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OF PARRAMATTA**

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STOLEN

INTRODUCTION

About these Teacher's Notes

These notes suggest practical activities to enhance student learning in the HSC Contemporary Australian theatre topic area. They also provide students with reflections on professional practice surrounding the creation of contemporary Australian theatre.

The notes were originally written to support and accompany the playreading and discussion of *Stolen*, staged at Riverside Theatres, Parramatta, in June 2013, and were written by director Anni Finsterer. The activities at the end of these pack were part of these original notes collated by Amy Matthews.

In 2016 National Theatre of Parramatta has re-staged the work under the director Vicki Van Hout. The notes from designers and sketches have been added to incorporate information from this new production.

National Theatre of Parramatta

STOLEN

CAST and Creatives

CREATIVES

Directed By
Vicki Van Hout

Designed By
Imogen Ross

Lighting and Video Designer
Toby K

Composer and Sound Designer
Phil Downing

Production Manager
Annette Rowison

Stage Manager
Carl Sciberras

Assistant to the Director
Bianca 'Bee' Cruse

CAST

Shirley	Henrietta Baird
Ann	Matilda Brown
Jimmy	Mathew Cooper
Ruby	Berthalia Selina Reuben
Sandy	Kerri Simpson

National Theatre of Parramatta

STOLEN

Directors note: Vicki Van Hout

Stolen at its core is a provocation to the importance of acting with humanity. Stolen follows the lives of 5 characters who have been affected by careless governance, from its leaders down to the smallest common denominator, the individuals who enforced this predicament upon them.

Why is Stolen relevant? It serves as a reminder how not to act. As a reminder that young lives are the adults of our future. When children are nurtured and loved they have accumulated a set of tools to contribute to a better future community, hence when they are denied nurturing guidance from the people who act as primary role models, their parents and their communities, it is almost inevitable that they will in turn will perform the instability they have been subjected to.

If the audience leave with their curiosities piqued I will consider this to be a success of sorts. I mean it's kind of weird to talk in terms of success isn't it? Considering the topic. When we think of world atrocities we automatically think of the holocaust of Nazi Germany, of Apartheid in South Africa, of the current unrest in Syria. Our history in Australia is equally insidious with hundreds, maybe thousands, of Stolen and Forgotten children, brought up to work as (for want of a better word) slaves.

I am always surprised by the power and presence of humour, especially when times appear at their bleakest and this play readily utilises humour to this effect. This play is ultimately not about lives in the home care system, but of the resilience to overcome an appalling start in life. This work operates as a sort of modern day urban song cycle, the storytelling occurs in a kind of dreaming time, where chronology and geography is fluid and secondary to the essence of who these characters are.

I am always seeking to embed my own works with the knowledge I have and am continuing to accumulating as a long time alumni of NAISDA (National Aboriginal/Islander Skills Development) Dance College. At NAISDA we learned dances, were told stories, lore and law, we made our own props from simple materials, often including, developing and substituting the traditional artefacts with urban equivalents at hand.

I have enhanced the idea of Stolen occurring as a song cycle, sung or conceived by the character Ruby, because she is deemed disturbed, I see her character as accessing the Dreaming more readily. This is a subtle device, which imbues the work with a more ambiguous or surrealist quality or logic. The set reflects this, I have done away with the original confines of the home; with its rows of beds and replaced it with a beautiful yarn bombed tree, which dominates the stage, designed by Imogen Ross, to reflect a culture surviving and thriving in urban modernity. The rest of the set is continuously constructed and deconstructed with pieces of cardboard used like we would dancing feathers which when finished with are tucked back into the folds of our skirts, to be replaced by leaves or small branches acting as spears or the beaks of cranes, perhaps the motion of the west wind or of the fog rolling off the mountains. Each scene retold in a separate short songlike manner with its own rhythm mimicking the landmarks of this dreaming cycle.

STOLEN

Lighting Designers note: Toby K

Stolen is unusual compared to an average play because it specifies quite a lot of lighting effects in the stage directions. Simultaneously it doesn't specify the location for a lot of the scenes, although the context can easily be determined from the dialog. So it's an interesting place to start, where you know some very specific things but are missing some of the more general cues. It's not a better or worse place to start though, as it's my job to fill in the blanks and it's one of the most enjoyable parts of the job. If it was all dictated that would be a lot less interesting.

I follow a list of priorities when I'm creating anything (not just lights but designing sets, making videos, writing music - anything): information, feeling, and spectacle.

- Information is about what actual information do we need to convey to the audience for them to understand the artwork. Eg they need to understand it's day or night. Generally you find that actually there is not much information audiences need, they are pretty smart, and sometimes it really doesn't matter if things are happening at night or day.

- Feeling is about how does this moment make you feel? That can be about emotions, or instincts, or moods or anything in that field. With lighting I tend to interpret it as 'what does the environment think about the action on stage?'. For example if the fictional authorities think the action onstage is underground and deviant than the lighting will often reflect that. Of course there's exceptions to the rule and sometimes you invert this relationship.

- Spectacle is things that are spectacular and make people think 'wow that lighting effect is cool'. However if effects like this don't have a strong relationship to the artwork then it can be a negative experience as it takes the audience out of the experience of the play and back to sitting in a theatre with lights and technicians and effects. So spectacle should be used sparingly and only for good reason. Again there's exceptions, sometimes the spectacle is an important part of the artwork (musicals) or more rarely you're actively trying to alienate the audience as part of the experience.

The director is the key creative on a play and as such they are the caretaker of the vision for the whole work. Vicki is a powerful director (and choreographer) because she has a potent and unique vision for all her work.

As a collaborator the question for me is always how do I work with any director to best achieve their vision. With Vicki it's refreshingly straight forward, she understands lighting and often has a clear idea of how the lights will work in a scene. We just straight talk on what works and what doesn't.

The design comes from 20% reading the script, 80% responding to the play by watching the performers and talking to the director in the space. When you spend time in rehearsal it becomes apparent what the play actually needs in terms of support from lighting in being able to tell the story.

As I write this we are in week 3 of rehearsals. Lighting and video is really just starting to evolve. It's usually the last week of rehearsals where lighting really comes together as the action of the whole play becomes apparent. By action I mean the literal blocking (movement) but also how the whole play ties together, which is very important for developing lighting transitions, timing and cues. It's a bit weird to create so much so late in the process but as a lighting designer you get used to it. You've got to trust your instincts and be ready to be flexible when you get in the theatre.

National Theatre of Parramatta

STOLEN

Designers notes: Imogen Ross

It has been a very interesting and challenging process designing STOLEN for National Theatre of Parramatta , as it is a play that is now 20years old and well known by many teachers and theatre goers.

In the time it has been written the Bringing Them Home Royal Commission report has been published, Prime Minister Rudd issued the historic National Apology, (now known as Sorry Day), and school students learn about the effects of the Stolen Generation in their classrooms as part of contemporary history studies. We have moved on a long way, but also have stayed still. The stories and journeys of the characters in STOLEN are as relevant to the Australian experience now as they were then.

Vicki and I were very clear that we did not want to replicate the design images of the script, as powerful and as pertinent as they were. The beds described in the script were a clear reference to the Childrens' Homes and prisons and de-personalised 'homes' that the characters experienced.

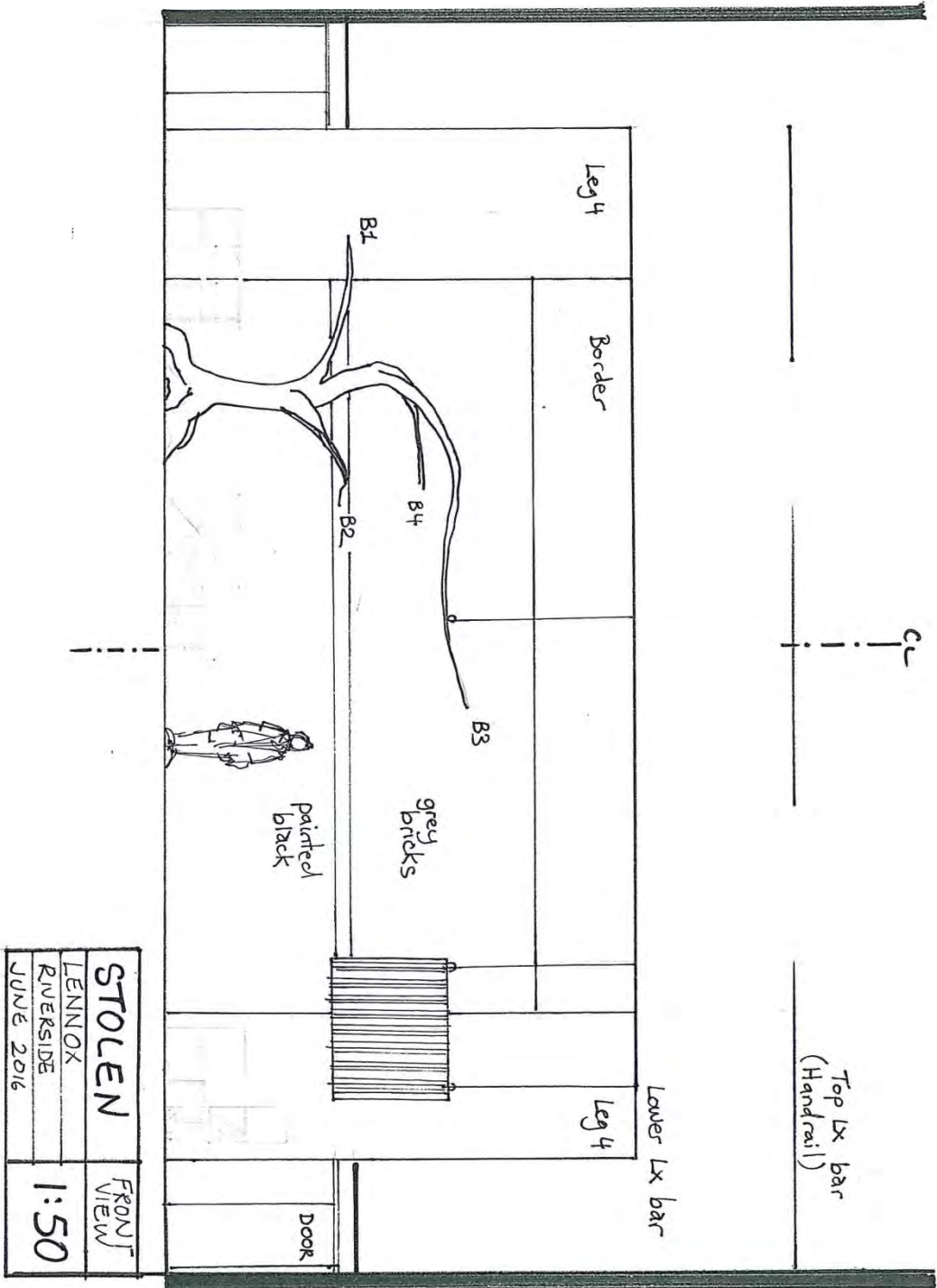
Vicki wanted to find another metaphor that was not as literal, nor as solid as the beds. We discussed a range of options, breaking down the script into scenes that seemed to hold the most resonance. I was keen on using suitcases as the metaphor for a home always on the road. Vicki was interested in exploring emptiness, and the power of using 'found objects' in our development of ideas. The use of empty cardboard boxes developed from these ideas.

Both of us are very interested in weaving motifs, and see all forms of weaving as a way of capturing the essence of women's work - 'busy hands' make connective actions that describe histories, her-stories and family stories. Shirley's habitual use of knitting as a means of hiding the pain of losing her children became a strong image in my mind, and I began playing with different ways of incorporating knitting within the set.

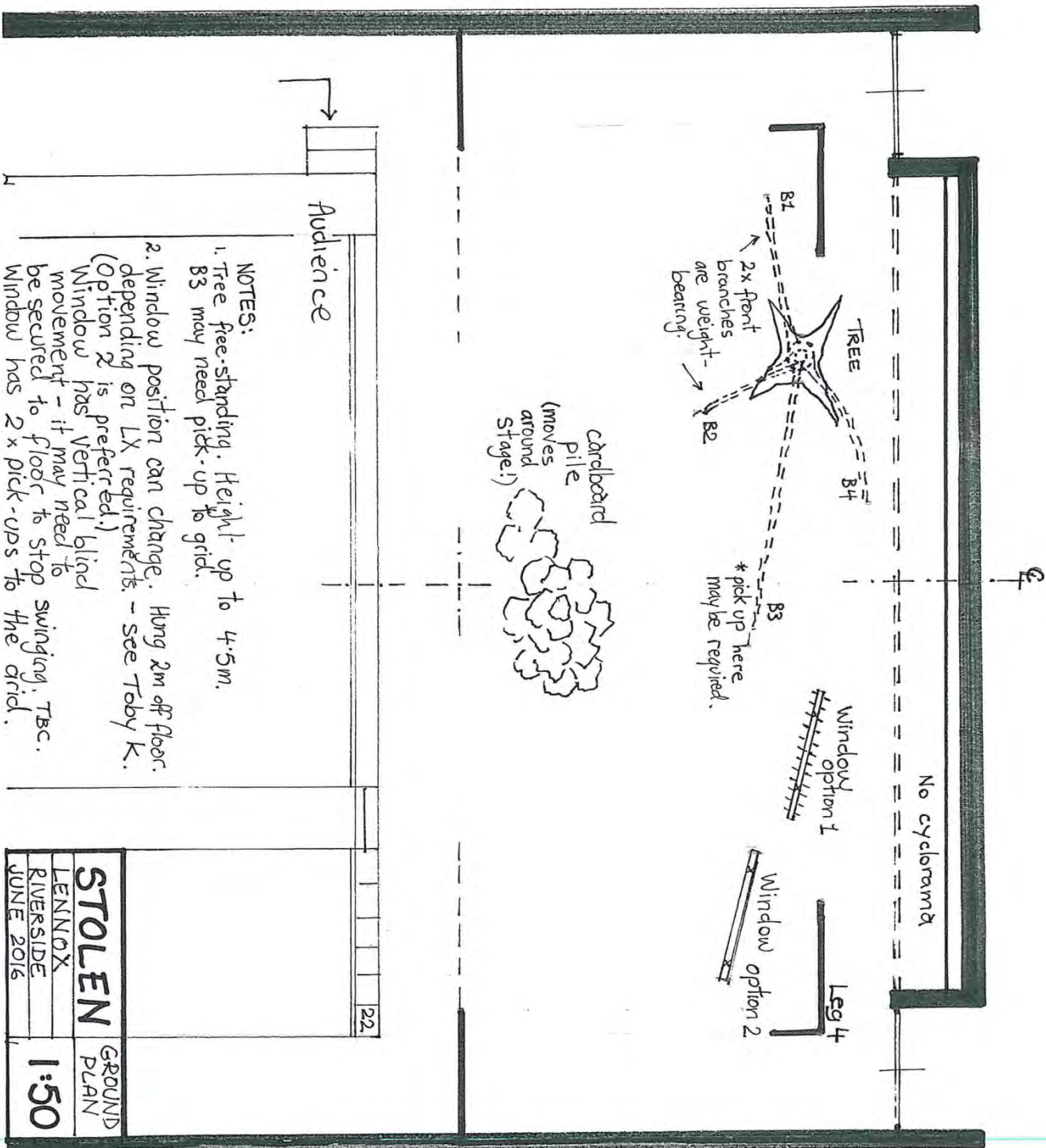
Vicki suggested 'yarn bombing' - a fun crafting art form very common in the inner city these days. It involves the 3D wrapping of trees and chairs and fire hydrants in the public streets with colourful knitted or crocheted yarns.

I had also recently returned from Adelaide where the Museum of SA had some lovely examples of contemporary weaving by women in the Central Desert - they wrap animal shapes with bright yarn and make the 'expected' shapes become extraordinary.

We decided to wrap a tree in yarn to represent the making of culture in a man-made sense - devoid of its natural course - ie. stolen culture continues to wrap itself around objects, making its own sense and shapes of them. In this way, I could see that the characters in Stolen are wrapping their stories around the tree - they and countless others of the Stolen generation are re-weaving the culture that was lost, and in doing so, they are weaving their stories together in the landscape. The tree is growing out of the wasteland of empty cardboard boxes - a reminder that the Aboriginal spirit is still strong and powerful and will not disappear, despite being removed from its natural habitats, and forced to grow in amongst empty boxes.



STOLEN	FRONT VIEW
LENNOX	
RIVERSIDE	
JUNE 2016	1:50



NOTES:

1. Tree free-standing. Height: up to 4.5m. B3 may need pick-up to grid.
2. Window position can change. Hung 2m off floor. depending on LX requirements. - see Toby K. (Option 2 is preferred.) Window has vertical blind movement - it may need to be secured to floor to stop swinging. TBC. Window has 2 x pick-ups to the grid.

STOLEN		GROUND PLAN
LENNOX		
RIVERSIDE		
JUNE 2016		
1:50		

SECTION 1:

DEVELOPING AN

UNDERSTANDING OF THE PLAY

AND ITS CONTEXT

1. AN INTRODUCTION TO *STOLEN*

Stolen is a candid and empathetic work that traces the lives of five Aboriginal children, Anne, Shirley, Ruby, Sandy and Jimmy, as they share their unique stories when removed from their families under official Australian government policy known as 'Assimilation.'

Jane Harrison's, *Stolen* represents a vitally important work for Australian Theatre, dramatising the fear, persecution and anguish felt by the children and their families, displaying the ongoing devastating effects on generations of Aboriginal people physically, psychologically and culturally. This non-linear play opens with the characters as children and reveals their experiences through story telling in non-conventional episodic form, ending with adult characters as they find their way home. It is through this personal experience of these characters that we are able to more deeply understand this devastating period of our history and allows us the opportunity to build a deeper unity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

Stolen emerged in 1993 when the Ilbjerri Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Theatre co-operative commissioned Jane Harrison and her researcher to create a play representing the many stories and varied experiences of 'The Lost Children' as the Stolen Generation were then known. The title was changed after the audience of early readings argued that the children were never lost but rather, stolen. It took six years for a full production to be mounted at the Malthouse Theatre, premiering at the Melbourne International Festival in 1998. It has since played annually in Australia and on tour to the UK, Hong Kong and Tokyo.

2: UNDERSTANDING CONTEXT

Stolen was written at a crucial time in Australian history when the 'Bringing them Home' report of 1997 highlighted the extent of the damage of forced removal of Indigenous children from their families.

The History of Political Government Approaches to Indigenous Cultures

The Aborigines Protection Board

Between 1909 and 1969, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's removal was enforced and maintained by the Aborigines Protection Board (APB). This removal policy had the power to remove Aboriginal children without either parental consent or a court order. Parents of Aboriginal children were declared unfit to bring up their own children for a number of reasons including the desire to teach the children English, the conditions in which they lived were considered to be dirty and squalid and the desire to bring the children up in the Christian faith.

By the 1950s, the Australian Government was attempting to 'breed out' Aboriginality for assimilation into Western society. Aboriginal children who were "half-caste" or lighter coloured were more likely to be removed from their families and placed in mission, welfare homes or fostered out to white homes ostensibly to provide them with a better standard of living and education. It was intended these children would assimilate and intermarry into mainstream society. Assimilation was rigorously pursued by most authorities and by non-indigenous foster and adoptive families. It is estimated that 100,000 Indigenous People have been affected by the removal of children. In particular, children and their families were discouraged or prevented from contacting each other. Many children were told they were unwanted, rejected or their parents were dead, when this was not true.

As the Western Australian Protector of Aborigines, A.O. Neville, asked at a 1937 conference:

Are we to have a population of 1,000,000 blacks in the Commonwealth or are we going to merge them into our white community and eventually forget that there were any Aborigines in Australia?

Life on the Missions

The conditions of missions, government institutions and children's homes were often very poor. Resources were insufficient to improve them, or keep children properly, clothed, fed and sheltered. The promise of good education at institution's often disappointed expectations with the standard being very low in mission areas. Most children started school at the age of eight at grade one with no preschool, attending school for an average of six years, often leaving school at the age of fourteen.

Children were essentially prepared for menial labour, placed in work by the authorities as farm hands or domestic helpers and were not entitled or trusted to receive their wages. These were supposed to be held in trust, but many never received the money that was rightfully theirs.

Many children were physically, assaulted and brutally punished in placements. These children were most at risk of this treatment in foster or adoptive families. 23.4% of these children who were fostered and adopted reported being assaulted there. One in six children who were institutionalised reported physical assault and punishments.

Outcomes of removal

The effects of removal for the majority of people have been multifaceted, manifold and ongoing. As far as figures go, the 1994 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) survey found that people who were forcibly removed in childhood are twice likely to assess their health as poor or only fair (29%) compared with people who were not removed. (15.4%)

They are not better educated, not more likely to be employed and not receiving significantly higher incomes than people who were raised in their communities. However they are twice as likely to have been arrested more than once in the past five years, with one in five removed people having this experience. Many forcibly removed children and their children have lost their cultures, their languages, their heritage and their lands, as well as their families and communities. Studies found forcible removal has left many people with nowhere to belong, no sense of identity.

Evidence presented to The Royal Commission by experts in their field discovered that separating an infant from his or her mother or primary carer in childhood can lead to:

- Depression and suicide
- Delinquency and violence sometimes leading to imprisonment
- Insecurity and lack of self-esteem, feelings of worthlessness
- Alcohol and drug abuse; and/or
- Lack of trust and intimacy

The Political Perspective: Recent Milestones

NOTE: The articles and excerpts in the following section have been selected to provide the basis for class discussion in preparation for reading the play.

The Bringing Them Home Report

In 1997, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (now the Australian Human Rights Commission) released its report *bringing them home: National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families*.

To quote the report itself:

This report is a tribute to the strength and struggles of many thousands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people affected by forcible removal. We acknowledge the hardships they endured and the sacrifices they made. We remember and lament all the children who will never come home. We dedicate this report with thanks and admiration to those who found the strength to tell their stories to the Inquiry and to the generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people separated from their families.



ACTIVITY- The “Bringing Them Home” report

What are other people’s perspectives in *The Bringing Them Home* report? **Find and write about 3 different perspectives.**

Some suggested sources:

Read: “Perspectives’, in Carmel Bird’s, *The Stolen Generation and their Stories*, (Random House 1998)

Check the web: http://www.humanrights.gov.au/social_justice/bth_report/index.html

Reconciliation

The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation Act 1991 was introduced into the Australian Parliament and the formal process of reconciliation was established as official Australian Government policy. Reconciliation is an ongoing process, promoting equity across Australia and social justice for Australia's Indigenous peoples. Reconciliation Australia defines Reconciliation as "building relationships for change between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians".



ACTIVITY- The Road to Reconciliation

Check these websites for more information on reconciliation:

- <http://australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/reconciliation>
- <http://www.reconciliation.org.au/home/latest/keating-redfern-speech-heralded-reconciliation-process>
- <http://australianpolitics.com/1992/12/10/paul-keatings-redfern-speech.html#gsc.tab=0>

Use the links above to **CONSTRUCT A TIMELINE** of the history of reconciliation in Australia. Include all the important events and milestones leading to the current climate today.

The Intervention: 2007

The NT Intervention or, as it is more correctly known, Northern Territory National Emergency Response Act 2007, was a legislative response from the Federal Government to the Northern Territory Government's Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse or 'Little Children are Sacred' report. The legislation received bipartisan support in the Commonwealth parliament. " However, the United Nations Human Rights Commissioner feared the Federal Government intervention program in Northern Territory Aboriginal communities would not benefit indigenous people without the participation of indigenous communities and the lives of indigenous peoples in Australia would not improve.

Further Reading: http://www.humanrights.gov.au/social_justice/intervention/index.html

The Apology: 2008

On the 13th February 2008, The Commonwealth parliament passed a motion that formally apologised to the Stolen Generations. Prime Minister Kevin Rudd tabled the motion, apologising to Indigenous Australians for "for the laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss".

Further Reading: <http://australia.gov.au/about-australia/our-country/our-people/apology-to-australias-indigenous-peoples>

The Act of Recognition: 2013

Another step towards recognition: Rare unity surrounded the passage of an Act of Recognition about the first chapter of Australia's story as a precursor to constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



ACTIVITY- What is happening today? The Act of Recognition.

First, watch this video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rnjPLZ0PkL4&feature=share>

Then READ the text of the speeches made by Prime Minister Julia Gillard and Tony Abbot, Leader of the Opposition here: <http://australianpolitics.com/2013/02/13/act-of-recognition-passes-house-of-representatives.html>

Answer these questions:

- a. Why is the Act of Recognition so important for indigenous Australians and Australia in general?
- b. What do you think the next step should be towards fully realising and respecting indigenous Australians ?



ACTIVITY- The Personal Perspective

Compare and contrast other 2 (two) other personal stories on the Aboriginal experience.

Suggested resources:

Websites

- <http://www.nswreconciliation.org.au/what-is-reconciliation>
- <http://www.nswreconciliation.org.au/stories>
- <http://reconciliation.org.au/nsw/education-kit/stolen-generations/>

Books

Sally Morgan, 'My Place': (1987. Penguin Books) the story of Morgan's discovery of her family's past which sold over half a million copies in Australia. It has also been published in Europe, Asia and the United States.

Song

'Took the Children Away' by Archie Roach.

Lyrics here: <http://www.songmeanings.net/songs/view/3530822107858710354/>

Listen to the song here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zLXzKYP1uCw>

Read about Archie Roach's Life here: <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~aar/stolen.htm>

Television

The First Australians: Episode 5: <http://www.sbs.com.au/firstaustralians/index/index/epid/5>

Redfern Now (ABC TV. Available on DVD)

Cry from the Heart SBS TV

Stolen generations SBS TV

Rabbit Proof Fence. Phillip Noyce. 2002.

3: CHARACTERS AND THEIR FUNCTION IN THE PLAY

SANDY

Sandy has spent his entire life on the run, never having a set home to live in. His quest is to find a place to call home, a place where he can be at peace, where he's not abused and where he doesn't have to keep hiding. His realization about his own powers and the notion of home is a significant one.



FOR DISCUSSION

- Express what you believe Sandy's notion of home to be and provide examples from the play.
- What is the significance in Sandy's Dreamtime story of the Mungee?
- Read Desert sand (p.22-23)
- What does this episode show about the importance of Sandy's connection to the land?
- Write an extended scene between the white ladies who gives Sandy a twenty-dollar note. Give reasons in the lady's back story as to why she does this.

RUBY

Ruby was forced to work as a domestic from a young age, whose mental health was adversely affected by the sexual abuse of her white 'carers'. Ruby is eventually reunited with her Aboriginal family.



FOR DISCUSSION

- Read the reunion scene on pages 30-31.
- What outcomes do you feel this reunion will have for Ruby?
- Is it possible, do you think, for Ruby to find a place away from her mental pain and suffering?

JIMMY

Jimmy was separated from his mother at a very young age, and she spent her entire life looking for him. Jimmy thought his mother was dead because her letters are taken and hidden. On his release from prison Jimmy was told about his mother's search but before he could meet her, she died, and Jimmy subsequently committed suicide.

Jimmy: 'I've been a thug and thief but I've never stolen anyone's soul.' (p.34)



FOR DISCUSSION

- Discuss this quote in terms of the effects of removal of Aboriginal communities and on kinship.
- Find examples in the text that show the links of Aboriginal identity to a sense of belonging in communities.
- Discuss Jimmy's death and the notion of suicide.

- What would you say to Jimmy to help him find a sense of control in his life?

ANNE

Anne was a young girl when removed from her family and placed in a white family's home. She was materially happy in this home and disinterested in discovering her origins. When her indigenous family tried to meet her, she felt bewildered and caught between cultures and her two "families".



FOR DISCUSSION

- What do you think about the statement 'ignorance is bliss?' Given the situation what do you think of Anne's adoptive parent's decision to withhold information.
- Do you understand Anne's anger towards her adoptive parents? Why?

SHIRLEY

Shirley is a nurturer who was removed from her parents, and had her children removed from her. Shirley never gives up on the search for her kids, keeping herself occupied by knitting. She is overjoyed when her granddaughter is born without the fear of removal.



FOR DISCUSSION

- How do you think Shirley is able to maintain an optimistic attitude about the future given her history? What do you think this says about Shirley?
- Shirley disbelieves that time will heal pain. (p.35) Do you agree or disagree. Why?
- Why do you think Shirley knits? What is this activity symbolic of?

4: STEREOTYPES AND AUTHORITY

Read this excerpt from the play:

Ruby's descent into madness

AUTHORITY FIGURE: Clean for me, Ruby.

AUTHORITY FIGURE: Wash for me, Ruby.

AUTHORITY FIGURE: Cook for me, Ruby.

RUBY: don't need any family of me own.

AUTHORITY FIGURE: Scrub for me, Ruby.

AUTHORITY FIGURE: Nurse for me,

Ruby. AUTHORITY FIGURE: Mop for me,

Ruby. RUBY: Got enough to do.

As the scene progresses, the voices get nastier as they force Ruby to her knees and abuse her.



ACTIVITY- Exploring the Use of Stereotypes and Authority in Stolen

1. Find examples in the play of where the children are conditioned to behave and think. What do you think would occur in a child's thinking if all adult human contact were to be authoritarian?
2. Find 3 examples where Cultural superiority is displayed by the characters. Discuss these findings with the class.
3. Examine the language of Anne's adopted parents. What does this language suggest? What affect does it have on both the characters and the audience?
4. Find 3 examples where Cultural Stereotyping exists. Discuss these findings with the class.

Creative thinking: Going back to the scene above, find a place for Ruby to go as she descends into madness where she can find some relief and peace of mind. Where is this and what if any of her past memories exist here?



CLASS DISCUSSION

Examine the following and discuss them as a class in relation to STEREOTYPES and AUTHORITY

- Anne's perception of her Indigenous family
- Jimmy's ideas about his Mother's hygiene
- The Racist Insult (p.32)
- Am I black or white? (P.28)
- Negative information about Aboriginal culture that is given to the characters.
- Discuss the White Voice on p. 29.
- Find examples in the play of how the policies were meant to help Aboriginal children.

SECTION 2:

STRATEGIES FOR EXPLORING

‘STOLEN’ THEORETICALLY

1: EXPLORING THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

The “Bringing them Home” report

In 1997, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (now the Australian Human Rights Commission) released its report *Bringing them home: National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families*.



ACTIVITY- Analysis of the Report

1. What were the major findings of this report?
2. What is the report a tribute to?
3. What does the report remember?
4. How does *Reconciliation Australia* define Reconciliation?
5. Write one paragraph on Reconciliation and the steps towards promoting equity across Australia and social justice for Australia's Indigenous peoples.

Source:

http://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/pdf/social_justice/bringing_them_home_report.pdf

The Apology

On the 13th February 2008, The Commonwealth parliament passed a motion that formally apologised to the Stolen Generations. Prime Minister Kevin Rudd tabled the motion, apologising to Indigenous Australians for "for the laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss".



ACTIVITY- Analysis of The Apology

1. What were the major points made in his speech about our history?
2. What was the reaction to the speech?
3. Write your own sorry speech. Which points would you refer to regarding our history?

Source:

<http://australia.gov.au/about-australia/our-country/our-people/apology-to-australias-indigenous-peoples>

The Intervention

The NT Intervention or, as it is more correctly known, Northern Territory National Emergency Response Act 2007, was a legislative response from the Federal Government to the Northern Territory Government's Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse, or 'Little Children are Sacred' report. The legislation received bipartisan support in the Commonwealth parliament.



ACTIVITY- Analysis of The Intervention

1. What was the outcome of this Intervention?
2. What were some the reactions to this intervention?

Source:

http://www.humanrights.gov.au/social_justice/intervention/index.html

2: BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

An in-depth theoretical exploration and analysis of 'Stolen'

The Western Australian Protector of Aborigines, A.O. Neville, asked at a 1937 conference...

Are we to have a population of 1,000,000 blacks in the Commonwealth or are we going to merge them into our white community and eventually forget that there were any Aborigines in Australia?



CLASS DISCUSSIONS

1. After your exploration of the social, historical and political background of *Stolen*, **present** to the class how your understanding of Indigenous people has changed since you began studying the text.
2. In small groups, identify **themes and issues** from the play. As a whole group discuss and add to your list.
3. **Identify** why *Stolen* was such a landmark in Australian theatre history. Include in this discussion the themes, the Elements of Drama and the non-conventional form Harrison employs to maximum effect. Include the stylistic features and language techniques.



FURTHER RESEARCH

1. **Research** the Indigenous stories and stages of the Aboriginal story in Australia, understanding how the relationship to the Stolen generation has and continues to evolve.
2. **Find and Explore** the background information available on Jane Harrison. How did the play emerge and into which political climate did it appear? What was the significance of this?



ACTIVITY- The Stolen Generation

Stolen represents a vitally important work for Australian Theatre, dramatising the distress, maltreatment and sorrow felt by the children and their families and displays the ongoing devastating effects of this policy on generations of Aboriginal people physically, psychologically and culturally.

1. **What** was the name of the policy, which was the catalyst for the forcible removal of children? Record the justification for the policy at the time it was executed.
2. **Name** three reasons given to parents of Aboriginal children as to why their children were being taken from them.
3. **What** was the level or standard of education for Indigenous children inside the institutions?
4. **What** was the main occupation for many of the children and what kind of payment in wages did they receive?

5. **Describe** the condition of missions, government institutions and children's homes.
6. **Describe** the types of abuse the children in placements suffered.
7. **Where** were the children most at risk? In missions, government institutions, children's homes, foster or adoptive families?
8. **What** are the long-term effects of removal for the majority of people?
9. **Complete** this sentence: As far as figures go, the 1994 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) survey found that
10. **List** five things the forcibly removed children and their children have lost beginning with - Culture...
11. **Evidence** presented to The Royal Commission by experts in their field discovered that separating an infant from his or her mother or primary carer in childhood can lead to...
 - **List 5 factors.**
12. **Write** a letter from an Aboriginal Mother who has had her child stolen.
13. **Write** an article for a 1930's newspaper on 'The Lucky Ones' – those children who have found a home with a white family. Write a letter home from the perspective of this child detailing impressions and feelings.
14. **Compare the** theatrical techniques and dramatic conventions used in *Stolen* with those used in other Contemporary Australian Texts. How do audiences respond to *Stolen* in comparison with other texts?



ACTIVITY- Racism and Stereotypes

Read the following text passages:

FATHER and MOTHER

P. 7

FATHER: We'll give her the best of everything.

MOTHER: Oh yes, a good education...

FATHER: My word! A sense of security...

MOTHER: Yes! And a good upbringing...

P.28

ANNE: I thought they'd live in the country or the outback or something. You know, on the land.

P.30

JIMMY: God I hope she's not real dirty or something.

1. **Define** the term 'cultural stereotype'.
2. **Find** other examples in the play that speak of Cultural Superiority
3. **Define** the word 'paradigm.' How do you think this word relates to *Stolen*?

Read 'Racist Insult' (P. 32)

1. **Explain** how racism is designed to maintain a societal paradigm of power.
2. **Find** examples in the text of how the policy of removal was designed to better the lives of Aboriginal children.



FOR DISCUSSION

One of the key issues with Non Indigenous people working on Indigenous issues is that often our own biases are not recognised. As European Australians we have a certain view of the world, which we take for granted. A worldview can be called a paradigm. Acknowledging our own biased view of the world is important because our own world view/values/paradigm is different from the Aboriginal voice/paradigm.

Do you agree with the statement above?

Articulate to your class how you believe the acknowledgement of these different voices will help us understand one another and move forward.



ACTIVITY- Abuse in Foster Homes

Read the following text on Page 8.

CHILDREN: What did he give to ya?

RUBY: Gave me a doll.

CHILDREN: He gave her a doll. What else did ya do?

They stop clapping.

RUBY: I promised not to tell.

JIMMY: Oh, Ruby!

1. **Write** a passage on the internal conflict going on within Ruby in this scene.
2. **Write** and share how you would stage this section of the play to highlight Ruby's tumultuous inner life.
3. **Write** a page on the importance of the issues in this play.
4. **Write** a page discussing the importance of this play to a contemporary audience.
5. **Write** a page discussing the process of developing this play.

SECTION 3:

STRATEGIES FOR EXPLORING

‘STOLEN’ EXPERIENTIALLY

1: THE MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES MODEL

Study Multiple Intelligences outlined in the diagram below, and use them as the basis for the following activities.



ACTIVITIES- Intrapersonal

1. **Write** a journal reflecting your impression the play 'Stolen'. Talk about the feelings it evoked in you and which characters you identified with and who you didn't. Give reasons why.
2. **Write** a directorial approach that you would take if you were to present the play.
3. **Choose** a character from the play and develop a back story for this character using the play and your imagination to build a character of some dimension. How would your character experience significant moments from life?
4. If a character from the play were to live in your house, how do you think that they would fit in? **Write** about what impact they would have on you and your family/housemates.
5. **Develop** a scene that comes before the first written scene and present it to the class.
6. **Create** a new character that enters into one scene. Describe the character and discuss how this new person may impact upon the scene: what would change, why and how? How does this new character may impact on the play as a whole? **Find** examples in the text where maltreatment has influenced his or her fate.

8. **Analyse** your own map of your community. Write down ten symbols and their associated meanings that are used in everyday life. E.g, ice, red earth, fire, suitcase, cross. Use symbols to represent and place in relation to each other the most significant landmarks and figures in the community. Map the social and political conditions of your existence. What are the major concerns affecting the health of the area? Consider family dynamic, employment figures, financial status. Construct a day in the life of a character contending with one of the social factors you have identified.
9. **Watch** the You Tube extract Bob Randall “We are Caretakers” and “Oursness”. Listen carefully to what Randall says. Record any important terms/definitions that he uses. Seek to understand the Aboriginal voice and how it differs from a European Australian voice or paradigm.

10. **Refer to the following text:** P.6.

SANDY: Oh. Do ya get more to eat than the rotten food here? Do ya have to scrub the floors?

JIMMY: Nah!

ANNE: But why?

RUBY: Shhh.

- a) **Find** other examples of the conditions within Institutions.
 - b) **Identify** the objective of a sequence of units from the text. What Elements of Drama are used and to what effect?
11. **Search** the Internet for the poem ‘We are Going’ by Oodgeroo Noonuccal. In pairs, readthrough the poem. Create a response and the feelings it presents. Play the music of Geoffrey Gurrumul music while you collect your ideas.
 12. **Write** a letter to a friend explaining what has happened to you as a stolen child. Include your impression or opinion of your new surroundings, roommates and duties you've been assigned.
 13. **Write** a journal on a personal dilemma faced by a character of your choice.
 14. **Write** a short scene dealing with an issue you see as related to a character from the play but that has not been written about directly.

Long response questions:

15. At the end of the play, the actors line up once more ‘just like in the first scene’, to ‘break out of their roles and talk in turn about their own experiences’. By creating the same visual image as the prologue, Harrison invites the audience to recall the children chatting over each other at the performances opening. What does this contrast convey and how effective is it?

16. The experiences of the individual were of particular importance in the writing of *Stolen*, as Harrison 'did not want the play to present Koori people as a homogenous people who all thought and felt the same way.' Needing to communicate this idea to an audience to whom the story was previously untold, Harrison employed several strong and dramatic images in her portrayal of the affected individuals. Do you agree? Why or why not? What are these images? How did they create Harrison's desired effect?

17. Each actor telling their story individually at the play's end communicates that the stolen children were not an impenetrable group but individuals inimitably affected by assimilation and its repercussions. What other theatrical devices does Harrison use to accentuate the individuals experience?'

18. Imagine you are one of the actors telling your own story at the end of the play. Research real stories and write your own monologue.

Theme exploration- Discrimination

Thinking about Discrimination, define the following terms:

- Discrimination
- Harassment
- Vilification
 - What is the difference between discrimination, harassment and vilification?
 - What is the impact of discrimination, harassment and vilification on individuals and communities?

VIEW the movie – *Remember the Titans*. Make notes on the following as the movie is playing.

1. **Outline** the nature of discrimination explored in the film.
2. **Explain** how the social factors influence the development and perpetuation of discrimination.
3. **Identify** three strategies used by Coach Boone to overcome the discrimination.
 - **Evaluate** their appropriateness and effectiveness.
 - **Predict** how successful these strategies would be in addressing other types of discrimination.
4. **Assess** the importance of characters in the film that resist the social pressure to discriminate. Examine the conflicts they face and how they overcome them.

Rebel, yearning, rules, community, honesty, blood, freedom, target, vulnerable, justice, desert, opposites

5. In your log book **create** a mind map. Choose one of the words from the list above or think of your own. **Brainstorm** as many images, situations and characters as you can.

ACTIVITIES- Bodily/ Kinesthetic

Performing the Diary Entry

Read the following first-hand account referring to events in 1935:

I was at the post office with my Mum and Auntie [and cousin]. They put us in the police ute and said they were taking us to Broome. They put the mums in there as well. But when we'd gone [about ten miles (16 km)] they stopped, and threw the mothers out of the car. We jumped on our mothers' backs, crying, trying not to be left behind. But the policemen pulled us off and threw us back in the car. They pushed the mothers away and drove off, while our mothers were chasing the car, running and crying after us. We were screaming in the back of that car. When we got to Broome they put me and my cousin in the Broome lock-up. We were only ten years old. We were in the lock-up for two days waiting for the boat to Perth.

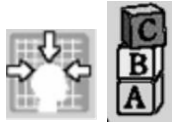
(From 'Bringing them Home' report.)

1. **Perform** a series of tableau's that tell of this event. Consider the transitions between your frozen pictures using the Laban table.

EFFORT	FLOW	SPACE	TIME: rhythm/pace	WEIGHT
PRESS	Continuous	Direct	Regular/Slow	Heavy
WRING	Continuous	Flexible	Irregular/heavy	Heavy
SLASH	Disjointed	Flexible	Irregular/fast	Heavy
PUNCH	Disjointed	Direct	Regular/fast	Heavy
FLICK	Disjointed	Flexible	Irregular/fast	Light
DAB	Disjointed	Direct	Regular/fast	Light
GLIDE	Continuous	Direct	Regular/Slow	Light
FLOAT	Continuous	Flexible	Irregular/slow	Light

2. **Perform** a sequence of still images or tableau's that tell us of the key moments in the play. Consider the Rising action, the conflicts, moments of inner turmoil, the climax, the falling action.
3. **With Music:** Walk around the room and when the music stops, you will hear a word from the text called out. Respond viscerally, creating an individual sculpture.
4. **Draw from the list:** *Force, Taken, Lost, Seek, Love, Fight, Hide, Pain, Mother, Hope Servitude.*
5. **Choose a quote** from the play and as a group, create a pastiche of ideas and images. Use transitions to take you from one frozen tableau to the next while a Narrator steps out and delivers the line you have chosen.
6. **Refer to the text on P.22.** 'Desert Sands.' Read Sandy's story. As a Chorus, create the red rocks, the whirling, swirling sand, the kids on the bed. Perform as a sequence of movements while someone reads Sandy's text.
7. **Develop** a movement sequence that depicts the dramatic action and main events in Stolen.

8. **Choose one of characters.** Concentrate on body language to depict your character. How do they walk? From where do they lead? Explore a central theme, issue or subject in *Stolen* through the use of short, self contained scenes. Using stylised movement, soundscapes or tableaux, create a series of moments or short scenes of contrasting styles to represent your ideas.
9. **Develop** a series of moving images expressing 'A day in the Life' of an Aboriginal child.



ACTIVITIES- Interpersonal and Verbal Linguistic

Class activity: The Suitcase

1. Bring in a suitcase or a pillow with 5 items of significant personal meaning. Write a few words connecting to the item. As you remove each item and consider it – speak of its significance in your life, giving each word weight and meaning.
2. Choose and speak a line of dialogue from the play.
3. Using this line as a starter, create an entrance using the prop and the line of dialogue. Allow time to prepare and play with different props.
4. Add on: Finish strongly in a freeze frame. You might choose from the opening sequence:

- I carry my home with me. Sandy. P1
- I'm finally gonna meet my Mother. P1.
- I want my Mummy. Ruby, P.2.
- Sandy, Run! Sandy's Mum P.3
- ...mummy's face is getting smaller and smaller..., Shirley, P.4.
- Oh. Do ya get to stay there forever? P.6
- They're gonna choose me one day. Jimmy. P.6
- I musn't have been in that children's home long, cos I can't remember it at all. Anne. P.7
- I promised not to tell. Ruby. P.8
- They just came and this woman picked him up and put him in the car. Shirley. P.9

Class Activity- The Court of Law

Halve the class and break up into small groups. Discuss the following roles:

A) An Aboriginal Mother or Father of a stolen child or children: Consider your family circumstances, your cultural mores, your relationship to the land, your heritage and how you pass on your knowledge to your children.

B) The Chief Protector of Aborigines in South Australia, (1911) William Garnet South, who reportedly 'lobbied for the power to remove Aboriginal children without a court hearing because the courts sometimes refused to accept that the children were neglected or destitute.' South argued that 'all children of mixed descent should be treated as neglected.' Your argument might include the Aborigines Protection Board attitude of the day: Parents of Aboriginal children were declared unfit to bring up their own children for a number of reasons including the desire to teach the children English, that the conditions in which they lived were considered to be dirty and

squalid and the desire to bring the children up in the Christian faith.

1. Improvise short scenes between the characters.
2. In groups of four, refer to the text and then discuss how the dramatic convention of nursery rhyme is used to convey the issue that Ruby was in fact sexually abused as a child

Class Activities- Characters

1. Choose one or two of the following characters - Sandy, Anne, Shirley and Jimmy. Critically analyse the performance styles, techniques and drama conventions used in the scenes of your chosen character or characters.
2. Choose a character from the play. Brainstorm the people who might populate the world outside the play for this character; someone this character is related to, or knows. Have the characters talk to each other. Improvise. Physically extend every moment. Add sounds or words.
3. **Hotseat:** Have the class ask the character questions about her/himself.
4. Discuss or write in your log books, reflecting on how choices in the back story affect the behaviour of the character in the play.

Class Debate: Cubillo & Gunner V The Commonwealth

In 1999, fifty one year old Peter Gunner, an Urapuntja community Leader undertook legal proceedings to sue the Commonwealth over the events that occurred to him when at age seven, he was taken from his remote cattle station in the Northern Territory and taken to a Christian hostel 250 kilometres away on the outskirts of Alice Springs. He would not see his Mother again for fourteen years. The trial focused on the personal histories of Lorna Cubillo and Peter Gunner, who claimed they were removed by employees of the Commonwealth Government.

The essential argument in this court case was this: Was Gunner one of the 'Stolen Generations' forcibly taken from his Mother under a racist government policy of assimilating 'half caste' Aborigines? Or was he an underprivileged child given shelter and education by benevolent Christian missionaries?

1. Identify the arguments for the Defence and the Prosecution of this case.
2. Present your arguments to the Jury

3. Discuss the outcome: Fact: The Federal Court dismissed the case of the Aboriginal claimants seeking damages for their removal from their families and detention at institutions because it was believed to be in the [then] child's best interests and, as the plaintiffs bore the onus of proof, they had failed to show that they were taken without the consent of their parents/guardians.

Class Activity: Evocative Language

Refer to the text on P.34: Jimmy's suicide.

1. What do you imagine Willy Wajurri means to Jimmy?
2. What do you think of Jimmy's decision to kill himself?

Discuss the terms below:

Collective
 Ownership
 Us vs Them
 We
 Immediate family circle
 Communal
 Birds animals and land are my family
 I owe this land
 We belong to the land
 The land is my mother
 I control the land
 Inclusive voice
 Exclusive voice
 Essentialism
 Land is separate to us
 Land and we are one
 Circular storytelling
 Linear storytelling
 Voice is separate and singular
 Voice is communal

6. What images do we create in our mind when we hear these words?
7. Using students' shoes, create two circles representative of the two paradigms (world views/voices) of Aboriginal and European Australia. Students draw these key words and terms from a hat and place them in the appropriate circle.
8. Reflect on this learning. Write up a paragraph using evocative language to communicate your learning or discoveries.



ACTIVITIES- Visual/ Spatial

1. Imagine you are to produce a summary or report of your research on a production of *Stolen* you have seen, where you have identified images, characters, symbols, setting, themes, irony, mood and atmosphere. Include any cultural, political and social issues and any element of Australian identity. For instance, show us an audience reaction if this were to be performed outside of Australia. What would audiences identify as Australian? If performed here, what do we as Australian's identify with? Record your experience.
2. Refer to the text P.35. *Sandy at the Top of the World*. Discuss with others the concept of Home. Create a collage, drawing, painting or sketch of these various concepts and what meaning they bring to those you speak to.
3. Discuss your design ideas for set, costume, sound and lighting. Trouble shoot in small groups all the problems and dilemmas you might encounter when staging *Stolen*. Solve the problems in as many ways you can think of and present to the class.
4. Develop a lighting design for *Stolen*. Present your ideas to the class and justify your choices.
5. Create a folder of images that strike you as related to the text. Design a poster and program using some of the images for the play.



ACTIVITIES- Mathematical/ Logical

1. Create a time line of the major turning points in the political / community responses to the Stolen Generation. Include the most recent event and predict a future direction.

Refer to the text on P.35.

2. Research your own family tree. How important is knowing who your forebears were to your own family? Create a time line from as far back in your own time line as you can.
3. Create a time line of the events in the lives of one or more of the characters from the play.
4. In small groups, discuss and list why women may be portrayed as they are in Stolen. Make connections to Australian society as you see it has developed.
5. If one of the characters in Stolen were a member of the opposite sex, would you imagine the outcome to be different for that character? Give reasons for your hypothesis.



ACTIVITIES- Musical/ Rhythmic

1. Design a sound inventory of music and sound effects for the play. Include mood music for use before the play starts and for after the final curtain.
2. Find a piece of music you think depicts the dramatic action of the play. Write a justification for your choice. Bring it to class and discuss your reasons for your choice.
3. Use musical instruments to represent the different characters in the play and present a scene using the music to depict the characters' actions and intentions.
4. In groups, create a word cloud to create a 20 second expressionistic play using sounds, words, movement and transformation devices to dramatise the following: What has just happened in one aspect of the story? Predict what will happen in the future. Include phrases reflecting your characters reaction to the situation.
5. In small groups, choose a scene from the play. Sequence in the correct order with one group's scene following another. Create a sound scape depicting the mood of the scene. Students now present the sound in the order of the play. Discuss each performance and choices that were made.
6. Choose rhyming words and phrases appropriate for a rap style song. Try having someone perform a scene from the play while the rap song is being performed. Discuss the mood of the rap and how it compares and contrasts with the atmosphere created by the spoken dialogue.

2: PERSPECTIVE ON: THE ELEMENTS OF DRAMA

How the Elements Of Drama Evoke Experience In An Essay

Look at the world of your essay subject through the Elements of Drama:

- **ROLE & CHARACTER** - The who?
- Plus the **SITUATION** - The what?
- Driven by **THE TENSION** – when the audience anticipates the outcome - pushing the drama towards the high point or climax.
- Directed by the **FOCUS** – the central theme, issue or problem, made explicit by **PLACE & TIME** - the where?
- Conveyed through the **DRAMATIC STRUCTURE** - the form & style.
- Expressed by – **LANGUAGE, SOUND AND MOVEMENT** –
- Indicating the status relationship, the urgency of the task leading to the **KEY MOMENTS** in the performance to build dramatic tension in the **SPACE**, communicating the relationships between characters and the environment while the **RHYTHM** manipulates timing through pace and tempo.
- **TO CREATE – SYMBOL & ATMOSPHERE**, objects, signs, flags, settings, gestures and language used in drama to represent issues and themes and to help establish atmosphere, which together create **DRAMATIC MEANING** and – **AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT**.

Use your senses!

Evocative words engage the senses, capture feeling or experience and are positive and negative emotional words.

If the word evocative means to bring to mind, then using evocative language involves seeing, hearing and experiencing. Always imagine that the person reading your work cannot see.

Evocative language uses words to bring about an image in the mind of the reader.

Your description of drama should make the reader feel they are present in the workshop or theatre in the exact moment you were. Describe a sensation. Describe the intensity of a feeling or experience. Give examples of some emotional words.

Complete the following:

- The tension was ...
- The rhythm was ...
- The actor's movement was ...
- The actor/audience relationship was ...

- The sound of the Chorus was ...
- The scenery was ...
- The hopeful themes ...
- The play's structure ...
- The characters spoke ...

The Elements of Drama

1. The Human Context: Roles, Relationship, Situation and Tension

Roles:

The role the character plays and how it serves the play as a whole.

Describe the characters, their beliefs, attitudes, ideas, what motivates or challenges them.

What is their objective in the play? How does their status influence their behavior?

Relationships:

Relationships between characters and environment:

1. Discuss in small groups or as a whole class how the characters relate.
2. Discuss why characters feel and act the way they do. Every significant relationship should be addressed.
3. How does the character relate to their environment? - How does this give you insight into the characters?

Situation:

Choose a character from the text. What Situation is the character in? How does this situation determine the focus? Give a detailed response with strong evidence from the text.

Tension:

There are the four tensions: Task. Mystery. Surprise. Relationship.

- Dramatic Tension is caused when there is a task, desire (objective) that one character wants and Obstacles are in the way of them achieving it.
- Dramatic tension is resolved by achieving the victory (or completing the task.)
- There are four major ways of creating and intensifying drama:
 - a) The tension of the task
 - b) The tension of relationships
 - c) The tension of surprise
 - d) The tension of mystery

a) The problem of the task, which the characters must complete, creates the **tension of the task** and is resolved by – completing the task, achieving the goal or losing.

b) The problem of relationships between the characters creates the **tension of relationships** resolved by managing the relationships, someone may change, and someone may leave.

c) The problem of the characters not knowing what's ahead creates the **tension of surprise** resolved by circumstances unfolding.

d) The problem of the characters not knowing what it all means creates the **tension of mystery** resolved by the action moving forward and everything becoming clear.

1. **Discuss** the ways in which the four tensions are utilised to create overall dramatic tension in Stolen.
2. **Refer to the text:** Ruby's Descent into Madness on P.24. Rehearse a movement sequence as Authority Figures with Ruby, which builds both physically and vocally to increase Dramatic tension.
4. **Refer to the text on P.36.** The actors line up across the stage, break out of their roles and talk in turn about their own experiences.
5. **What** dramatic tension is created with this device? Do you think it is an effective dramatic device to use as a final moment for the play?

2. Focus: Focus directs attention to what is most significant and intensifies the dramatic meaning. There are four related areas of focus:

- The focus of the scene
- The focus of the audience
- The focus of the character
- The focus of the actor

- a) The Focus of the Scene: In small groups, choose a sequence of scenes and determine the focus or the significant moment of each scene.
- b) The Focus Of The Audience: Choose a sequence of Scenes. If you were to direct the attention of the audience, what or who would you focus on and how would you achieve this?
- c) The Focus Of The Character: To whom or what is the character directing their attention?

- d) The Focus Of The Actor: Refer to the text: Discuss Jimmy's use of focus on P.32 Racist Insults.
- Define the various modes of focus that must be used to execute this scene.
 - Discuss the ways in which actors sustain their internal concentration and belief in role.
 - Refer to the text on P.25. Improvise a scene which occurs before the dialogue begins at the bus stop.
 - Debrief by discussing how you created and maintained the focus of the scene, directing the attention of an imagined audience, the characters and within the actor.

3. Dramatic Imagery: Dramatic Imagery is the combining of elements such as words, sounds, movement and music in order to create a particular feeling or mood in the piece.

- Describe the language in Stolen. Is it naturalistic or stylistic?
- How is the story expressed?
- How does the piece express movement ideas?
- Is this important in the story of Stolen? Why?
- Go through the part of the story you believe most important or significant for one of the characters.
- Choose the most important words and write a list.
- Go through the same part of the story and pick out any images that are present.
- What piece of music would work well with the mood of the sequence you have chosen?
- Read Sandy's 'Story of the Mungee' (P.10). Why does Sandy tell the story at this point in the play? What images are created and what is his message?

4. Proxemics: Location & Settings

The Use of Space:

- The space and spatial design is manipulated to visually communicate relationships between characters and their environment.
- What are the different locations the story uses?
- Comment on the polarised use of space: The moments where characters are isolated versus the moments where a sense of community spirit is introduced.

Period: (time of day, season, year)

- Does this affect the play? If so, how?
- Discuss how to stage each of these examples to create a clear picture of the place and time the writer is trying to depict.
- Refer to the text on P.30. Discuss the use of time in relation to the twenty six presents NANCY takes from out of the box and how this affects the next moment when she dies.
- Refer to the use of time used on P.31 when SANDY revisits the children's home as it transforms into an apartment building. What echoes remains from the first time he was bought here and what effect does his visit engender in the audience?

Pace & Tempo:

- Different characters have different tempo's. The manipulation of timing through pace and tempo will determine the dramatic effect of the production.
- When the pace of the story change? How does this affect dramatic tension? Report ideas back to the class.

5. Mood, Symbols and Atmosphere: Mood and atmosphere is created by the combination of the human context, the space, time, language, movement and production values of the piece (e.g, Lights, Sound, Costumes and Music). They are used in drama to represent issues and themes and to establish atmosphere.

Symbols are objects used as signs, which have specific significance and meaning. What do the following represent?

- The beds
- Suitcases
- Shirley's knitting
- The filing cabinet
- The Broom
- Pillows
- Why is Jimmy's bed turned around?

- a) **Refer to the text on P.6.** ANNE'S WHITE PARENTS are represented by shadows falling on a Venetian blind or white sheets. Her PARENTS and ANNE speak in turn but do not hear what the other is saying.

- b) Discuss these two theatrical directives from the playwright. What is the message from the playwright here and what effect do you think they each would have on an audience?
- c) Read how the pillow is used on P12. What is the double meaning of the pillow in this context?
- d) Discover what the filing cabinet meant in the life of Ruth Hegarty, author of 'Is that you Ruthie?'

Check the web:

http://www.australianworkersheritagecentre.com.au/10_pdf/hegarty.pdf

- e) **Why** are Symbols and Mood so important to the story of Stolen?
- f) **Why** has the playwright projected the Letter from Jimmy's Mother onto his face during the scene where he is being beaten? (P12).
- g) Use evocative language to describe the effect of the bells. (P.20)
- h) Use evocative language to describe the effect Shirley's unraveling knitting has on the audience? (P.19)
- i) Use evocative language to describe how Sandy feels when he thinks about a can of peas. (P.19)
- j) What double meaning does the term 'past it's use by date' (in relation to the can of peas) have?
- k) **Discuss** the use of Rain and how it is used on P4 in relation to tears. What is the effect of the rhythm and repetition in this stanza?
- l) Play two different types of music of differing moods. Discuss as a class what part of the story you would set to each piece.
- m) **What** are your impressions of the song, 'Happy Little Vegemite?'
- n) **Discuss** the symbolism in the song and what 'Vegemite' represents as an Australian brand.
- o) **What** do you understand by the term 'Satire' in relation to the Happy Little vegemite' song.
- p) **Discuss** how the jovial tone of the song is used to create dramatic effect when juxtaposed with the loneliness and actuality of Ruby's experience.
- q) **Brainstorm** how you would use each element of drama to create mood. Consider Lighting effects, sound effects, proxemics and so on.

6. Performance styles:

A variety of performance styles are used to create dramatic meaning in Stolen.

- a) **Describe** the various styles and what effect they have on creating engagement with the audience.

Include the use of:

- Chorus
- Characterisation (as children / then adults)
- Monologues

- Naturalism –
- Autobiographical accounts from the actors

b) **Refer to text P.21:** What effect do the voices as Shirley’s Chorus have when looking for Lionel?