Poetry and Protest

Indigenous Australians

**SST:** Indigenous Australians, prejudiced beliefs, plight, empathy, values,

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**Learning intention:**

**To know:** some issues experienced by Indigenous Australian people.

**To understand:** how some of these concerns have been expressed in poetry.

**To be able to:** engage with Indigenous Australian poetry and express my understanding of how the composers of these texts express their views.

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Look up the definitions for this week’s SST and write my own definition for each in my workbook.

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**Australian Aboriginal Verse**

Some Aboriginal poets consider themselves to be mouthpieces for their people, expressing grievances and concerns felt collectively by the entire Aboriginal community. Others emphasise this political aspect of verse even further, believing that the act of composing poetry is an inherently political one which is itself an invaluable form of activism. Others view poetry as a means of preserving impressions and appreciations of nature and the beauty of life, and eschew any political involvement. Still others consider that writing verse is an essential emotional release and a salve for bitter experiences. Finally, some Aboriginal poets hope to become successful individual role models for their people who, through
international as well as domestic recognition, can bring the Black Australian situation to the attention of the world. 

Sourced from The Poetry of Politics: Australian Aboriginal Verse

Some reasons for writing poetry have been stated here, please list these in your workbook. Remember to create a wordmap for words you do not know.

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**Juno Gemes**

Juno Gemes is one of Australia’s most celebrated contemporary photographers. Using both words and images she has spent 40 years documenting the changing social landscape of Australia, and in particular the lives and struggles of Aboriginal Australians. She was one of ten photographers invited to document the National Apology in Canberra in 2008.

Please view some of her photographs at http://www.junogemes.com

While viewing these images and discussing them with a peer, create a vocabulary list of twenty words that describe the images Juno Gemes has captured.

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**Oodgeroo Noonuccal**

Log onto http://famouspoetsandpoems.com/poets/oodgeroo_noonuccal/biography

Please compose a half page summary in your workbook.
“No More Boomerang”

Please annotate “No More Boomerang” and paste into your workbook.

Polorised Debate

After discussing of the issues in the poem with your table team, brainstorm all the possible advantages and disadvantages of the technological age for Indigenous Australians. Create a table to list these in your workbook.

Stanzas

What patterns have you traced within each stanza. Talk about these with a partner. Have you noticed how some stanzas set up contrasting patterns about then and now? Read the poem aloud to hear the effects of the rhyming words in linking the ideas in the stanza. Make summary notes of your findings in your workbook.

Poetic images

Discuss the literal and metaphorical meanings of the images. In your workbook, explain the effects of these images in creating the meaning (This is a great opportunity to use PEETEEEL).

For Extra Credit – Write a Narrative

Write a narrative using the information gained from the discussion of the poem. Remember there are various ways you can structure your narrative (non-linear or circular).
“Dawn Wail For the Dead”

Please annotate “Dawn Wail for the Dead” and paste into your workbook.

Themes and Ideas
1. What do you think are the main themes and ideas in the poem?
2. How is the theme of the relationship between death and life represented in the poem?
3. What impression is given of the daily life of the Aboriginal tribe in this poem?

Poetic Techniques
1. Find two words that appear three times in each poem. What is this technique called? What might be the effect of this?
2. How has Oodgeroo achieved a soft, gentle sound in this poem?
3. Comment on how the last three lines work on the reader.
4. The only noteworthy use of punctuation is the use of commas in the last three lines. What is the effect of the punctuation in the last three lines?

Vocabulary
Explain what the following words mean in the poem:
- Dim
- faintly
- Indigenous
- Traditional
- Integration
Mirror Task
You are to create a visual and written representation on powerpoint for the poem “No More Boomerang”. Highlight the major themes explored in this poem through images and words. Your presentation is to consist of three slides. Please complete by Monday and share on google with your teacher. Refer to your formal assessment cover sheet for instructions and marking criteria.

Success criteria:
I understand the subject specific terminology and have written definitions for each in my own words.
I have listed the five reasons why Indigenous Australians have chosen to use verse to protest.
I have engaged with Juno Gemes’ website and have constructed a vocabulary list consisting of at least twenty words.
I have composed a half page summary biography of Oodgeroo Noonuccal.
I have annotated, pasted into my workbook and completed the activities for “No More Boomerang”.
I have annotated, pasted into my workbook and completed the activities for “Dawn Wailing for the Dead”.
I have completed my mirror task on powerpoint and have shared this with my teacher on google.