#

**Multicultural Community Collections**

# Culture Victoria

# Education Kit – *Polish Dancers*

# http://cv.vic.gov.au/stories/immigrants-and-emigrants/migrants-enriching-australia

## Australian Curriculum (ACARA) & Victorian Curriculum (AusVELS)

## History Level 6

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**This education kit was produced in partnership by Culture Victoria & the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria**

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## Curriculum links

This education kit supports the Australian (ACARA) Curriculum and Victorian (AusVELS) Curriculum by providing student activities in the following content areas:

### History Level 6 – Australia as a Nation

The four activities in this education kit align directly with the Level 6 History curriculum in the area of ‘Australia as a Nation’, by using Culture Victoria’s film *Polish Dancers* as a reference point. Each activity addresses key inquiry questions, historical knowledge & understanding and historical skills criteria identified in the table below.

#### Content descriptions: History Level 6

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Curriculum links** | *Activity 1* | *Activity 2* | *Activity 3* | *Activity 4* |
| **Key inquiry questions** |
| Who were the people who came to Australia? Why did they come? |  |  |  |  |
| How did Australian society change throughout the twentieth century? |  |  |  |  |
| **Historical knowledge & understanding** |
| Stories of groups of people who migrated to Australia (including from ONE Asian country) and the reasons they migrated, such as World War II and Australian migration programs since the war. [(ACHHK115)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/curriculum/contentdescription/ACHHK115) |  |  |  |  |
| The contribution of individuals and groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and migrants, to the development of Australian society, for example in areas such as the economy, education, science, the arts, sport. [(ACHHK116)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/curriculum/contentdescription/ACHHK116) |  |  |  |  |
| **Historical skills** |
| *Chronology, terms & concepts* |  |  |  |  |
| *Historical questions & research*  |  |  |  |  |
| *Analysis & use of sources* |  |  |  |  |
| *Perspectives & interpretations* |  |  |  |  |
| *Explanation & communication* |  |  |  |  |

## Teaching notes

This education kit contains classroom activities designed to complement Culture Victoria’s film *Polish Dancers*. It provides four classroom activities that align with the prescribed Australian Curriculum (ACARA) and AusVELS History Level 6 key inquiry questions, by improving student knowledge and understandings of the development of Australia as a nation post-1900. The content also provides opportunities for students to develop understanding of key concepts including sources, continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives, empathy and significance.

The case study for this kit is a film produced by Culture Victoria through interviews with members of Melbourne’s Polish community who emigrated to Australia following World War II. The strong cultural traditions of Polish music and dance that these migrants brought with them led to the establishment of a vibrant performing arts’ school, which operated in Melbourne between 1985 and 2000. This film allows students to hear first-hand accounts of individuals who experienced displacement and were able to revive their cultural traditions in a new setting, contributing to the development of Australia’s socio-cultural identity in the twentieth century.

### Glossary

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Historical inquiry* | Process of investigation undertaken in order to understand the past |
| *Significance* | Importance that is assigned to particular aspects of the past, e.g. events, developments, movements and historical sites |
| *Immigration* | To come to a new country or place of which one is not native |
| *Primary source* | Accounts about the past that were created at the time being investigated |
| *Secondary source* | Accounts about the past that were created after the time being investigated |
| *Alien* | A resident who is born in or belongs to another country who has not acquired citizenship |
| *Society* | A group of people associated together for religious, cultural, scientific, political, patriotic, or other purposes |
| *Community*  | A social group of any size whose members reside in a specific locality, share government, and often have a common cultural and historical background |
| *Culture* | Behaviours and beliefs characteristic of a particular social, ethnic or age group |
| *Multiculturalism* | Policy of maintaining a diversity of ethnic cultures within a community |
| *Heritage* | Something that comes to an individual or group by reason of birth or tradition |
| *Identity* | The sense of self, providing sameness and continuity in personality over time |
| *Displaced*  | Persons who lack a home through political exile, destruction of their previous home, or lack of financial resources |
| *Diversity* | Inclusion of individuals representing more than one national origin, color, religion, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, etc. |

###

### ACARA prescribed teaching standard

#### ‘Above satisfactory’ work in the Level 6 historical discipline:

By the end of Year 6, students identify change and continuity and describe the causes and effects of change on society. They compare the different experiences of people in the past. They explain the significance of an individual and group.

Students sequence events and people (their lifetime) in chronological order, and represent time by creating timelines. When researching, students develop questions to frame an historical inquiry. They identify a range of sources and locate and compare information to answer inquiry questions. They examine sources to identify and describe points of view. Students develop texts, particularly narratives and descriptions. In developing these texts and organising and presenting their information, they use historical terms and concepts and incorporate relevant sources.

<http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au>

### Resources

An extensive list of online resources can be found on the Museum Victoria website that covers all aspects of the activities in this education kit. Specific resources useful for each activity are also provided in the relevant section.

<http://museumvictoria.com.au/discoverycentre/websites-mini/journeys-australia/resources/>

## Introduction

#### For teachers’ use

The Second World War was a global conflict that lasted from 1939 to 1945, but was preceded by a chain of events from as early as the end of World War I that led to the breakout of open warfare. WWII involved the majority of the world’s nations and was the most widespread conflict in human history, with the Allies – France, Poland, Great Britain and the British Commonwealth of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa – opposing aggression by the Axis powers made up of Germany, Italy and Japan. Although the Axis forces were united in their political ambition to gain power, their efforts against the Allies were not coordinated, which meant that the battle was fought on several fronts in parts of the Pacific, Europe and Africa.

The formal surrender of Japan on 2 September 1945 marked the end of WWII and the beginning of recovery for all nations involved.. For six years or more, all of the major participants had directed their entire scientific, industrial and economic capabilities towards the war effort, blurring the line between civilian and military resources. The conflict resulted in an estimated 50 to 85 million fatalities including those systematically killed in the Holocaust, and in addition to the millions of displaced people whose homes and families were lost or disrupted. The United States and Australia, as relatively new lands of opportunity, became the foremost destinations for immigrants fleeing the devastation of Europe.

From the 1890s up until the 1950s a ‘White Australia Policy’ had been the official position of all mainstream Australian political parties, which involved the exclusion of non-European (more specifically, non-British) people from migrating to Australia. At the end of WWII this began to change, as the Chifley Government believed they must increase population levels for defence and development, and initiated an immigration scheme under the slogan “Populate or Perish”. From 1945 Australia looked outside of Britain for migrants for the first time, coming to an arrangement with the International Refugee Organisation (IRO), to settle at least 12,000 refugees each year from European war-camps, including Poland. By 1950, almost 200,000 war refugees had been relocated to Australia.

Post-WWII, the Government of Australia also had formal migration agreements with the United Kingdom and some European countries, such as Malta, Turkey, West Germany, The Netherlands and Italy. These were mostly under assisted migration schemes. Assisted migration significantly subsidized the cost of passage and targeted young, healthy individuals capable of working on arrival, usually on significant public works projects. In 1947 the country’s first migrant camp was opened at Bonegilla, Victoria, to receive and train new Australian immigrants. Approximately 300,000 individuals had spent time at Bonegilla between 1947 up until its closure in 1971.

By the 1970s, a move away from the ‘White Australia Policy’ was even more pronounced, as Australia progressed towards ‘multiculturalism’ under the Whitlam and Fraser Governments, accepting increasingly higher rates of migrants from Asian and other non-European countries. The affect of Australia’s migration policies past and present have undoubtedly shaped where the nation is today, impacting on Australia’s societal development by making it a melting pot of world culture. Migrants experiencing displacement and reviving their cultural traditions in Australia is a process of continuity and change important to maintaining links with their home countries, as well as a distinct cultural identity for themselves and collectively, for the nation.

##

## Activity 1 – Australian Immigration Policy

### Learning outcomes

In addition to Poland, many other nations were involved in WWII and had a high number of war refugees who became migrants. Australian policy targeted specific countries for potential migrants that suited the nation’s ‘needs’ at key points in time, which were linked closely with world events. The Culture Victoria film demonstrates this by communicating the experiences of displaced peoples from Poland after WWII. This activity is designed to provide students with an understanding of the significance of WWII to Australian migration from the mid-twentieth century up until the ‘White Australia Policy’ formally ended in the 1980s.

### Curriculum links

This activity is recommended for ACARA and AusVELS History Level 6

#### Key inquiry questions:

* *Who were the people who came to Australia? Why did they come?*

### Instructions

*Step 1*

Either singularly, in groups or as a class discussion, students will make a list of countries that they think may have had high emigration rates after WWII.

*Step 2*

Students will each select one country listed in *Step 1* and investigate the specific immigration policies of Australia that targeted this nation between 1945 and 1980.

*Step 3*

As a class, students will create a timeline of significant changes in Australian immigration policy and related events between 1945 and 1980 from their research. This may include:

* End of WWII
* Formal migration agreements made with individual nations and the International Refugee Organisation (IRO)
* Opening of the Bonegilla migrant camp
* Policy of the Benjamin Chifley Government
* Policy of the Robert Menzies Government
* Policy of the Gough Whitlam Government
* Policy of the Malcolm Fraser Government

### Resources

<http://www.immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/04fifty.htm>

<http://museumvictoria.com.au/immigrationmuseum/discoverycentre/immigrant-stories/>

<http://museumvictoria.com.au/discoverycentre/websites-mini/immigration-timeline/>

<http://www.bonegilla.org.au>

http://dl.nfsa.gov.au/module/1599/

<http://museumvictoria.com.au/discoverycentre/websites-mini/journeys-australia/1940s60s/>

<http://www.unhcr.org>

<http://museumvictoria.com.au/origins/>

## Activity 2 – Experiencing Migration

### Learning outcomes

A number of key world events directly impacted on Australian immigration policy throughout the twentieth century. Despite the intricacy of worldwide immigration narratives, it is important to recognise that it is the experiences of individual people that make up these common storylines. The Culture Victoria film is an outstanding example of this by concentrating on the story of one person who impacted many. In this activity students will focus on the experiences of individuals who migrated to Australia in the past, in order to understand how different people can bring about change.

### Curriculum links

This activity is recommended for ACARA and AusVELS History Level 6

#### Key inquiry questions:

* *Who were the people who came to Australia? Why did they come?*

### Instructions

*Step 1*

Students will each select two individuals who migrated to Australia in the twentieth century and made an outstanding contribution to Australian society, in areas such as food, performing arts, politics, sport, fashion, science or technology.

*Step 2*

Using a range of sources, students will research the reasons why each individual migrated and provide examples of their significant achievements.

*Step 3*

Students will describe and compare the differing experiences of the two individuals they selected and explain why they were important people in Australian society.

*Step 4*

Students will present their findings to the class as a report, along with a list of resources used.

### Resources

<http://museumvictoria.com.au/immigrationmuseum/discoverycentre/immigrant-stories/>

<http://museumvictoria.com.au/immigrationmuseum/discoverycentre/identity/>

<http://museumvictoria.com.au/discoverycentre/websites-mini/journeys-australia/1940s60s/>

<http://www.unhcr.org>

<http://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/horizons/home>

## Activity 3 – Forming Cultural Identities

### Learning outcomes

As migration policy of the Government of Australia changed throughout the twentieth century, so did the nation’s cultural identity. Australia is almost entirely made up of migrants or the descendants of migrants, contributing to its identity as a ‘multicultural’ society. Culture Victoria’s film is a key example of this by exploring the role of Polish traditional costume and dance in one Australian community. In this activity students will investigate the importance national costume and performing arts can have as a symbolic expression of culture, as well as the rituality involved in traditional costume making by creating their own.

### Curriculum links

This activity is recommended for ACARA and AusVELS History Level 6

#### Key inquiry questions:

* *How did Australian society change throughout the twentieth century?*

### Instructions

*\*Students will remain in groups of 4-5 people throughout this activity*

*Step 1*

In groups, students will discuss and describe the style of national costume they viewed in the Culture Victoria film, by listing the key design elements such as intricate embroidery and loose fitting pants and sleeves. Students should also be encouraged to draw what they saw.

*Step 2*

Students will discuss what roles these dance costumes and performing arts activities were likely to have where they originated in Poland. For example:

* Ceremonial practices
* Celebratory occasions
* Education
* Passing down of tradition
* Recreational activity

*Step 3*

Students will compare the Polish costumes they viewed in the Culture Victoria film with the style of clothing they wear today for events similar to those identified in *Step 2*. For instance, discussing what they would wear to an important family gathering, a concert recital or Christmas party.

*Step 4*

In each group, students will replicate one of the traditional Polish costumes seen in the film. Students may wish to do further research online to obtain more images of traditional Polish clothing.

Costumes can be created out of materials such as newspaper, fabric or recycled goods but should incorporate the key design elements identified in *Step 1*.

*Step 5*

It is encouraged that students participate in a gallery walk to exhibit their final products.

### Resources

<http://www.multiculturalaustralia.edu.au>

<http://museumvictoria.com.au/immigrationmuseum/discoverycentre/identity/>

<http://www.nfsa.afc.gov.au>

## Activity 4 – Creating Cultural Expression

### Learning outcomes

For many communities, the performing arts can be a form of ritual and symbolic expression that continues to change over time. Culture Victoria’s film is an outstanding example of this, as it explores the role of Polish traditional costume and dance in one Australian community. In this activity students will explore the social, cultural and historical context of music as a meaningful expression of tradition, by creating and responding to Polish music independently.

### Curriculum links

This activity is recommended for ACARA and AusVELS History Level 6 & ACARA and AusVELS Music Level 6

#### Key inquiry questions:

* *How did Australian society change throughout the twentieth century?*

### Instructions

*\*It is encouraged that every class in the Year 6 Level participate in this activity*

*Step 1*

As a class, students will create one performance based on their knowledge of traditional Polish dance, costume and music.

*Step 2*

Break class into four groups and allocate each group one task from the following that will contribute to a single class performance:

* Music – compose a piece of music by identifying rhythm, pitch and form in traditional Polish music featured in the film
* Lyrics – compose lyrics to explore meaning and interpretation of culture through lyrics used in traditional Polish music similar to that featured in the film
* Costume – create costumes for class performance by interpreting traditional Polish clothing featured in the film
* Dance – create a dance routine by experiencing and responding to Polish dance movements featured in the film

*Step 3*

Remaining in groups, students will undertake research online to inform their work further.

*Step 4*

Students will rehearse to bring all four components together as a single performance. Each class will take turns performing for the rest of the Year 6 Level.

### Resources

<http://www.multiculturalaustralia.edu.au>

<http://www.thepolishzone.com/national-dances-of-poland>

<http://museumvictoria.com.au/immigrationmuseum/discoverycentre/identity/>

<http://www.nfsa.afc.gov.au>