MODULE 7
CULTURAL ADAPTATION
SYNOPSIS

The Cultural Competence Program (CCP) and the Cultural Atlas

The Cultural Competence Program (CCP) is an online training course aimed at building capability around cultural diversity in the workplace. It features engaging multimedia learning modules and a wealth of resources.

The CCP builds capability around cultural diversity. It helps Australian organisations navigate and maximise the benefits of cultural diversity in the workplace. The CCP for individuals is available as an app for tablets and mobile devices. The program builds capability around cultural diversity, and participants will gain practical skills and cultural specific knowledge for use both at work and in everyday life.

Topics covered include:
• Diversity Works – the business case for investing in diversity
• Cultural Differences and Similarities
• Core Inclusion Skills
• Unconscious Bias
• Cross-cultural Communication (two modules)
• Cultural Adaptation
• Australia by the Numbers

The CCP provides a solid foundation in understanding what culture, diversity, inclusion and cultural competence mean. While it is primarily aimed at building capability around cultural diversity in the workplace, secondary school students will benefit from undertaking the course in terms of increasing their own understanding of cultural diversity in Australia.

The CCP explores topics including cross-cultural communication, addressing stereotypes, unconscious bias, diversity and the benefits of multiculturalism in the workplace. There are over sixty animations and films, including real people telling real stories. Also included are fun, interactive activities, plus options for further reading.

Working alongside the CCP, the Cultural Atlas is a supplementary resource designed to inform and educate in relation to cross-cultural attitudes, practices, norms, behaviours and communications.

The Cultural Atlas is a large-scale online resource providing information about a range of cultures in Australia including:
• Core Concepts – cultural values
• Etiquette, Do’s and Do Not’s
• Greetings and Communication
• Religion
• Demographic Statistics
• Business Culture

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LEARNING OUTCOMES AND BENEFITS FOR SCHOOLS

The Cultural Competence Program (CCP) and the Cultural Atlas

There are eight modules (and one summary module) within the CCP. The activities in these guides are tailored to work with each specific module. Teachers may work through the modules in sequential order, or choose to work with modules that best suit their curriculum needs.

The Australian National Curriculum has been used as a guide for the basis of these activities. Teachers are advised to select and adapt the activities to suit the student age and stage of their class, and the curriculum foci and outcomes used in specific schools. The activities are also suitable for use in pastoral care and student wellbeing programs.

The CCP and Cultural Atlas can be used in relation to the following subject areas of the Australian National Curriculum:

- Years 7–10 Civics and Citizenship
- Years 7–10 English
- Years 7–10 Health and Physical Education
- Years 7–10 Media Arts
- Year 10 History

In addition, the CCP and Cultural Atlas relate to the following General Capabilities within the Australian National Curriculum:

- Personality and Social Capability
- Ethical Understanding
- Intercultural Understanding

The seven study guides associated with the CCP and Cultural Atlas are:

- DIVERSITY WORKS
- CULTURAL DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES
- CORE INCLUSION SKILLS
- UNCONSCIOUS BIAS
- CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION
- CULTURAL ADAPTATION
- AUSTRALIA BY THE NUMBERS

CONCEPTS COVERED IN THE ‘CULTURAL ADAPTATION’ GUIDE:

- Stages of cultural adaptation
- Impact on management

Upon completion of the Cultural Adaptation module and related activities in this study guide, students will be able to:

- Define the different stages of cultural adaptation.
- Illustrate how culture shock can be expressed in various ways.
- Describe the concept of ‘reverse culture shock’.
- Understand how the different stages of cultural adaptation may impact a person at work.
- Identify measures to facilitate a smooth transition through the stages of cultural adaptation.

ACCOMPANYING VIDEOS

The following videos accompany this study guide, and can be accessed at <https://theeducationshop.com.au/cultural-competence-program/>:

- First Impression – Interviewees recount some first-hand experiences of moving to Australia.
- Culture Shock – This video explains the terms ‘cultural adaptation’ and ‘culture shock’. It explores the different instances when culture shock can occur, and how it can affect people.
- Everything is Different – People who have moved to Australia describe their expectations, and some of the differences they experienced.
- Adaptation Theory – An explanation of the five stages people go through on their personal journey to cultural adaptation, and the various factors that can affect this journey.
- Adapting – Some real life accounts of adaptation theory.
- Reverse Culture Shock – An interesting, first-hand account of ‘reverse culture shock’.
- Managing Adaptation – This video discusses the importance of being able to recognise if a person (including yourself) is experiencing culture shock.
CURRICULUM LINKS RELATED TO ‘CULTURAL ADAPTATION’

Civics and Citizenship

YEAR 7
Citizenship, diversity and identity
- How Australia is a secular nation and a multi-faith society with a Christian heritage (ACHCK051 – Scootle)
- How values, including freedom, respect, inclusion, civility, responsibility, compassion, equality and a ‘fair go’, can promote cohesion within Australian society (ACHCK052 – Scootle)
- How groups, such as religious and cultural groups, express their particular identities; and how this influences their perceptions of others and vice versa (ACHCK053 – Scootle)

YEAR 8
Citizenship, diversity and identity
- The values and beliefs of religions practised in contemporary Australia, including Christianity (ACHCK065 – Scootle)
- Different perspectives about Australia’s national identity, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, and what it means to be Australian (ACHCK066 – Scootle)
- How national identity can shape a sense of belonging in Australia’s multicultural society (ACHCK067 – Scootle)

YEAR 9
Citizenship, diversity and identity
- The influence of a range of media, including social media, in shaping identities and attitudes to diversity (ACHCK080 – Scootle)
- How ideas about and experiences of Australian identity are influenced by global connectedness and mobility (ACHCK081 – Scootle)

YEAR 10
Civics and Citizenship Knowledge and Understanding
- The challenges to and ways of sustaining a resilient democracy and cohesive society (ACHCK094 – Scootle)

English

YEAR 7
Language: Language variation and change
- Understand the way language evolves to reflect a changing world, particularly in response to the use of new technology for presenting texts and communicating (ACELA1528 – Scootle)

Language: Language for interaction
- Understand how accents, styles of speech and idioms express and create personal and social identities (ACELA1529 – Scootle)

Literature: Literature and context
- Identify and explore ideas and viewpoints about events, issues and characters represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts (ACELT1619 – Scootle)

Literature: Responding to literature
- Reflect on ideas and opinions about characters, settings and events in literary texts, identifying areas of agreement and difference with others and justifying a point of view (ACELT1620 – Scootle)

Literacy: Interpreting, analysing and evaluating
- Analyse and explain the ways text structures and language features shape meaning and vary according to audience and purpose (ACELY1721 – Scootle)
- Use comprehension strategies to interpret, analyse and synthesise ideas and information, critiquing ideas and issues from a variety of textual sources (ACELY1723 – Scootle)

Literacy: Creating texts
- Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, selecting aspects of subject matter and particular language, visual, and audio features to convey information and ideas (ACELY1725 – Scootle)

YEAR 8
Language: Language for interaction
- Understand how conventions of speech adopted by communities influence the identities of people in those communities (ACELA1541 – Scootle)

Literature: Literature and context
- Explore the ways that ideas and viewpoints in literary texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts may reflect or challenge the values of individuals and groups (ACELT1626 – Scootle)

Literature: Responding to literature
- Understand and explain how combinations of words and images in texts are used to represent particular groups in society, and how texts position readers in relation to those groups (ACELT1628 – Scootle)
- Recognise and explain differing viewpoints about the world, cultures, individual people and concerns represented in texts (ACELT1807 – Scootle)

Literacy: Interacting with others
- Plan, rehearse and deliver presentations, selecting and sequencing appropriate content, including multimodal elements, to reflect a diversity of viewpoints (ACELY1731 – Scootle)

Literacy: Creating texts
- Create imaginative, informative and persuasive texts that raise issues, report events and advance opinions, using deliberate language and textual choices, and including digital elements as appropriate (ACELY1736 – Scootle)

YEAR 9
Language: Language for interaction
- Understand that roles and relationships are developed and challenged through language and interpersonal skills (ACELA1551 – Scootle)

Literature: Literature and context
- Interpret and compare how representations of people and
culture in literary texts are drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts (ACELT1633 – Scootle)

Literacy: Texts in Context
• Analyse how the construction and interpretation of texts, including media texts, can be influenced by cultural perspectives and other texts (ACELY1739 – Scootel)

Literacy: Interpreting, analysing and evaluating
• Interpret, analyse and evaluate how different perspectives of issue, event, situation, individuals or groups are constructed to serve specific purposes in texts (ACELY1742 – Scoote)

Literacy: Creating texts
• Create imaginative, informative and persuasive texts that present a point of view and advance or illustrate arguments, including texts that integrate visual, print and/or audio features (ACELY1746 – Scootel)

YEAR 10
Language: Language for interaction
• Understand how language use can have inclusive and exclusive social effects, and can empower or disempower people (ACELA1564 – Scoote)

Literature: Literature and context
• Compare and evaluate a range of representations of individuals and groups in different historical, social and cultural contexts (ACELT1639 – Scoote)

Literature: Responding to literature
• Reflect on, extend, endorse or refute others’ interpretations of and responses to literature (ACELT1640 – Scoote)
• Evaluate the social, moral and ethical positions represented in texts (ACELT1812 – Scoote)

Literature: Creating literature
• Create literary texts that reflect an emerging sense of personal style and evaluate the effectiveness of these texts (ACELT1814 – Scoote)
• Create imaginative texts that make relevant thematic and intertextual connections with other texts (ACELY1644 – Scoote)

Literacy: Interpreting, analysing and evaluating
• Identify and analyse implicit or explicit values, beliefs and assumptions in texts and how these are influenced by purposes and likely audiences (ACELY1752 – Scoote)
• Use comprehension strategies to compare and contrast information within and between texts, identifying and analysing embedded perspectives, and evaluating supporting evidence (ACELY1754 – Scoote)

Literacy: Creating texts
• Create sustained texts, including texts that combine specific digital or media content, for imaginative, informative, or persuasive purposes that reflect upon challenging and complex issues (ACELY1756 – Scoote)

Health and Physical Education

YEARS 7 AND 8
Personal, Social and Community Health
• Investigate the impact of transition and change on identities (ACPPS070 – Scoote)
• Evaluate strategies to manage personal, physical and social changes that occur as they grow older (ACPPS071 – Scoote)
• Investigate and select strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing (ACPPS073 – Scoote)
• Investigate the benefits of relationships and examine their impact on their own and others’ health and wellbeing (ACPPS074 – Scoote)
• Analyse factors that influence emotions, and develop strategies to demonstrate empathy and sensitivity (ACPPS075 – Scoote)
• Plan and use health practices, behaviours and resources to enhance health, safety and wellbeing of their communities (ACPPS077 – Scoote)
• Investigate the benefits to individuals and communities of valuing diversity and promoting inclusivity (ACPPS079 – Scoote)

YEARS 9 AND 10
Personal, Social and Community Health
• Evaluate factors that shape identities and critically analyse how individuals impact the identities of others (ACPPS089 – Scoote)
• Investigate how empathy and ethical decision making contribute to respectful relationships (ACPPS093 – Scoote)
• Plan, implement and critique strategies to enhance health, safety and wellbeing of their communities (ACPPS096 – Scoote)
• Plan and evaluate new and creative interventions that promote their own and others’ connection to community and natural and built environments (ACPPS097 – Scoote)
• Critique behaviours and contextual factors that influence health and wellbeing of diverse communities (ACPPS098 – Scoote)

Media Arts

YEARS 7 AND 8
• Experiment with the organisation of ideas to structure stories through media conventions and genres to create points of view in images, sounds and text (ACAMAM066 – Scoote)
• Develop media representations to show familiar or shared social and cultural values and beliefs, including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (ACAMAM067 – Scoote)
• Develop and refine media production skills to shape the technical and symbolic elements of images, sounds and text for a specific purpose and meaning (ACAMAM068 – Scoote)
• Plan, structure and design media artworks that engage audiences (ACAMAM069 – Scoote)
• Present media artworks for different community and institutional contexts with consideration of ethical and regulatory issues (ACAMAM070 – Scoote)

YEARS 9 AND 10
• Analyse a range of media artworks from contemporary and past times to explore differing viewpoints and enrich their media arts making, starting with Australian media artworks, including media artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and international media artworks (ACAMAR079 – Scoote)
• Produce and distribute media artworks for a range of community and institutional contexts and consider social, ethical and regulatory issues (ACAMAM077 – Scoote)
PREPARATORY ACTIVITY

Teachers are advised to conduct the following preparatory activity before engaging with the CCP and the Cultural Atlas. Talking about cultural diversity, bias, discrimination, the importance of inclusivity and related ideas requires maturity and understanding of others. While the CCP and activities contained in this study guide clearly aim to increase students’ awareness of the importance of inclusion in a culturally diverse society, certain discussions may cause existing biases and stereotypes to surface.

With this in mind, it is extremely important to spend time creating a safe and inclusive classroom environment.

Suggested activity to help establish this:

ACTIVITY

Establishing Class Ground Rules

The aim is to establish a classroom environment that encourages openness, positive behaviour and expected standards of interaction with other class members.

Teachers are to lead a discussion that invites students to develop a series of Class Ground Rules. Ideas to include:

1. **Respect Others:** You may hear ideas and opinions that may differ from your own. Try and take in new information without judgement and keep an open mind. Be mindful of your words and body language and ensure these reflect a respectful attitude. Learn by listening to others.

2. **Own Your Own Values:** Speak personally (e.g. ‘I feel…’ or ‘In my experience…’). Avoid overtly negative, accusatory or generalised statements when interacting with others in your class. If you disagree with a class member, remember to challenge their opinion not the person.

3. **Be Open and Honest:** All students have the right to ask questions without fear of judgement. It is important that everyone be given the opportunity to learn as much as possible. If you are not confident in asking a question in front of the class, make sure you approach your teacher personally.

4. **Respect and Confidentiality:** Everything said in the classroom stays in the classroom. When sharing personal anecdotes, avoid using real names and carefully consider what personal information you chose to share with the class.

5. **Share ‘Air Time’:** Every student is encouraged to express their ideas and opinions. Allow others to share and don’t monopolise discussion. You are not obligated to speak; it is fine to say ‘pass’.

Once the class has established their Ground Rules together, teachers should formalise these and display/make copies available to all students. These can be referred to during your engagement with the CCP and the Cultural Atlas.

First Impression:

As a class, view the ‘First Impression’ clip and use the following table to summarise the responses the interviewees share about their first impressions of arriving as an immigrant to Australia.

- What are the major themes running through the interviewee’s first impressions of Australia? What are the similarities and differences?
-Were you, or other classmates/people you know, new arrivals to Australia? Share and discuss first impressions from these anecdotes.
Focus on ‘culture shock’

As a class, brainstorm the term ‘culture shock.’ Share stories of any personal experiences you’ve had with this concept.

Changing cultures can affect you in a range of ways, both big and small. As a class, view the ‘Culture Shock’ clip and answer the following questions:

1. The clip asks you to reflect on a time where you’ve changed school, home, suburb, city or country. Have you ever experienced such change? Reflect on this experience and discuss as a class.

2. How do you think the experience of being new somewhere is amplified by not being able to speak the language?

3. What does ‘cultural adaptation’ refer to, and what is it sometimes called?

4. What aspects of our emotions and behaviours can be affected by ‘culture shock’? Give examples.

5. How can an understanding of ‘culture shock’ help build cultural competency?

As a class, view the ‘Everything is Different’ clip and use the table below to summarise the responses the interviewees share about their experiences as migrants in Australia.

- What are the major themes running through the interviewees’ experiences of being a newly arrived migrant in Australia?
- Were you, or other classmates/people you know, new arrivals to Australia? Share and discuss migrant experiences.
  - Why do you think this clip is entitled ‘Everything Is Different’? Do you think this is an apt description of finding yourself in a new country/culture?
  - Why do you think it’s important for migrants to be able to share their experiences with others (both from within their culture and across cultures)?

Most major cities around Australia have clubs, societies or organisations specific to a certain country or culture. These provide a range of services for people from that culture, helping them connect with other members from their culture as well as settling into life in their new country.

**Working in pairs, select a country/culture different from your own and research a club, society or organisation in your capital city specifically related to members of that culture.**

- Where is it located?
- When was it formed?
- What services does it provide for members?
- Share and compare with other class members, noting key similarities and differences in the organisations you’ve researched.
Focus on ‘adaptation theory’

As a class, brainstorm the term ‘adaptation’. Consider with direct reference to the experiences of people who have immigrated.

While most people will go through similar stages in their journey to adaptation, the intensity and timing varies substantially from individual to individual and from group to group, depending on a large range of factors.

As a class, view the ‘Adaptation Theory’ clip and answer the following questions:

1. The clip explores some of the factors that can impact the experience of adaptation for someone living in a new culture. Take notes about these in the table above.
2. While the intensity of the experience will vary for every individual, many people will go through similar stages on their journey to cultural adaptation. Pierre Casse describes five stages which people go through in adapting to their new surrounds. Take notes on each of these stages in the table below.
   • Which cultural adaptation stage do you think would be the most challenging and why? Share and discuss answers as a class.
   • Why do you think the stages of cultural adaptation can be represented in simple terms using the shape similar to a ‘U’ as the visual model? Plot the five stages on the ‘U’ shape and discuss.
   • Working in pairs, devise and present a role-play of an immigrant who is experiencing one of the key stages of cultural adaptation. Present to the class and have students guess which stage you are exploring. Remember your commitment to the ground rule of respect and avoid stereotypical or prejudiced portrayals in this exercise.
   • Consider each of the five stages of cultural adaptation and write a reflection on the ways that a person experiencing each stage could be assisted in their process. Share and discuss as a class.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features of the Adaptation Stage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Honeymoon</td>
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<td>2. Disorientation</td>
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<td>3. Re-integration</td>
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<td>4. Autonomy</td>
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<td>5. Independence</td>
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<th>Impact on the Adaptation Experience</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reasons for the move</td>
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<tr>
<td>Differences/similarities of the new culture to the old</td>
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<td>Friends or family in the new culture</td>
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<td>Level of overall support in the new culture</td>
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<td>Resilience of the individual and attitude towards the process of adaptation</td>
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</table>
Focus on ‘adapting’

Adapting to a culture and overcoming culture shock takes time. As a class, view the ‘Adapting’ clip and take notes about the interviewees’ experiences of adapting to life in Australia:

• In what ways were the interviewees’ experiences of adapting to life in Australia similar and in what ways were they different?

### EXPERIENCE OF ADAPTING TO LIFE IN AUSTRALIA

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<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linh Dao</td>
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<td>Xavier Villagonzalo</td>
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<td>Arfa Noor</td>
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<td>James Yu</td>
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Moving back to your home country means experiencing reverse culture shock as you re-adapt to your culture of origin. It can also be experienced by people who stayed outside their home country for a shorter period of time, e.g. exchange students. Before returning to their culture of origin, people usually expect themselves to return to their everyday lives. They often do not anticipate what has changed and have an idealised view of their home. You can often feel like a foreigner at home.

As a class, view the ‘Reverse Culture Shock’ clip and answer the following questions:

1. What were the differences in Arfa’s expectations when she came to Australia versus when she returned to Pakistan and how did this impact her experience?
2. How had her four years in Australia altered some of her behaviours and how did this translate back to life in Pakistan?
3. The University of Newcastle has published a guide on reverse culture shock called “Going Home – A guide for international students returning to their home countries”. Working in pairs, read the advice and information contained in this guide. [https://www.newcastle.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/44284/GoingHome_A-guide-for-returning-students.pdf] Discuss the following:
   • The guide covers a range of common unexpected situations and expectations that the returnee may not have considered upon arriving back in their home culture. Which of these do you find most interesting and why?
   • The guide talks about common features of ‘returning home stress’. What are some of these? How does the guide suggest the overall experience of ‘reverse culture shock’ is best managed?
   • Why do you think an awareness of ‘reverse culture shock’ is an important aspect of cultural competence?

Ms. Jazmin

Managing Adaptation

It is clear from this module that culture shock can have a profound effect on people. Understanding at what stage an individual is – or may be at – in their process of cultural adaptation will help you better deal with the people experiencing culture shock.

As a class, view the ‘Managing Adaptation’ clip and answer the following questions:

1. The clip mentions some of the negative emotions and reactions that a person experiencing culture shock can have. What are some of these, and how do you think these could impact a person’s ability to focus at work or at school?
2. Write a reflection on the ways that you think a person can best assist someone experiencing culture shock and going through the process of cultural adaptation. Tie in the knowledge and ideas you have gained from this module in your response.
The correct answers are:

- Independence - The final stage of cultural adaptation
- Autonomy (Cultural adjustment and integration) - Starting to understand the new culture and how to deal with the differences
- Re-integrating - Becoming part of the new culture & beginning to value differences and similarities
- Disintegration/Disorientation (Culture shock) - Starting to understand the new culture and how to deal with the differences
- Honeymoon - Feeling homesick and missing your own culture

Final note for this module: remember there is more than one way through the phases of cultural adaptation. It is a personal journey and at any time, a person might feel homesick. Understanding where you or your friends / fellow students / people you meet are in the process is an important feature of cultural competency. It is also important to understand that some people need different levels of support.

Cultural Adaptation Quiz

The Cultural Adaptation module ends with the ‘Cultural Adaptation Quiz’, which requires participants to select and match the cultural adaptation processes with their description.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Adaptation Processes</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>The final stage of cultural adaptation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy (Cultural adjustment and integration)</td>
<td>Becoming part of the new culture &amp; beginning to value differences and similarities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-integrating</td>
<td>Finding the new culture exciting and intriguing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disintegration/Disorientation (Culture shock)</td>
<td>Starting to understand the new culture and how to deal with the differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honeymoon</td>
<td>Feeling homesick and missing your own culture</td>
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The correct answers are:
First Impression Reflections

Working in small groups, students are to make their own ‘First Impression’ documentary clips, similar to the one contained in this module.

- Decide on three to four people who would be suitable (and willing) to be interviewed for this clip.
- Write your questions (aim for five to ten) regarding their experience of arriving in Australia and their reactions to their new country.
- Conduct and record your interviews.
- Edit and apply any post-production techniques.
- View as a class.

What’s Your Story?

The Immigration Museum of Victoria has a popular permanent display entitled ‘What’s Your Story?’, where immigrants to Australia present their arrival story/background via a suitcase containing five personal items.

- Visit the Immigration Museum of Victoria’s site and read the five stories from newly arrived immigrants: <https://museumsvictoria.com.au/learning/whats-your-story/>
- Discuss the stories and the individuals’ objects as a class. Which stories/objects most resonated with you and why?
- Visit the ‘Making History’ <https://museumsvictoria.com.au/learning/making-history/> page at the museum. This provides resources that help students investigate and create a short digital history of a migrant’s story. Students are to undertake the following steps in creating their own digital history for someone they know who has an arrival story.
- Choose your theme. You may, for example, ask the interviewee to tell their arrival story through five objects or you may choose to focus specifically on their experience of cultural adaptation and how they experienced each stage.
- Research. Remember it is vital that you ask open-ended questions and have a curiosity and understanding of the person’s cultural background. The Cultural Atlas is a great resource for this.
- Create a storyboard.
- Film and edit.
- Share as a class.
REFERENCES

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