Main Topic: Country
Sub Topic: Connection

- Discuss the term ‘Connection to Country’.
- Use the book *Caring for Country* from the ‘First Australians : Plenty Stories’ series, to help students understand this concept.
- The *Papunya School Book of Country and History* starts with an explanation of Country being at the centre of all learning. It traces the history of the people at Papunya and the changes that came with colonisation and the movement from their 5 traditional countries.
- Episode 2 of *Many Nations, One People* is titled *Relationship with Country* and gives a good explanation of this concept for young people. [www.abc.net.au/schooltv/nations/ep2.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/schooltv/nations/ep2.htm)
- *Aboriginal Australians* is an old video that you will find in most school library collections. Don’t be put off by its out dated appearance. The content is still relevant and is a good introduction to students learning about Aboriginal people.
- The companion video in the series *The Torres Strait Islanders* gives a comprehensive look at the lives of the people of the Torres Strait Islands.
- There are many DVDs which explore the concept of ‘Country’ for Aboriginal peoples.
  - *Noongar of the Beeliar* (Perth)
  - *Milli Milli* (Kimberley)
  - *Painting Country* (Balgo, Kimberley)
  - *Exile and the Kingdom* (Roebourne)
  - *Bush Law* (Lajamanu, NT)
  - *Kanyini* (Central Australia) Teachers notes at [www.kanyini.com](http://www.kanyini.com)
  - *Kurtal : Snake Spirit* (Great Sandy Desert)
- Share a song demonstrating Aboriginal relationship with the land such as
  - *My Land* – Pigram Brothers
  - *From Little Things Big Things Grow* – Kev Carmody & Paul Kelly
  - *This Land is Mine* – Paul Kelly & Kelton Pell (One Night the Moon)
  - *Native Born* - Archie Roach
  - *My Island Home* - Warumpi Band or Christine Anu
  - *Beagle Bay Dreaming* - Kerry-Ann Cox
  - *Fishing in daytime* – Scrap Metal
  - *Raining on Djlba* – George Walley
  - *Djapana* – Yothu Yindi
  - *Ol’ Man From the Bush* – Pigram Brothers
  - *Long Way Away From my Country* – Ernie Dingo (Bran Nue Dae)
- When the colonisers “discovered” new places in Australia, they gave them
English names. Some names reflected their original names and others were completely new. Find out about the history of the name of your community, town or suburb.


- All Aboriginal groups around Australia have Dreaming stories associated with them. Many of them are Creation stories. You can access them on websites, DVDs, videos and in books in your library. As students read, listen and watch them, mark them on the Aboriginal Languages Map in your classroom.

- The Katta Dijnoong : First Peoples of Western Australia gallery at the Western Australian Museum has exhibits which reinforce the concept of connection to country for Aboriginal peoples in different parts of WA. The Teacher Resource file has information and activities with this theme.

- Ask students to think about their favourite place:
  - How did it become their special place?
  - What is their connection and how do they nurture their connection to this place?
  - How do they feel when they have spent time at their place?
  - Describe what this place does for their spirit, eg happiness, alive, rested, at peace, refreshed etc.
  - Illustrate their place using an art form of their choice – collage, painting, sculpture.
  - Select a piece of music that reminds them of their special place.

- For many Aboriginal groups, colonisation meant moving their people away from their traditional lands. Read about the history of Papunya from pre colonisation to the present day and all the changes and movement that was involved, in Papunya School Book of Country and History.

- Know the Song, Know the Country is the Ngaardangarli story of culture and history in Ngarluma and Yinjibarndi Country.

- The colonisation of Australia was based on the premise of Terra Nullius. Explore the concept of Terra Nullius and the implications for the early colonisation of Australia. Discuss the misunderstandings that arose from the earliest contact.

- Examine the poster You are on Aboriginal Land, (1984), adapted from Pay the Rent - You are on Aboriginal Land, designed by Marie McMahon in 1981-1982
  - What does this poster communicate?
  - List all the colours in the poster.
  - How many different patterns can you find in this image?

Resources
- *Many nations, one people*. ABC TV. 2005.
- *Exile and the kingdom* (DVD). Film Australia, Lindfield, NSW, 2005, 147min.
- *On sacred ground* (DVD). Film Australia, Lindfield, NSW, 1981, 57min.
- *Kanyini* (DVD). Hopscotch Entertainment, 2006. 54min.