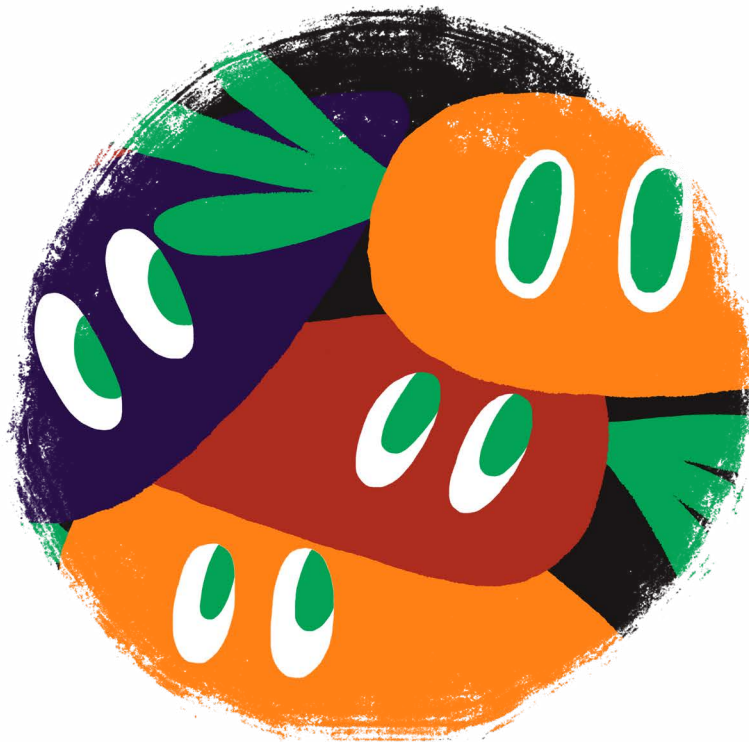


# Welcome to Country

- Year 3 – Humanities and Social Sciences  
Year 4 – Humanities and Social Sciences  
Year 5 – Humanities and Social Sciences



**(HASS; Yr 3, ACHASSK062)**

The importance of Country/Place to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples who belong to a local area

**(HASS; Yr 3, ACHASSI053)**

Locate and collect information and data from different sources, including observations

**(HASS – Geography; Yr 4, ACHASSK088)**

The importance of environments, including natural vegetation, to animals and people

**(HASS – Geography; Yr 4, ACHASSK089)**

The custodial responsibility Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have for Country/Place, and how this influences views about sustainability

**Cross-curriculum priority**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures; Sustainability

# Welcome to Country

**When you look after country, country looks after you**

In The One with the Welcome, Aunty Di Kerr explains what the Welcome to Country ceremony means. This lesson facilitates students' understanding of the connection between culture and the land for Australia's First Peoples. Ideally a local Aboriginal Elder will be able to visit your class. Students' understanding of Welcome to Country will benefit from a more localized definition of Welcome.

**Equipment:**

If available, local native vegetation of significance (to Aunty Di, the Manna Gum is significant)

**Duration:**

45 minutes

**Location:**

The classroom or a bush area of the school

**Notes:**

(If you are going outside, watch the episode before you go.)

## Welcome

- Write the word 'Welcome' on the board, or say it slowly to the class if outside.
- Say "Well – Come". What does it mean? Why is it important?
- ❓ Ask about students' experiences of a Welcome to Country ceremony. Where did it happen? What happened? Who performed it? What was the reason for the ceremony? Who was arriving On Country that needed to be welcomed?

👁 Watch **The One with the Welcome**



## Respectful permission

- Make a mind map with the class detailing the feelings, values, and behaviours that might be indicated by Aunty Di and Aunty Dale's words, actions, and way of speaking. Add words for how the Super Naturals and Alice respond. (Is this a wild and noisy party, or is it more reflective and respectful? How can you tell?)
- After watching Aunty Di's explanation, ask students to explain the meaning of the Welcome to Country in their own words. (It allows you to cross the Country of another people, and in return you promise to respect the Country you walk across, and treat it and the people well.)

### A few words in Noongar

**Boodja/Booja:** Country / Land / Mother Earth

**Boodjara:** Country (Of Origin/Belonging to)  
the Land, our Mother

**Boodjaree:** Pregnant

## ✍ Exploring welcome

- Tell the class to imagine they are going to welcome a class from another country to their school.
- Point out that explaining the connection to place (where we live) to visitors is an important first step.

**Ask students, individually or in groups, to devise a plan for how they will present the concept of Welcome to Country to the visiting students.**

- ? How will they accommodate for language barriers? (Who will translate and how will it be done?)
- ? How will they explain the significance of local nature? (Will they include tree leaves or local stones or shells?)
- ? Will visitors be expected to respond, and what should they be encouraged to say? (Students may role-play the two groups to ensure this is considered from both perspectives.)
- ? Students create a plan, write scripts for those who will present, and create any visuals such as decorations.
- ? If visitors are coming to the school, such as parents and guardians, a local politician or visiting author, have students enact their plan and be the Welcome hosts for the event.

## ✍ Wominjeka

- Explore any of these resources individually or in groups. They include videos of other Welcome to Country ceremonies, and an award-winning picture book about the meaning of Country.

### Resources

- ◇ Burarrwanga, Lakak et al. (2013). Welcome to my Country. Crows Nest, NSW : Allen & Unwin
- ◇ Murphy, Joy. & Kennedy, Lisa. (2016). Welcome to Country. Newtown, NSW : Black Dog Books, an imprint of Walker Books Australia Pty Ltd
- ◇ Welcome to Country – Australian Indigenous Language Groups and Cultural Protocols App: <https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/welcome-to-country-australian/id1005047597?mt=8>
- ◇ Welcome to Country – Noongar (video/animation, duration 3:11): <https://youtu.be/FUSuGWH-HrU>
- ◇ Welcome to Country Brochure – Stepwise Heritage and Tourism (PDF): [http://www.stepwise.net.au/what/WTC\\_Brochure.pdf](http://www.stepwise.net.au/what/WTC_Brochure.pdf)
- ◇ Wominjeka (Welcome to Country) – Joy Murphy – Wurundjeri (video, duration 2:53): <https://youtu.be/NeBWultrpW8>