- Aboriginal peoples have the longest continuous surviving culture in the world.
  - What evidence is there to support current western scientific theory which places Aboriginal occupation of Australia at 40,000 - 60,000 years?
  - What theories do Aboriginal people have in regard to their own occupation of Australia? [http://www.abc.net.au/quantum/info/jinmitx.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/quantum/info/jinmitx.htm)
  - How long have Aboriginal peoples occupied Australia?


- Whole class activity: brainstorm ideas about how people learn about past history.

- Exhibit artefacts and discuss how they can provide evidence of past Aboriginal societies. Discuss how this evidence is used today.


- *Discovering Aboriginal Australia* and *Caring for Country* in the *First Australians: Plenty Stories* gives some insight into the use of archaeology to find evidence of Australia’s human history.

- Individual activity: each student makes a pair of Matching Cards, with a picture of an artefact on one card and the evidence it provides on its mate. Combine to create a class set.

- Are any of the artefacts or traditional technologies still in use today?

- Teachers’ vocabulary should consist of:
  - Archaeological evidence – both land and marine
  - Artefacts
  - Rock Carvings/Etchings/Engravings/Paintings
  - Creation and Dreaming Stories

- Archaeological dig: insert various artefacts from periods of Australian history in layers of sand. Use a substance such as Bondcrete to solidify the layers of sand. Students use appropriate tools to dig up and “discover” the artefacts. Research can then be carried out on each artefact to find out its history.

- Students at schools near the coast could visit a local site such as a midden. There are many middens along the coastal fringes of Western Australia. For some background information about middens, students can read the Scholastic book *Postcards* and look on this website: [http://www.ccmaindig.info/heritage/SitesArtifacts_MiddensCoastal.html](http://www.ccmaindig.info/heritage/SitesArtifacts_MiddensCoastal.html)


Discuss archaeological evidence of Aboriginal occupation at places such as Lake Condah in Victoria and Devils Lair in Western Australia.

- What is significant about these sites and what does it say about the status of Aboriginal people’s social and economic development?
- Lead students to understand that much archeological evidence in the form of wooden implements has been lost due to rot caused by the wet soils in some areas.

Excursion: Visit the Katta Djinooong exhibition at the Western Australian Museum to view the rock art and carvings and implements made by Aboriginal people out of shell, bark and trees.

The Teacher Resource File: Katta Djinooong: First Peoples of Western Australia contains information, activities and worksheets related to the exhibits.

Class discussion: What do rock carvings and photographs have in common?

- How have they been used to record events?
- Record similarities and differences using a Venn diagram

Research: Identify which recording method is the oldest form of technology used around the world?

Before cameras were used, how did Aboriginal people record historical events and keep pictorial records?

Use pictures of Aboriginal rock art from around WA and other parts of Australia to investigate the use of rock art to record events.

The resource list at the end of this section lists information books on Rock Art.

Investigate the issues regarding the desecration and preservation of the Burrup Peninsula Rock Art.

Based on the findings write a letter expressing your views and concerns regarding the preservation of rock art of the Burrup Peninsula to the mining company involved and the Minister of Indigenous Affairs.

View pictures of rock art and engravings from around Australia. Discuss similarities and differences in the artworks. Note that they were preserved by Elders over thousands of years and that many have now fallen into disrepair due to Elders being prevented from performing rituals and repainting them on a regular basis.
In the video *Milli Milli*, David Mowijari explains the importance of repainting his ancestors’ stories.

Aboriginal Artists of WA Poster Pack contains pictures of Rock Art.

The NNBNN kit has a poster of Rock Art and activities in the resource file.

Percy Trezise and Dick Roughsey based their very popular children’s books on stories from Rock Art in Cape York. You can find out all about it in Part Two of the *Story Makers* series (video).

Information about the Bradshaw Figures can be found at: [http://www.aboriginalartonline.com/regions/gwion-gwion.php](http://www.aboriginalartonline.com/regions/gwion-gwion.php)

Read *Keeping the Wanjinhas Fresh*.

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**Resources**


