

Sounds sensational

Indigenous perspectives curriculum links

Engage

Lesson 1 Sound advice

Indigenous people have lived in Australia for thousands of years, developing a deep knowledge of Australian flora and fauna. Indigenous names for Australian birds originate from the sounds and calls they make.

- Contact the local Indigenous Land Council or cultural heritage centre to make contact with local Indigenous community members. Consult with them about Australian native birds, their names and the calls they make.

Explore

Lesson 2 Good vibrations

- Consult local Indigenous community members and/or Indigenous education officers to organise for students to explore Indigenous percussion instruments such as clap sticks and drums.

Lesson 3 Shaping sound

Music is an integral part of Indigenous culture. Songs, music and dance are traditionally used as a way of telling a story, passing on family history or illustrating everyday life and activities.

See www.scu.edu.au/schools/sass/music/musicarchive/AusGeneral.html

- Gather and/or investigate the following Indigenous instruments and ask students to explore how each instrument makes sound. Discuss how each instrument can be grouped as percussion, wind, string or brass.
 - Didgeridoo
 - Clap sticks
 - Boomerangs hit together
 - Bullroarer
 - Drums, particularly in Torres Strait
 - Whistles made from various plants
- Introduce a didgeridoo or a long cardboard tube or plastic pipe to students. To learn how to play the didgeridoo and change the sounds see http://members.ozemail.com.au/~mmichie/engag_ideas.htm#didge
Ask students to feel the didgeridoo for vibrations and suggest what part of the orchestra a didgeridoo would belong to.

Note: Traditionally, didgeridoos are only played by men although they may be decorated by men and women.

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Lesson 4 Sounds on the move

Indigenous people use a bullroarer when hunting, to warn unauthorised people away from ceremonies, and in rainmaking ceremonies.

- To hear the sound of a bullroarer, see www.australianscreen.com.au/titles/crocodile-dundee-ii/clip2
- Make a bullroarer using a wooden ruler with a hole in one end, and a 1-2m length of string.



Note: In certain areas of Australia bullroarers are used in relation to spirits so it is very important to consult with local Indigenous community members and/or Indigenous education officers before using this activity.