



Workbook

Menagerie

CONTEMPORARY INDIGENOUS SCULPTURE

AN OBJECT GALLERY AND AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM EXHIBITION
5 SEPTEMBER TO 15 NOVEMBER 2009



Djirringama (Echidna), 2008

by Penny Milingu Wanapuyngu

pandanus fibre, paperbark, wood and acrylic paint
23 x 25 x 55cm
Courtesy of the artist
Photo: Australian Museum



Echidna, 2006

by Garth Lena

mango, wood and porcelain
38 x 47 x 50cm
Courtesy of the artist
Photo: Australian Museum



Looking

Why do you think Penny finds her materials in her country, rather than purchasing them?

If you were to touch an Echidna, how would it feel?

What materials has Penny used to create the echidna's spikes, beak and legs?

Draw Djirringama [Echidna] and concentrate on showing the pattern and texture.

Looking

Draw the echidna paying special attention to the quills.

What techniques has Garth used to make his echidna?

Which parts of the echidna express ideas about the fragile nature of animals?

Compare Garth's Echidna with others in the exhibition or maybe with a real one.

Discovering

Find out about dying fabric using natural dyes. What plants are used and how is the colour extracted?

Which natural history museum has the echidna as its logo?

Visit the 'Hands-On' room in the Australian Museum or another natural history museum near you and feel the echidna's quills.

Discovering

What can happen to native animals in their natural habitats and in urban environments that threaten their survival?

Read the story of Pugsley the short-beaked echidna that lives at Taronga Zoo.

<http://zoo.nsw.gov.au/taronga-zoo/education/our-education-animals/pugsley.aspx>

Making

Find an activity or craft that you learnt from your family and teach it to someone else.

Make a poster for an exhibition on Australian native animals and use Penny's *Djirringama* [Echidna] as the key image.

Making

Create a ceramic work based on the shape of a natural formation in your environment.

Make a family of echidnas from clay or found materials.

Camp Dogs, group of five, 2008

by Lena Yarinkura

pandanus fibre, wood, ochre, paperbark and feathers
dimensions variable, 104cm
Courtesy of the artist and Maningrida Arts and Culture
Photo: Australian Museum



Hammerhead Shark Headdress, 2009

by Ken Thaiday Snr

mixed media
100 x 85 x 64cm
Courtesy of the artist
Photo: Australian Museum



Looking

Draw one of Lena's dogs using a continuous line. Don't take your pencil off the paper.

Using a view finder draw a section of your favourite dog.

Draw one of the dogs close up and reproduce the texture and pattern in the work.

See if you can tell which dog is which!
Give them names.

How does Lena create a feeling of movement and animation in her work?

How does Lena apply the paint or ochres to her work?

Discovering

Where can you find ochres and how are they used?

Describe the colours or ochre. What do the colours remind you of?

Making

Write a story about your pet or favourite animal. Use your drawings from the exhibition visit to illustrate it.

Create a poem about a naughty dog and use your drawings from the exhibition visit as a starting point.

Compare Lena's dogs with another camp dog from the exhibition by Craig Koomeeta.

Looking

Why is Ken's headdress called a machine?

Draw a section of the headdress.

List the materials used in the headdress.

Look at the colours in this work. How are they different from the colours used in other works in this exhibition?

Discovering

Find out more about *Hammerhead Shark Headdress, 2009* by visiting this fun site from the National Gallery of Australia called *Mystery Object*

http://www.nma.gov.au/kidz/learn_and_play/torres/

Learn more about Ken Thaiday, his art making techniques and ceremonial dancing by visiting the Queensland Art Gallery site.

http://www.visualarts.qld.gov.au/content/thaiday_home.asp?name=Thaiday_Home

Think about traditional dances from other cultures. Does your family come from a culture with a traditional dance? What do the performers or dancers wear? Write a list of instructions for the dance so others can join in.

Making

Create a headdress from found objects or natural materials. The headdress could be based on an animal or be suitable for a particular event.

Sgraffito Owl, 2008

by Rahel Kngwarria Ungwanaka

terracotta, white engobe, with incised decoration

33 x 16 x 20cm

Courtesy of the artist, Hermannsburg Potters and Margaret White

Photo: Australian Museum



Jurrukukuni (Owl), group of three, 2008

by Patrick Freddy Puruntatameri

ironwood and ochre

left to right: 55 x 13 x 13cm, 55 x 15 x 15cm and 63 x 16 x 16cm

Courtesy of the artist and Jilamara Arts and Crafts

Photo: Australian Museum



Looking

What do we associate with Owls?

Draw the patterns on Rahel's pot. How do the pot and lid relate to each other?

Sketch *Sgraffito Owl* pot and use shading to make your drawing look three dimensional.

Looking

Copy some of the designs you can see on one of the owls.

What tools do you think Patrick Freddy Puruntatameri used to make his *Jurrukukuni*?

Compare the owls by Rahel and Patrick Freddy. What are the similarities and differences?

Which is your favourite and why?

Discovering

Visit the official Hermannsburg Potters website and look at the pots and processes involved in making them.

How are the pots made? Describe the process.

What other animals are portrayed on the pots?

What scenes have the potters painted on their work?

<http://www.hermannsburgpotters.com.au/main.html>

Discovering

Find out about the Tiwi Islands. Where are they located? What are the two islands that make up the Tiwi Islands?

Look at Tiwi design from Bathurst Island at the following website.

<http://www.tiwidesign.com/>

Discover more about owls at the Australian Museum site.

<http://australianmuseum.net.au/Barn-Owl/>

Making

Create a coil or a pinch pot with a sculpture of an animal on the outside or on the lid.

Create your own pattern based on an owl suitable for a ceramic piece or a fabric print.

Making

Create your own artworks using old combs to achieve similar results to that of a pwata.

Write a story about these three owls. Illustrate with pattern and shapes.

Pondi (Murray River Cod), 2009

by Yvonne Koolmatrie

sedge grass, river rushes

18 x 69 x 121cm

Courtesy of the artist and Aboriginal & Pacific Art

Photo: Australian Museum



Looking Forward, Looking Back, 2009

by Treahna Hamm

mixed media

34 x 13 x 84cm

Courtesy of the artist

Photo: Australian Museum



Looking

Look closely at Yvonne's Murray Cod and describe the technique she used to make it.

Draw the Murray Cod making sure you include the lines created by the weaving technique.

Sketch a close up section of this work to show the 'bundled coil' technique that Yvonne uses.

Looking

What is Treahna trying to tell us about the Murray River in this work?

Why did Treahna title the sculpture *Looking Forward Looking Back*?

How does the poem by Treahna relate to the sculpture?

List the materials used in this work.

Discovering

Flinders University Art Museum held an exhibition about the Murray Cod. Visit this website to see photographs and artworks and read stories about this important fish.

http://www.flinders.edu.au/artmuseum/documents/MC_edkit-lowres.pdf

Watch the movie *Storm Boy* to get an idea of what the Coorong looks like.

Discovering

Research current environmental issues that the Murray/Darling river system faces.

Today, the Murray Cod is on the endangered species list. How could we help the survival of this fish?

Making

Make a ceramic fish platter using the coil technique. Base the shape of the platter on Yvonne's *Murray Cod*.

Making

Make an animal using recycled materials and found objects located in your school.

Create a poster using the sculptures by Yvonne and Treahna to raise awareness of the problems facing the Murray River.

Ngirntaka Ngunytju Palunyalu and Tjitji (mother and baby goannas), 2008

by Jean Burke

Mother 38 x 56 x 144cm, Baby 17 x 28 x 84cm
Courtesy of the artist and Tjanpi Desert Weavers
Photo: Australian Museum



Tinka(Sand Goanna), 2007

by Niningka Lewis

river red gum
57 x 7.5 x 7.5cm
Courtesy of the artist and Maruku Arts
Photo: Australian Museum



Looking

Imagine you were the artist who made this work. How would you have gone about making these goannas?

How has Jean created a feeling of power and strength in her goannas?

Looking

Draw the pattern on Niningka's sand goannas.

Compare the Goannas by Niningka Lewis and Jean Bourke. What parts of the goanna have these artists chosen to concentrate on when representing goannas?

List the things that you have learned about the behavior of goannas by looking at the sculptures by Niningka and Jean

Discovering

How did Indigenous people traditionally collect food? What type of food did the women gather and what animals did the men hunt? What were the traditional tools for hunting and collecting food?

Visit the Tjanpi website and find out about this group of women weavers that Jean belongs to.

<http://www.tjanpi.com.au/>

What is the meaning of the word Tjanpi?

Look at the *Tjanpi Toyota, 2005*. Describe the work and find out which prize this work was awarded.

http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/philanthropy/case_studies/case_study_items/tjanpi_desert_weavers

Discovering

Visit the Australian Museum website and listen to the story told by Aunty Beryl Carmichael

<http://australianmuseum.net.au/movie/koock-ard>

Making

Visit Aboriginal Chef, Mark Olive's website and cook your own bushtucker!

Find an artwork that incorporates a story about native food or bush tucker. Describe the work and write down the story.

Making

Look at closely at your pet at home or view a documentary of an animal. Record some of their different behaviours. Create a series of small drawings or clay sculptures that capture the animal or bird engaged in different activities.

Golden Orb Spider on Web, 2004

by Badger Bates

metal (rusted cast-iron bed ornamentation and springs)
24 x 118 x 113cm
Courtesy of the artist
Photo: Australian Museum



I'm a Widow by Choice, 2008

by Laurie Nilsen

barbed wire, steel and enamel paint
140 x 160 x 50cm
Courtesy of the artist and Fireworks Gallery
Photo: Australian Museum



Looking

Pretend you are the exhibition curator or organiser and write a label for this work.

Draw the work using 'spidery' lines.

What makes this work so unusual and different?

Looking

Why has Laurie called the work *I'm a Widow by Choice*?

Why has he made his sculpture so large? How does this make you feel?

How does the display of the spider add to the mood of the work?

Discovering

Visit the Australian Museum online and look at the section on spiders. Research an aspect of spiders that interests you.

<http://australianmuseum.net.au/spiders>

How do natural history museums display their spider collections? What can you learn about spiders by seeing them in a museum?

Read *The Story of the Falling Star* by Elsie Jones. This book is a retelling and recreation of a very old Paakantji story.

Discovering

Think about fables or stories that have a spider in them. How are they represented?

How do most people react when they see a spider? Why do they react like that?

What is a widow?

Why has Laurie called this work *I'm a Widow by Choice*?

Making

Take photographs or draw some images of spider webs around your school or home.

Making

Compose a poem about a spider and write it in the shape of a web.

Marlu (Kangaroos), pair, 2008

by Johnny Young

Cooper wire and steel

30 x 47 x 96cm and 47 x 23 x 86cm

Courtesy of the artist and Tapatjatjaka Art and Craft Centre

Photo: Australian Museum



Red, White and Blue, 2008

by Danie Mellor

dimensions variable

mixed media

Courtesy of the artist and Caruana and Reid Fine Art

Photo: Australian Museum



Looking

Draw one or more of Johnny Young's sculptures using a continuous line. Use a pencil, biro or coloured pencil.

Imagine what these kangaroos have been doing. Write some dialogue between them.

Compare Johnny's *Marlu* (kangaroos) to Danie Mellor's group of kangaroos.

Looking

Danie Mellor's work is filled with symbols. Can you find them? Look at the colours and materials he uses. What could they mean?

Why has Mellor used the symbols of *see no evil*, *hear no evil* and *speak no evil*?

Discovering

Some of Johnny Young's works are referred to as 'Bush Toys'. Are they really bush toys? Why would they be given that title? Why would young people have made bush toys?

Discuss what makes a toy precious? Is it the materials that they are made from or the memories associated with them?

Discovering

Red, White and Blue resembles a diorama. What is a diorama and where would you find one?

What has replaced the diorama today in many museums?

Look at the short video on Danie Mellor and discover about his ways of working and the different types of materials he uses.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/video/2008/06/23/2282463.htm>

Making

Make your own 'bush' toy using strands of craft wire.

Making

Draw an Australian animal and create a collage using pieces of coloured paper.

Create your own diorama using both found and made objects. Paint or project the background from a computer.

Gubuka (Stingrays), 2008

by Dennis Nona

bronze and aluminium with pearl shell inlay

106 x 88 x 82cm

Courtesy of the artist, Australian Art Print Network and Urban Art Projects

Photo: Australian Museum



Stingrays, group of seven, 2008

by Frewa Bardaluna

pandanus fibre and wood

dimensions variable, longest 146cm

Courtesy of the artist and Maningrida Arts and Culture

Photo: Australian Museum



Looking

Look at *Gubuka (Stingrays)*, 2008. Why has Dennis decided to use metal to portray his stingrays?

Draw the work and explain how Dennis expresses the way stingrays move through the water.

Draw sections of the pattern in detail.

Why do you think that Dennis has joined his stingrays together?

Looking

Draw the stingrays in the exhibition. Have them floating around the page.

How are they displayed? Why have they been displayed this way?

Think of other ways they might be shown.

Compare the stingrays by Dennis Nona with Frewa Bardaluna's. Think about the material, colour, patterns and how movement has been achieved.

Discovering

Find a map of the Torres Strait Islands and locate Badu Island.

What does the map tell you about the way of life of the Torres Strait Islanders?

How do stingrays move?

What do they eat?

Discovering

Look at this website and find works by other artists who use fibre.

<http://www.maningrida.com/>

Making

Make a stingray from cardboard covered in thick aluminium foil and emboss a pattern on it using a spoon handle or chopstick.

Making

Make a stingray from wire and some pantyhose or stockings. Decorate it with paint.

Hella, 2009

by Vicki West

mixed media

55 x 34 x 78cm

Courtesy of the artist

Photo: Australian Museum



Looking

What materials has Vicki used to make this work?

What techniques has she used to construct *Hella*?

Why has Vicki made the devil's snout so red?

Making

Create a multimedia campaign to highlight the plight of the Tasmanian devil.

Discovering

View the film on the following website before visiting the exhibition.

<http://www.tassiedevilappeal.org/tda/landing.php>

What are the problems faced by the Tasmanian devil?

Help the Tassie devil by visiting this site. Organise a collection at your school.

<http://www.tassiedevilappeal.org/tda/landing.php>

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