

LESSON IDEA – YR 10

Big idea

Australia has 2 distinct First Nations Peoples; each encompasses a diversity of nations across Australia. Aboriginal Peoples are the first peoples of Australia and have occupied the Australian continent for more than 60,000 years. Torres Strait Islander Peoples are the First Nations Peoples of the Torres Strait and have occupied the region for over 4,000 years. (People A_TSIP1)

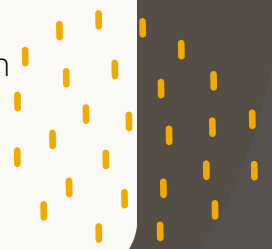
Application

using the concept of Indigenous data sovereignty to critique and evaluate the Australian Government's "Closing the Gap" report



AC9M10ST01

analyse claims, inferences and conclusions of statistical reports in the media, including ethical considerations and identification of potential sources of bias



Connection

Data is consistently collected by non-Indigenous Australians and used to report on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' outcomes in relation to health, education and employment, which is often compared to non-Indigenous Australians in a deficit model.

Indigenous data sovereignty is the right of Indigenous peoples to control, maintain and use data that relates to them and their communities.

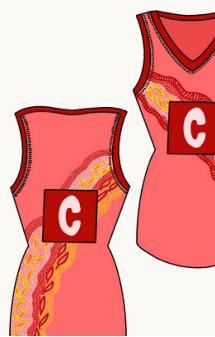
Lesson ideas

- Read the extract from the 2020 report and evaluate the extent to which Indigenous data sovereignty is reflected
- Research the term BADDR and discuss how Closing the Gap reports align/contrast with BADDR data
- Choose one of the 17 targets, analyse what the data shows and identify how that information could be used to show bias:

<https://www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement/targets>

- Watch this video on the Indigenous data paradox:

<https://aiatsis.gov.au/publication/116530>. (scroll to 2nd video)



BACKGROUND

Data sovereignty

In Australia, Indigenous data refers to information or knowledge, in any format or medium, which is about, or may affect, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, collectively or individually.

Indigenous data sovereignty is the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, communities and organisations to maintain, control, protect, develop, and use data as it relates to them. Indigenous Data Sovereignty describes how the rights of Indigenous Peoples, their experiences, values and understanding are developed and reflected in any data and information gathered about them, their communities and their knowledges.

Indigenous Data Sovereignty is practised through Indigenous data governance.

Governance

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities, have the right to govern, retain control over, and manage the collection, usage, and application of data for their purposes and to use it in ways that align with their self-determined priorities, aspirations and practices.

Strong governance ensures that data collection:

- supports the priorities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, communities or organisations
- implements agreed standards for quality control
- helps ensure data is available in a timely way

Why is it important?

In the past, research has too often been done 'on' Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities.

Instead, this should be done 'for' or 'by' Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities, which can be achieved when research projects:

- are led by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander experts
- the team includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers
- the data that is collected reflects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander values and frameworks, such as cultural determinants of health

BACKGROUND

Data protocols

Research teams should consider the processes they use to collect, analyse and report on data in a culturally safe way, which reflect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing . This includes:

- effectively reporting on and returning data in a way that is respectful of and meaningful to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, communities and organisations
- negotiating what data is shared and how it is shared in a public manner, such as through reports and other publications, and how these recognise the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges.

Indigenous Data Sovereignty requires all researchers, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous, to actively engage with involved Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, communities and organisations to ensure that the reporting of data reflects their priorities, values and cultures.

Data should be treated and managed in these ways:

Be stored securely

Be collected with free, prior, and informed consent, including respect for confidentiality

Be returned in an easily understood and meaningful way

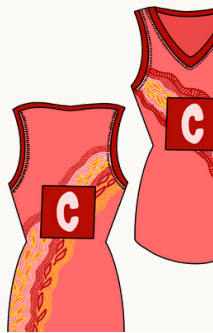
Be accessible, appropriate, and meet Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander needs.

Be used to advance self determination and development

Be interpreted by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experts, ensuring it reflects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lived experiences and perspectives

Only be used how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations agree

Reflect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander interests, values, and priorities, including cultural ways of knowing, being and doing



BACKGROUND

Closing the gap

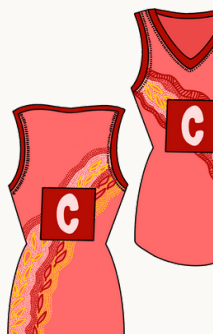
The objective of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (the National Agreement) is to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and governments to work together to overcome the inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and achieve life outcomes equal to all Australians.

For the first time, the National Agreement has been developed in genuine partnership between Australian governments and the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations (the Coalition of Peaks). The expertise and experience of the Coalition of Peaks and its membership have been central to the commitments in this National Agreement. So too has the feedback from the extensive engagements in 2019 with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia.

The views and expertise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including Elders, Traditional Owners and Native Title holders, communities and organisations will continue to provide central guidance to the Coalition of Peaks and Australian governments as the National Agreement is implemented.

17 Targets

- Everyone enjoys long and healthy lives
- Children are born healthy and strong
- Children are engaged in high quality, culturally appropriate early childhood education in their early years
- Children thrive in their early years
- Students achieve their full learning potential
- Students reach their full potential through further education pathways
- Youth are engaged in employment or education
- Strong economic participation and development of people and their communities
- People can secure appropriate, affordable housing that is aligned with their priorities and need
- Adults are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system
- Young people are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system
- Children are not overrepresented in the child protection system
- People enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing
- Families and households are safe
- People maintain a distinctive cultural, spiritual, physical and economic relationship with their land and waters
- Cultures and languages are strong, supported and flourishing
- People have access to information and services enabling participation in informed decision-making regarding their own lives



BACKGROUND

Data example

Socioeconomic outcome area 15 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people maintain a distinctive cultural, spiritual, physical and economic relationship with their land and waters

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aus Gov	Aust
Land area	➔	➔	➔	➔	➔	▨	▨	➔	..	✓
Sea area	▨	➔	➔	➔	➔	▨	..	➔	➔	🌐

➔ improvement ▨ no change ↶ worsening .. not applicable as required data not available.
✓ good improvement and target on track to be met. 🌐 improvement but target not on track to be met.

Extract (2020 report)

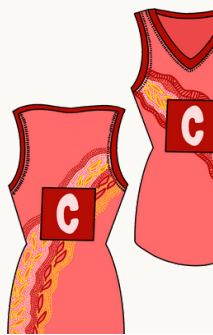
In 2017, the Government began a process to refresh the Closing the Gap agenda. A Special Gathering of prominent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians called for the next phase to deliver a community-led, strengths-based approach. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are at the centre of this new strategy.

Recognising a formal partnership between government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people would achieve greater progress in the future, the Prime Minister sought agreement from the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) to a new way of working.

In 2019, all levels of government and a Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations signed a formal agreement to work in genuine partnership. This means shared accountability and jointly developing an agreed framework and new targets. The Partnership is helping to capture the aspirations and priorities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and communities in the design of policies and programs which impact them.

The significance of this new partnership is reflected in the establishment of the Joint Council on Closing the Gap. This is the first time a COAG Ministerial Council has included non-government representatives.

As governments work in this new way, there is increasing involvement and support for local communities to set their own priorities and tailor services to their unique contexts. The Indigenous-designed and led Empowered Communities initiative, which is reshaping the relationship between Indigenous communities and governments, is just one example. In a commitment to devolving decision-making as close to the ground as possible, community leaders are directly involved in making recommendations to government about how services and funding align with community priorities. Transparency and data sharing informs a 'learn and adapt as you go' approach and underpins local action.



BACKGROUND

Artwork

Artworks have been created by:

- Sheri Skele, a proud Bidjara woman and a contemporary Aboriginal artist who calls her artworks Bigi Nagala, which means 'I am dreaming' in Bidjara
- Cortney Glass, a contemporary digital artist, originally from Katherine, Northern Territory. She is a Dagoman, Wardaman, and Gurindji woman who is now living on Gadigal land (Sydney NSW).

References

- Australian Government, Australia state of the environment (2021). *Indigenous: Information*. <https://soe.dcceew.gov.au/indigenous/pressures/information>
- Australian Government. (2020). *Closing the gap report 2020*. <https://ctgreport.niaa.gov.au/sites/default/files/pdf/closing-the-gap-report-2020.pdf>
- Australian Government. (n.d.). *Closing the Gap targets and outcomes*. <https://www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement/targets>
- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, (2019). *Delivering Indigenous Data Sovereignty*. <https://aiatsis.gov.au/publication/116530>
- Lowitja Institute, (2021). *Indigenous Data Governance and Sovereignty*, https://www.lowitja.org.au/icms_docs/328550_data-governance-and-sovereignty.pdf