

## Teacher Guide – Your Prized Possessions – A competition

The State Library of WA is running this competition in the lead up to the arrival of an important national exhibition to Perth – National Treasures from Australia’s Great Libraries.

Your participation in and support of Your Prized Possessions will help to raise community awareness of the importance of preserving our cultural heritage and spark interest in visiting the National Treasures and Our Prized Possession exhibits from 30<sup>th</sup> June to 26<sup>th</sup> August 2007.

We believe that the incorporation of the Your Prized Possessions Competition into your course work will provide an opportunity to explore the learning area of ‘Society and Environment – Time, Continuity and Change’ as outlined by the Curriculum Framework and Outcomes and Standards Framework of the Department of Education and Training.

**Overall Outcome:** Students understand that people’s actions and values are shaped by their understanding and interpretation of the past;

Curriculum Sub-strands	Your Prized Possession Class Activities
Understanding the Past: Students understand that over time, societies and communities have lasting and changing aspects of events, people and times.	Selecting a National Treasure: Students become familiar with national and state treasured items and how they convey lasting and changing aspects of an event.  <i>See Lesson 1</i>
Continuity and Change: Students understand that continuity and change result from social, political, cultural, environmental and economic forces.	Exploring National Treasure themes: Students are introduced to the themes of National Treasures as a way of understand-how the value of a treasure is linked to its power to communicate key historical and cultural events  <i>See Lesson 2 &amp; 3</i>
Interpretations and Perspectives: Students understand that there are many versions of history based on socio-cultural perspectives over time, which inform and influence people’s actions.	Selecting Your Local Treasure: Students are guided in selecting a local treasure that provides another perspective of the key historical and cultural events covered through the National Treasures themes.  <i>See Lesson 4</i>

This compilation of four learning activities will guide students in planning and undertaking research to both gain an understanding of what a treasure is and to translate this understanding into their own local treasure selection. As such it will also contribute to the investigation, communication and participation learning area.

The Learning Activities are supported by the following resources:

- This teacher's guide outlining thinking and activities to support a series of four learning activities.
- Student resource template files to support lessons one and two
- The 'Your Prized Possessions' competition information page on the State Library of Western Australia website
- The 'Your Prized Possessions' flickr group page and guidelines
- The National Treasures Exhibition web-pages from the National Library of Australia.
- The Battye Library Treasures website highlighting West Australian treasures

The Learning Activities focus heavily on the National Treasures Exhibition items and the eight themes covered, these are:

- Under the Southern Cross – early mapping and discovery of Australia
- Settlement, Land & Nature – first impressions, first settlements
- Hope & Hardship – experiences of convicts, settlers and migrants
- War & Loss – Impacts of wars, natural disaster and colonization
- Innovation & Industry – that underpinned our growth as a nation
- Heroes & Villains – outlining who some of them are and why
- National Obsessions – our love of sport, food, beer and fine wine
- Culture – our distinctive voice and artistic impressions

The Activities outlined here are best suited to SOSE TCC Levels 2 to Level 5, being the middle childhood to early adolescence phase.

At the end of this document you will find some suggestions for how you might be able to adapt the learning activities for early childhood and late adolescence learning phases.

Also don't forget to look at the National Library Teachers Resource area. They provide learning 26 learning activities from lower primary to upper secondary focusing in on specific items in the national treasures collection..

[http://nationaltreasures.nla.gov.au/index/Treasures/for\\_teachers](http://nationaltreasures.nla.gov.au/index/Treasures/for_teachers)

## Your Prized Possessions – In the Classroom

From the *Your Prized Possession* competition web-page on the State Library of WA website, you can gain an overview of the competition and a range of documents that have been developed to support it: From the competition web-page: you will find

- Information about the competition and how to enter
- Instructions for entering online through flickr
- Hard copy entry forms to download
- A colour poster you can print off for your use in promotion

You may find these useful for distributing to your students or modifying. Use this link to go directly to our competition web-page:

<http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/prizedinfo.html>

The following four learning activities, in helping to develop your students appreciation of what a treasure is or could be, aim to support them in selecting their own Prized Possession or Local Treasure to enter into our competition. These activities are designed to follow on from each other, but can be completed as stand-alone activities.

In addition, the learning activities will build their familiarity with the National Treasures Exhibition and its importance to our cultural heritage making their visit to the National Treasures and Our Prized Possession Exhibits a much more valuable experience for them.

### **Lesson 1: Understanding the concept: A Treasure**

Student's first need to have an understanding of what a treasure or prized possession is and why they might be important.

*“A Treasure: an object or possession prized for its power to link us to times past, present and future”*

This activity will get students to begin to understand what a Treasure is by introducing them to the National Treasures web-site and asking them to select and describe one of the treasured items highlighted there. The students will be asked to share their description of their chosen treasure with others in the class and pin it up underneath one of the eight theme areas it relates to.

### **Resource Needs**

- Internet access for the class to the State Library of WA web-site and National Treasures site.
- Lesson 1 Student Resource pages one, one copy photocopied for each student
- Lesson 1 student resource page two, up to 5 copies to hand out to students and use as theme labels on pin-up board (see next page for questions)
- Pin up or wall surface area and sticky or pins for putting up themes.

## Activity

- a) The National Treasures theme is divided up into eight theme areas that provide an overview of the development of Australia as a nation. The second page of Lesson 1 student template lists these eight theme areas.

To assist students in selecting a treasure from National Treasures to describe first photocopy up to 4 copies of this page, cut them out and distribute one theme label to each student. Students can then be instructed to select their treasure to describe from this theme area (this will ensure a spread of items from the exhibition within the class).

- b) Use the links on the 'State Library of WA's what new' web page to get students to read about the National Treasures and link through to the National Treasures web-site. <http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/new.html>. This will open them up onto the theme page where they can select their treasure to describe.
- c) Use the template from Lesson 1 student resources on page 1 as a hand-out to guide students in selecting and describing the National Treasure they have chosen.

Guiding questions on the template include:

- What is the name of the treasure you have chosen to focus on?
  - What type of object is it? What is it made out of?
  - How old is it, when was it made, written, built or found?
  - Why do you think it has become a treasure, what story does it tell?
- d) Ask students to introduce the treasure they have chosen, and to share with the class some features about it as collected on the template they have filled in. Place one set of the theme labels up around the class room and ask students to pin their completed sheet up around the room underneath the theme label.

## **Lesson 2 – Understanding what makes a Treasure valuable**

Having chosen a national treasure and grouped it underneath its related theme area in lesson one, you can now ask students to reflect on the stories being told through the eight National Treasures themes as a way of developing their understanding of what makes a treasure valuable.

The key to this is the understanding that the value of a treasure is linked to its capacity to connect us to and give us a window into important cultural and historical events. The themes articulated through the National Treasures exhibit provide an overview of the key cultural and historical events vital to the development of Australia as a nation from early exploration, through to settlement and the growth of our distinctive cultural voice.

Objects become treasures or prized possessions because of their power to convey to us how cultural and historical events have impacted on and defined us as a people.

Treasures can be made up of both official accounts and unofficial accounts of key cultural and historical events, providing us with a range of perspectives on a given event and thus enriching our understanding of their impact on our society as a whole.

### Resource Needs

- Lesson 2 student resource handouts with one copy of the theme summary (cut-out ) for the class activity and one copy of the treasure items (cut out) to distribute to the class-room for the small group activity.
- Wall or pin-board space to place theme summary description and treasure item cut outs underneath theme label.

### Activity

- a.) With students' chosen treasures now pinned underneath its corresponding National Treasures theme label ask them to have a look over them and then as a class make some inferences about what each theme is about.

Within the student template file you will find a table that lists the 8 themes together with a summary of the key historical focus for each of them. Underneath each theme summary is a list of treasured items from the National Treasures exhibit.

As each theme is discussed in the class you can place the cut out the summary of each theme underneath the theme title label for each.

- b.) To reinforce your students' understanding of the themes and of the sequencing of events; distribute the remaining cut out listings of treasured items, mix them up and share them out, in any order, to your class. Your students' task is then to read the description of the treasured item and position it beneath the relevant theme area, in date order if possible. (Teachers clue: Each theme area has its own font type)

This will both build their familiarity with the National Treasures theme areas and the key cultural or historical events they explore as well as reinforce the variety of objects that have or can become treasures.

### More Learning Opportunities

The National Library of Australia's National Treasures web-site has a teacher's resource area. You may wish to further focus some learning activities on one of the National Treasure items in particular. There are 26 activities offered covering from lower primary to upper secondary. Some of these may fit into a specific learning area you are focusing on. Follow the link from the "Schools Treasures Trove" page on the State Library of WA website. <http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/troves.html>

### Lesson 3 - A definition of “A Treasure”

Having completed these last two lessons your students may be in a better position to work up a definition of what makes something ‘a treasure’. The dictionary definition talks of “riches and accumulating wealth” but this is clearly not the meaning intended when we talk of treasures as part of our cultural heritage.

#### Resource Needs

- Whiteboard / Blackboard for brainstorming of key words.
- Blank A3 or A4 sheets for writing up of group definitions

#### Activity

a.) Ask your classroom of students to work up their own definition of a treasure that is valued for its cultural heritage. A brain-storming session will probably work well here, with key words being identified written up on your white-board /blackboard.

**Keywords:** traditions, customs, way of life, sense of self, identity, understanding, legacy.

b.) Break your students into group of 3 or 4 to and set them the task of developing a working definition that can be written up and posted around the room.

#### Optional

If this is a new lesson you may wish to build on the previous activity (in Lesson 2) by asking students to do the same exercise with the State Library of WA Treasures , however, these have not been pre-sorted into themes.

This will require students to think about what theme area they may belong to – helping them once again to think about the sequencing of events. See the link from the “Our Prized Possessions” description - <http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/treasures/>

### Lesson 4 - Research - Selecting a Treasure of their Own

#### - Local Treasures, Prized Possessions with a story to tell

With a very good working knowledge of the eight themes from the National Treasures from Australia’s Great Libraries exhibition, your students will be in a good position to think about how these major events in Australia’s development as a nation relate to the development of their own local community or personal family history.

In selecting their own Prized Possession students will need to;

- Decide on a theme area of interest to them
- Carry out some research in that theme area for their local community and choose an event or perspective they wish to focus on
- Identify a local treasure they feel helps to tell us an interesting story or perspective about the cultural or historical event they have chosen.
- Take a photograph of the treasure, give it a title and write up a description (up to 300 word) of the story that it tells.

These steps outlined in this activity will provide guiding questions to support your students in selecting a local treasure with strong significance to your cultural heritage. However, a treasure can relate, more broadly to anything that we hold dear about “our place” and our way of life.

If you this research activity is too time-consuming or difficult for your students you may wish to go directly to our *Your Prized Possession*” competition web-based instructions and gain your students more expansive interpretation of their own personal local treasure. Please go to our competition web-page for extra instructions and guidance on entering our competition. <http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/prizedinfo.html>

They can send a hard copy entry using an entry form downloaded from our website or they can put their entry online through our ‘flickr’ group.

### Resource Needs

- Research opportunities from school library, local library or other sources.
- Lesson 1, student resource page 3, one copy for each student
- The Your Prized Possession web-page on the State Library website

For entering:

- A downloaded entry form from our website for hard-copy entries
- Access to the *Your Prized Possession* flickr group for online entries

### Activity:

a.) Decide on a theme area to focus your research and selection of a treasure on?

In the two tables below are some suggestions of how you might guide students to select a local treasure that fits into one of the cultural heritage themes of National Treasures - milestones of Australia’s history and cultural identity. As a teacher you may wish to focus on a specific theme area that is relevant to your current area of study.

### From National To Local Treasures – historical events

Theme Area	Focus of Theme	In Your Community
Under the Southern Cross	Outlines the early mapping and discovery of Australia, and tells of early contact and encounters with indigenous Australians.	When was your area first explored, discovered or mapped. What do you know of the first encounters with Indigenous Australians and their link to the land.
Settlement, Land & Nature	First impressions of the natural environment, first settlements	When was your area settled, how has the natural and built environment changed.
Hope & Hardship	Experiences of early settler’s, convicts, successive migrants and indigenous people.	Do you have grandparents, parents, friends who have a story to tell about hope & hardship.
War & Loss	The impact of the experience of war, natural disasters and colonization.	Family members who had experience of the wars, local impacts to your community.

## From National to Local Treasures – Cultural Identity

Theme Area	Focus of Theme	In Your Community
Innovation & Industry	Early innovations & industries that helped to build Australia. Special focus on early communications and transport.	What innovations and industry have been important to the development of your area.
Heroes and Villains	Focus on who our heroes and villains are, from Ned Kelly to Edward Koki Mabo.	Do you have your own local heroes or villains?
National Obsessions	Focus on our obsession with food, from early game to today and our love of sport.	Does your community have its own obsessions - food, sport or otherwise
Culture	Our distinctive voice and artistic expression	What is our distinctive voice, who is your favorite local artist?

b) Carry out some initial research to find out more about the local impacts of the cultural or historical event or theme area you are focusing on?

### Sources:

- Your local school library may have collected information about its past?
- Your local council may have information on their website?
- Your local library may have a local history collection?  
<http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/publibs.html>.
- There may be local or state-wide historical societies that have information about your area? (*Search the State Library of WA's info-link database (Some key words: history, heritage, preservation, conservation)*)
- You could check the State Library of WA Catalogue [www.slwa.wa.gov.au](http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au)
- Check out the Cultural Heritage Portal <http://chp.library.uwa.edu.au/>

NB: We will be building a list of public libraries with local history collections to sit of the State Library of WA's, Your Prized Possessions Competition page.

<http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/prizedinfo.html>

c) Having chosen a local historical or cultural event that fits into your theme area decide on whose perspective about this local event you are going to focus on – is there an account from a particular person or organisation that you will use as your major source:

- Official government accounts
- A famous or influential person in your community
- An account from a pastoralist, a convict, an early migrant, an indigenous person or a family member (parent or grandparent).

NB: the use of 'oral histories' may be especially useful here, if your public library has a local history collection they will undoubtedly also have oral histories.

This may also present an opportunity for students to interview family members and include their accounts or memories of an event as a treasure.

- d) Select a local prized possession or treasure that you think best represents or symbolizes the perspective of the historical cultural event you are interested in.

It could be: a photo of a place, a person or an object, a monument, a map, a book, a newspaper article, an old brochure or advert.

- e) Having selected a local prized possession and filled in any gaps in your research about the historical or cultural event it helps to tell the story about, your students should now be ready to write up their 300 word description of the object.

They can use the student resource template heading used in lesson 1, page one as a guide. This will mean their 300 word description includes:

- The name of the treasure you have chosen to focus on?
- What type of object is it? What is it made out of?
- How old is it, when was it made, written, built or found?
- Why do you think it has is a local treasure, what story does it tell?

- f) Take a photo or get a copy of a photo of your local treasure, and fill in a 'Your Prized Possession's' entry form. The entry form needs to include a title of your local treasure, your 300 word description of it and your photo or picture.

*(Remember to acknowledge your source for copy-right purposes)*

Follow the instructions set out on the State Library of WA's – Your Prized Possession Competition webpage at: <http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/prizedinfo.html>. You can download a copy of the entry form to send in a hard-copy entry or follow the links to flickr to place your entry onto our *Your Prized Possession* flickr group.

If your students are able to place their entry on the internet through the flickr interactive photo sharing site this will provide a great opportunity for other students from other schools to share in the local treasures they have chosen.

If they are entering a hard-copy, please get them to follow the instructions for sending the entries to the State Library of WA.

*Many thanks for supporting the **Your Prized Possession Competition**. Although we would appreciate an entry by the 28<sup>th</sup> May the competition will remain accessible and open to entries throughout the exhibition opening times.*

## **Adapting these learning activities for early childhood and late adolescence phases.**

*Please find following some suggestions of how these lessons might be adapted or changed to better suit these age groups.*

### **Early Childhood**

#### Lesson 1:

The student template could still be used but requiring less formal writing up about the national treasure chosen.

Alternatively you may select and print out a picture of one of the treasures in each theme area, and ask students to suggest as a class group what they might convey.

The lesson 1 student template could be filled in by you as their teacher from the group discussion.

Suggestions of good images to select from each theme area:

- Under the Southern Cross – the Mabo Papers
- Settlement, Land and Nature – Governor Arthur's Proclamation
- Hope and Hardship – The life of the immigrant
- Heroes and Villians – Ned Kellys helmet
- War and Loss – Cover from the Happiness Box
- Culture – Cover from the Magic Pudding

As each template is filled in it could be pinned under the theme label's provided in the lesson 1 student template.

#### Lesson 2 and 3:

From the above discussion you should be able to tease out and suggest that these treasures are evidence of a sequence of events, that in most cases these events are long ago and aim to roughly date them.

There are some excellent local children's books written that you can read to your students to help to further develop their understanding of people, events and ideas.

Some examples include:

- Comparing the story of Ned Kelly to that of WA's only known bushranger, Moondyne Joe as told by author and illustrator Fran Lessac
- Focus on Lasseter's Diary from the Hope and Hardship theme and read Mark Greenwood story titled "The Legend of Lasseter's Reef"

The National Treasures website on the National Library of Australia site provides three activities specifically developed for lower primary:

- KLA – English Level 3 - David Griffin's *The Happiness Box*
- English Level 3 - Harold Lasseter's diary
- KLA – Visual Art Level 3 - James Barker Emery's *Sketches of Australian Fishes*

Lesson 4:

As suggested in this section the selection of a treasure can relate more broadly to anything that we hold dear about “our place” and our way of life.

You can ask your lower primary students to reflect on anything that is special or important to them. From this they can be further instructed to think about what objects or treasures they might choose to communicate this to future generations.

### Late Adolescents

I hope that most of the activities can be adapted for late adolescents through encouraging more from the students.

The research process in Lesson four could be supported through reference to the Collection Council of Australia's publication Significance, which sets out the steps required to assess significance of cultural heritage objects

[http://www.collectionsaustralia.net/sector\\_info\\_item/5](http://www.collectionsaustralia.net/sector_info_item/5)

They could also be encouraged to choose two treasured items that relate to the same historical and/or cultural event but which present two very different perspectives. This will help to ensure they gain a more developed understanding of how interpretations and perspectives vary depending on the beliefs, values and traditions of different individuals and groups.

Again, the National Treasures website on the National Library of Australia site provides activities specifically developed for upper secondary students allowing for a more in depth assessment of the value of a cultural heritage item.

Please follow this link to review the activities offered:

[http://nationaltreasures.nla.gov.au/index/Treasures/for\\_teachers](http://nationaltreasures.nla.gov.au/index/Treasures/for_teachers)

Thanks again and we look forward to Your Prized Possession entry forms from all of your students. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any queries.

Yours truly,

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