrate their work in English classes with teaching History to enable to incorporation of historical fiction. 30% of teachers reported using computer games, most often in their exploration of battle tactics.

All but one of the History teachers (n= 205) agreed that historical representations help students learn in History. As Participant 55 explains, “They [historical representations] help to consolidate their learning by providing multiple mediums... This really assists students to become critical thinkers and [they] learn to question information that they are consuming.” And from Participant 4, “Not only are these [historical representations] more engaging for some students but they show the lasting legacy and importance of remembering history.”

The notion of historical representations being a memorable and engaging learning event developed as primary rationales for usage. This comment from a phase two interview talking about film illustrates the point, “Film gives students, who are part of a world filled with visual stimuli, a visual hook on which to hang often complex concepts. They remember what they see better than what they read and film gives the class a basis for discussion.” Four lines of explanation for historical representations being a memorable and engaging emerged from the synthesis of the three phases of the data. These four dimensions, dubbed “experiences”, were categorized as multi-sensory, embodied, entertaining and narrative. The flow diagram (See Figure 1) illustrates how each “experience” dimension was most often linked to the development

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of a particular element of historical understanding, although it needs to be noted that in practice the “experiences” are simultaneous, and propel and inform each other. Each of the experience continua culminate in the historical understanding which has been highlighted in bold type on the diagram.

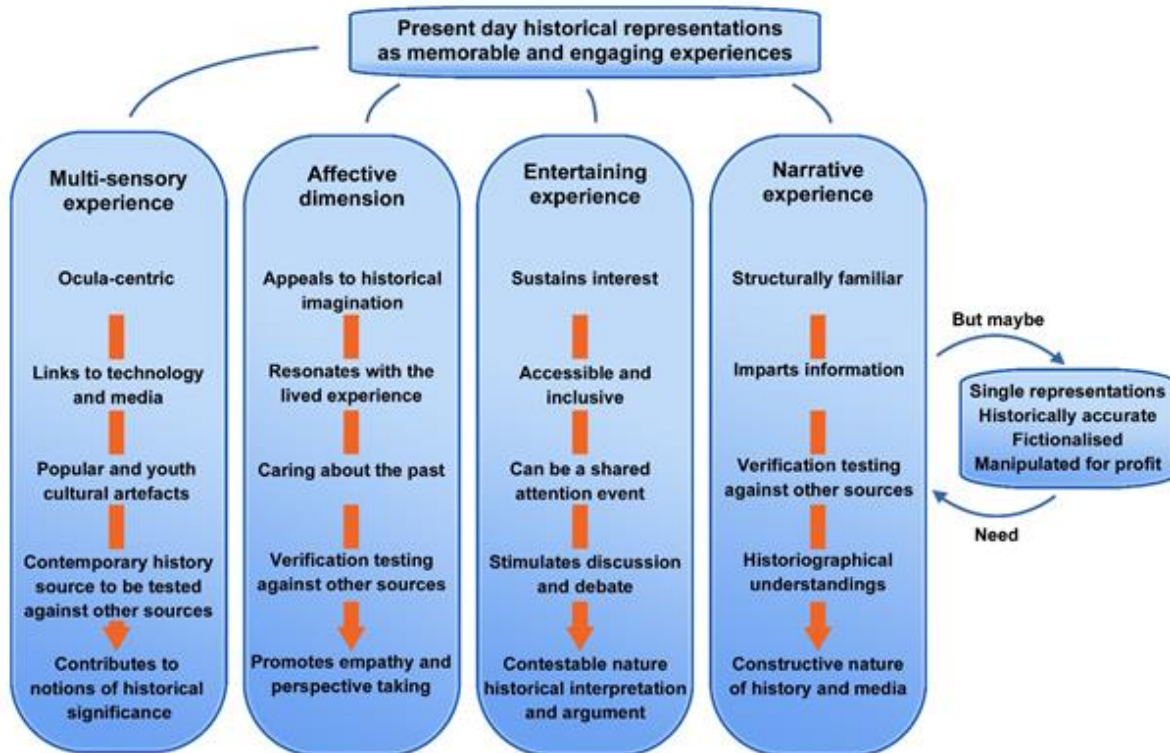


Figure 1: Synopsis of research findings concerning the use of contemporary historical representations and the teaching of disciplinary understanding in History.

### The multi-sensory experience.

Many historical representations are memorable in that they cater to a preference for visual forms of knowledge and combine appeals to the senses. Contemporary society has become ocular-centric, privileging predominantly visual texts on electronic platforms (Grushka and Donnelly, 2010). Young people are immersed in visual representations of the past seen in movie theatres,

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on television, on computer screens and on portable entertainment and communication devices. Many of these are designed to be powerful multi-sensory experiences for the audience with production techniques that combine the visual and aural to create another world within which the audience is briefly captured. Many filmic representations as well as computer games are an integral part of youth culture and it is understandable that history teachers wishing to enliven their classes would use these now-accessible sources. As one teacher from the Phase One survey commented on the appeal of film, "Most students watch movies regularly and therefore would find watching a film more accessible and relevant than reading a book or a set of primary written sources."

Contemporary historical representations are texts and as such require analysis and evaluation as do other sources used in history teaching (Marcus et al, 2010, Marcus et al, 2012, Metzger & Paxton, 2016). However, most of the teachers in this research tended to use the narrative and/or information provided by the historical representation, rather than analyse the text as a primary or secondary source. Several of the interviewees were surprised by the suggestion of applying source analysis techniques to contemporary historical representations. Clearly in their minds historical sources were written texts, not multi-modal experiences. Significantly, it appears that the majority teachers in the study did not delve into the mechanisms of persuasion and manipulation used in these historical representations. One of the major recommendation of this study is that teachers need to spend time examining the semiotics of the form before using the representation in class. There were teachers who were exceptions to this trend, as the case study exemplars demonstrate. For example in Mr Hunt's museum visit, he examined the multi-sensory experience of the museum visit, discussing issues of artefact selection and display choices such as lighting, colour and music, the use of labels and interactive options available to the museum visitors.

Another issue that emerged from the data was the link between historical significance and historical representations as contemporary historical sources. Why are some topics popular with film-makers, authors and illustrators, computer game designers, museum curators and not others? There were some indications from the participants in this research of the importance of contemporary historical representations in lending significance to different events, people and eras. Several interviewees lamented the lack of Australian voices in historical representations. As one case study participant complained, "Our story is going to get lost, that's the sad thing, that's where you've got to have the national film industry for our own story. Computer games are set in exotic locations and our ancient times interests centre in Europe, not Australia."

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### **Mr Hunter's visit to the Nicholson Museum**

As can be seen from Mr Hunter's unit plan in Appendix A, before going to the museum his Year 7 (first year of high school) class was well prepared. His students knew the where and when of Ancient Egypt and had presented small group assignments on Ancient Egypt burial customs. They had explored the issues around object analysis and considered how museums re-construct facets of the past, considering the elements and limitations of design and presentation in museum settings. While on the visit, the students worked with a partner to collect resources for their alphabet book assignment, which involved the developing an illustrated book about death in Ancient Egypt integrating the prior learning with the museum experience. The search of the displays for appropriate items for inclusion, enhanced student engagement and activity during the visit as well as fostering collaborative discussion amongst the group. These alphabet books of death in Ancient Egypt were displayed in the school library and presented at a parent visit night.



*Figure 2: Photographs of Egyptian Gallery, Nicholson Museum, Sydney.*

Directly after the visit, Mr Hunt had his class evaluate the excursion using a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis tool. Then he led a discussion centred on the questions: "How was the visit different to looking the topic up on the internet or textbook?"; "What elements of display did you notice and what was their impact?"; and "What was the exhibition trying to say about death in Ancient Egypt? Did it succeed?" Mr Hunt was also interested in addressing the issue of historical significance. Questions such as "These people died a long time ago and far away, do they matter to us?", "Did the visit to the museum add to our

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understanding of the topic?” and “Should we care about Ancient Egypt?” were posed to the class in a lesson designed to conclude the unit and generated spirited debate. These questions asked his students to step back from the topic under study and reflect on its importance and relevance. It was noted in the project that although there were some exceptions such as Mr Hunt, many teachers neglected to directly address the issue of historical significance of the topic under study.

**The affective experience.**

Many contemporary historical representations are designed to be empathetic and emotional experiences. The capacity of these historical representations to bring history to life and elicit emotional responses and involvement was widely reported by teachers. However, when asked about empathy and history, many of the interviewed history teachers admitted that this was a difficult area to navigate. A source of concern for history teachers appeared to be their idea that history is supposed to be an objective study and so the role of emotion is problematic and, as one survey respondent put it, “empathy can get in the way of analysis.” But despite this uncertainty, 75% of the teacher survey respondents cited “encourages empathy” and “brings history to life and stimulates historical imagination” as the main reasons for including contemporary historical representations in their teaching. This project found that the affective experience was understood by many teachers to be important for engagement but that many were not sure on the best way to use it.

**The entertaining experience.**

Most teachers in this project rejected the notion of contemporary historical representations being used to entertain their classes. It is an interesting phenomenon that most teachers did not see themselves as entertainers and claimed they did not seek to use entertaining resources for the presentation of history. This reluctance on the part of the teachers to label contemporary historical representations as entertaining inclusions the classroom, points to an important issue that emerged from the survey data, that being, the disapproval of some forms of historical representations, as a teaching tool from the outside community, and from within the school system. Teachers spoke of their use of some historical representations being viewed with suspicion by the school administration and sometimes by other teachers. A few teachers worried that the parents would dislike their use of computer games in class and a number of teachers reported that some parents viewed the use of film as an indication of time-wasting and so the use of film was discouraged by senior managers.

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This controversy appears to stem from the nexus between history, fiction and entertainment and almost certainly has been intensified by the misuse by some teachers using some historical representations to fill in time and neglecting to critically analyse them as sources. This research project found a lag between contemporary teaching and learning resources, and teacher understanding of how to best to integrate visual and multi-modal formats into History. A rapid proliferation of these kinds of resources has caught many unprepared with little or no training included in training courses. The training reported by most teachers in this project concentrated on the work of the historian as an explorer of printed text, and many have found it difficult to expand these techniques to encompass other platforms.

Teachers did agree on the value of using historical representations, such as film and museum visits, as a shared attention event which was inclusive and accessible for their classes. The use of class discussion during and after the viewing of the historical feature film was strongly endorsed by the teacher practice surveys. Discussions were viewed as opportunities to practise group discussion protocols, like listening and respecting others, while at the same time debating the issues. These findings agree with those of Anna Clark (2008) who concluded in her Australia-wide investigation of history education, *History's children: History wars in the classroom* that students wanted to discuss issues and debate historical questions, not simply be presented with a version of history.

#### **The narrative experience.**

For decades, scholars have argued that storytelling is a powerful mode for contemporary meaning-making (Rusen, 2005; Carr, 1986; Ricoeur, 1983). Memory is enhanced by the story-form and it is through storytelling that disparate historical facts are given coherence. Another consistent finding in research is the marginalisation of historical sources in the development of student understanding of the past and the tendency to rely on narrative for understanding. Barton (1997) suggests that the failure to meaningfully engage with historical sources may be due to the primarily narrative form with which people are exposed to history outside of academic contexts. The use of contemporary historical representations brings into the history classroom the structural familiarity of the narrative form and the opportunity to critically analyse the presentation of the past and test it against other sources.

A major finding of the project was that the majority of teachers (57%) did not use contemporary historical representations as sources of history. These teachers tended to use these texts for motivation or to begin or conclude a study, rather than integrating and interrogating them, as

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they would other sources (Donnelly, 2014). This response was typical of this group, “I don’t ever really encourage them [the students] to use it [the film] as a source or anything like that, I don’t... I never would let them refer to a film in a written piece of text.”

The nature of many historical representations, such as feature films, graphic novels or computer games, as products designed for popular consumption means that veracity is often sacrifice. There is a strong temptation for the creators of these texts to use the historical theme as a starting point and then manipulate it for public appeal and resulting profit. As a consequence, many of these historical representations look deceptively authentic but are fictionalized representations of the past (Marcus et al., 2010; Landsberg, 2015) and do not conform to an evidence-based interpretation. A few teachers took the attitude that the fictionalised elements inherent in many contemporary historical representations were an opportunity to explore the interpretative nature of history with their students. These few had made the connection between the study of these representations, issues of historiography and the constructive nature of historical representations. However, these teachers were a small minority. One of them was Mr Green.

#### **Mr Green’s use of *The Rabbits* (1998).**

As can be seen in his unit plan in Appendix B, Mr Green used *The Rabbits* for his investigation of contact history between European and indigenous peoples in Australia. This well-known Australian picture book uses analogy to tell the story of the invasion and dispossession of the Aboriginal peoples, and was even made into a rock opera a few years ago. *The Rabbits* is a post-modern picture book, which is a term used to describe picture books that manipulate the visual and words of the text to create interplay and irony and use multiple allusions and meanings to provide opportunities for critical analysis and call the reader to engage in an independent and often challenging discourse with the work. In Australia this new literacy subgenre has found a place in English studies at secondary level, but few examples have been reported in History. The book uses the analogy of rabbits in Australia, an exotic species that have infested the continent since the early days of European settlement and has displaced many native animals, and European invasion of Australia.

Mr Green initially uses the book to develop investigative lines for his class. He then leads the class to discuss the narrative as a product of 1998, rather than 2017, and asks is the portrayal dated and has recent history moved the story forward. The ending of the book asks “Who will save us from the rabbits?” and this passive and powerlessness can be viewed as running counter to

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contemporary struggles self-determination and recognition. Mr Green then has the class research aboriginal resistance, create a timeline of aboriginal land rights and resistance, and create an alternate ending to the book. Mr Green spent some time discussing with the class issues of source analysis and the changing nature of history. He posed a sequence of questions and comments to his class: “*The Rabbits* is a secondary source, who would agree?”; “In what way can it be seen as giving first-hand information to us”, “Yes, it provides us with an example of an attitude about Aboriginal people from the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, sympathetic but perhaps a little superior. Remember that this does not mean that everyone thought like this in the 1990’s, but as *The Rabbits* has been so popular, we can say that the attitude was still around” As he explained in a post-lesson de-brief, “I want my students to understand that how we read the past changes over time, and that today we are hopefully much more aware of Aboriginal resistance to invasion and the survival of their culture.”

### **Conclusion**

This research project found that by presenting “experiences” in history contemporary historical representations can teach rich lessons about the nature of historical inquiry and the subversion and redrafting of history in contemporary media. Their appeal to the cognitive and emotional endows them with an enduring impact that can be exploited by teachers in epistemological and ethical investigations and lead to the development of metacognitive frameworks of historical understanding and consciousness. Many of the history teachers interviewed and observed found that engagement with these visual and multi-modal constructs enriched their pedagogy and made the classroom encounters more significant and relevant to students’ world life, outside and beyond school. But none of this impressive potential can be achieved without expert guidance from history educators and this has serious implications for pre-service and in-service History teacher training agendas.

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**Appendix A**

Stage 4 Year 7 (11 to 12 year olds)

The Ancient World Depth Study 2: The Mediterranean World Egypt (*NSW History K-10 Syllabus, 42-43*), integrating visit to Nicholson Museum, Sydney.

| <b>Week</b> | <b>Activity</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>Goal</b>                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b>    | <p>Slide show of tombs, cemeteries and memorials – class discussion</p> <p>Brainstorm about burial customs from across culture and time.<br/>Why do societies have customs and rituals surrounding death?</p> <p>Think, pair, share – Why is Ancient Egypt so famous? What do you know about Ancient Egyptian burial customs? What might this tell us about their belief system?</p> <p>Make a class list of information about burial customs in Ancient Egypt</p> | <p>Students clarify ideas around burial customs and belief systems.</p> <p>Collaborate to focus on Egyptian burial customs and hypothesise about belief system</p> |
| <b>2</b>    | <p>Mapping: Where in the world is Egypt? What did it look like in ancient times?</p> <p>Illustrated teacher exposition: The very long history of Ancient Egypt and the high point of achievement</p> <p>Groups create illuminated timeline – wall display</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p>Locate geographical setting.</p> <p>Overview of history of Ancient Egypt</p> <p>Create group timelines</p>                                                      |
| <b>3</b>    | <p>Mini investigations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mummification and funerary practices</li> <li>• The Gods and death in Ancient Egypt</li> <li>• Pyramids</li> <li>• The Valley of the Kings</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <p>Develop and enhance research skills and share</p>                                                                                                               |

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|   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                             |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tutankhamun’s tomb</li> <li>• Ordinary burials in Ancient Egypt</li> </ul> <p>Students work in groups of 2 or 3 and present findings to class</p> <p>Class activity: Summary of interesting information</p>                                                                                                                                                     | discoveries with peers                                                                                      |
| 4 | Analysing an object: Cognitive apprenticeship model                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Explore the advantages and limitations of object analysis                                                   |
| 5 | <p>The role of museums in Public History and in our understanding of the Ancient World in Australia.</p> <p>How do museums represent history?</p> <p><a href="http://www.nma.gov.au/data/.../Museums%20represent%20full%20colour.pdf">www.nma.gov.au/ data/.../Museums represent full colour.pdf</a></p> <p>Observation template: display formats, lighting, music, positioning, grouping, labelling</p> | <p>Examine museum as the form of historical representations.</p> <p>Understand limitations and benefits</p> |
| 6 | <p>Visit to Nicholson Museum, University of Sydney – Ancient Egypt</p> <p>Fill in observation template and gather images, information and material for Alphabet book.</p> <p>Alphabet book pair assignment - Death in Ancient Egypt</p> <p>Research: students develop project- examine online and library resources</p>                                                                                  | <p>Experience and observe an ancient history museum.</p> <p>Produce research</p>                            |
| 7 | <p>Evaluation of museum experience – SWOT analysis and class discussion. “What was the exhibition trying to say about death in Ancient Egypt? How did it do this?”</p> <p>Develop and publish books</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Reflection on role of museum visit in understanding topic                                                   |

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|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8  | Present books to class and wider audience<br>Organise display in library or similar public location                                                                                                                                              | Explain, present and display                                                                       |
| 9  | Individual task design and curate an exhibition with at least 6 items of interest from your book. Desk presentations.<br>What were the decision making processes involved in creating your exhibition?                                           | Experience the work of curating an exhibition and nature of museum display.<br>Learning reflection |
| 10 | Class test – Ancient Egypt: Knowledge and understanding, skills of source analysis and evaluation.<br>Class discussion: Issues of historical significance<br>“These people died a long time ago and far away, do they matter to us? If so, why?” | In class test testing outcomes.<br>Consideration of historical significance                        |

### Appendix B

Stage 5 Year 9 (13 to 14 year olds)

Depth Study 2: Australia and Asia. 2a: Making a nation (*NSW History K-10 Syllabus, 74*), integrating the post-modern picture book, *The Rabbits (1998)*.

| Week | Activity                                                                                                                                                              | Goal                                                                                             |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1    | Close examination of <i>The Rabbits</i> .<br>See, Think, Wonder and Word, Phrase, Sentence protocols<br><br>Is this book different from a story book?<br>Why rabbits? | Students develop features of post-modern picture books<br>Does analogy deepen this presentation? |
| 2    | Identify areas of research – group work topics:<br>Exotic animals in Australia; Initial contact between Europeans and Aboriginal peoples; Differences in world        | Group research and presentation                                                                  |

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|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|   | views; Differences in technologies; Process of dispossession; Indigenous resistance; Stolen generations; Land rights and reconciliation.                                                                                                                      | via report and performance<br>Verification of narrative against other sources.                      |
| 3 | Research and presentations<br>Written and illuminated summaries                                                                                                                                                                                               | Class explores topic collaboratively<br>Develop class display                                       |
| 4 | Class discussion: How are Europeans and Aboriginal peoples depicted in the book? Spider diagram.<br><br>This book was produced in 1998. Do you find it dated in 2017? If so, in what ways?                                                                    | Draw conclusions about depiction in book.<br>Examine changing representations of Aboriginal history |
| 5 | Video clip "Midnight Oil" at the Sydney Olympics<br>"Bed are Burning" Sorry clip<br>Can we "give it back"? Do we want to?<br><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dqBRYMdivzU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dqBRYMdivzU</a>                            | Summarise arguments.<br>Deepen understanding, multi-perspectives                                    |
| 6 | Class discussion: Should Australia be ashamed of our colonial history? Sorry for what?                                                                                                                                                                        | Summarise arguments                                                                                 |
| 7 | Can we write a more 21 <sup>st</sup> century ending?<br>Students construct and present "revised" last double page of <i>The Rabbits</i> .<br>Student research. What other sources can you find about indigenous resistance? What do they add to the argument? | Introduce an alternate view of the narrative.<br>Constructive nature of history and the media.      |

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|          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                              |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>8</b> | Diamond ranking exercise: What were the steps indigenous resistance? Citing sources of information, class constructs a synoptic ranking.                                                                                                                     | Clarification of issue.<br>Preparation for assessment item.                                  |
| <b>9</b> | In class essay:<br>Using your own research, class work and the diamond ranking scaffold, write an essay answering:<br>How have indigenous peoples of Australia resisted the European colonisation of Australia? Refer to evidence to support your arguments. | Essay to summarise research discoveries and conclusions.<br>Learning is tested and assessed. |

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**About the Author:**

**Dr. Debra Donnelly** is a history educator in the School of Education at the University of Newcastle, Australia, lecturing and co-ordinating undergraduate and postgraduate programs. She has a secondary school background with extensive classroom, school administration and welfare experience across a range of educational settings in Australia and internationally. Debra's research interests centre on the role of the visual and media in the development of historical and global consciousness in an age of ever-increasing access through modern technology. Her research explores, and seeks to clarify, the relationship between teacher conceptual frameworks of understanding and problematic knowledge, multi-modality, and pedagogical practice. Address for correspondence: [debra.donnelly@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:debra.donnelly@newcastle.edu.au)

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