



*Emu Weaving Story*  
*Online Workshop*  
**Suzanne Connelly**  
**Klidomitis**  
Teacher Resources  
2021

Ideal for Years 3-9

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## ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

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This resource has been created to provide teachers with curriculum links to the Victorian Curriculum, and includes some preliminary and post workshop ideas and activities as to how to extend their experience of *Emu Weaving Story*. The activities are designed to be open-ended and multi-ability. They may need differentiation for your specific cohort.

The performances and workshops included in the Arts & Education program are designed to offer students engaging arts experiences with strong links to the Victorian Curriculum and to VEYLDF, and VCE subjects where appropriate. Each Arts & Education program varies in its purpose and content and as a result the scope for integration across the curriculum varies. Please feel free to contact the Arts & Education team on (03) 9644 1808 or at [education@rav.net.au](mailto:education@rav.net.au),

If you have any questions about this resource, its content or its implementation within your classroom please do not hesitate to contact the Arts & Education Department.

## ABOUT REGIONAL ARTS VICTORIA

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Regional Arts Victoria inspires art across the state. Through creative facilitation, touring, education, specialised resources, artistic projects and advocacy, we develop and sustain creative communities and artistic practice all over Victoria.

Regional Arts Victoria is an independent, not-for-profit, membership-based organisation working in long-term partnerships with every level of government, fostering contemporary and innovative regional cultural practice across five decades. We advise and impact on decision-making across multiple portfolios and levels of government.

Regional Arts Victoria is the peak body for regional artists and arts organisations, and the leading organisation for regional creative practice in Victoria.

### PARTNERSHIPS

Regional Arts Victoria facilitates the partnerships, the organisations and the practices that create new work.

- Regional Cultural Partnerships
- Creative Arts Facilitators
- Membership program
- Devolved grants programs
- Resources, workshops and events
- Sector advocacy and leadership development

### PROGRAMMING

Regional Arts Victoria nurtures the experts who foster local artistic experiences and stimulate young minds.

- Arts & Education Program
- Connecting Places
- Touring programs
- Education resources
- Industry development resources and events
- Sector advocacy and leadership development

### PROJECTS

Regional Arts Victoria presents major artistic projects that build local artistic leadership and legacy.

- State-wide projects including *Small Town Transformations and Artlands Victoria*
- Internal Creative Professional Development programs
- Sector advocacy and leadership development

## ARTS & EDUCATION

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Regional Arts Victoria's Programming department has nearly 50 years of experience touring work to schools, community halls and theatres across Victoria and Australia. The department programs are the Arts & Education, Touring Services and Connecting Places programs.

The Arts and Education program also provides significant subsidy assistance (up to 75% of program costs) to eligible remote and disadvantaged schools. Your school may be eligible so please contact us to find out more.

For general enquiries please contact: [education@rav.net.au](mailto:education@rav.net.au)

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM

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*Emu Weaving Story is delivered as an online, livestream workshop. Weaving materials will be sent to your school ahead of the workshop.*

Emu Weaving Story tells of the seven sisters who were chased into the sky to form an important constellation. In this online workshop, students will use this story as a launching pad to learn about southern Australian Aboriginal culture and traditional weaving techniques and will engage with a whole range of themes from astronomy and the environment, to traditional creation stories.

Emu Weaving Story will introduce the students to Koorie culture, language, symbols, the flag, and Aboriginal nations, gestures and place names. The Emu story is then introduced as a creation story, and Aboriginal constellations, and astronomy is discussed, followed by an introduction to weaving, how it is used and who in the community would traditionally do it.

The students and teachers will be able to see and learn about weaving/baskets, emu eggs and emu feathers. Students are then taught coil weaving with native grasses. There is also talk about nature, conservation, environment, waterways and river health from an Aboriginal perspective – with history and traditional management of natural resources.

The hands on experience of learning traditional coil weaving is presented in a way that will provide a big picture view of Aboriginal culture, stories and customs, and will engender an understanding and care for first nations people. This program will provide a foundation to learning about the oldest living culture in the world, and how natural resources have been used for millennia for problem solving [nets, traps, coolamons].

Students will leave this impactful workshop feeling more connected with the earth and the country they live in through hands on learning, led by an Aboriginal person.



## BIOGRAPHY

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### **Suzanne Connelly Klidomitis**

"I am a Wiradjuri woman. I was born and grew up in Swan Hill and district. Since I was a child I have watched and helped make artefacts along the river and in the Mallee scrub. I use traditional, contemporary and recycled materials to create art works which have been sold locally at the art gallery, at the Koorie Heritage Trust and Melbourne Museum.

My last job was as a Koorie Educator and Koorie Education Development Officer. Currently I am a student at the Sunraysia TAFE, Swan Hill Campus doing a Koorie Art & Design course.

I had my first exhibition at the Swan Hill Art Gallery in March 2014 called 'The Koorie Garden'. I used materials from the bush to create a Mallee bush scene to display my emu feather quandong seed flowers.

Recently I have taken up weaving again which I was taught as a child and use my weaving design to create ceramic pieces. Some of these were exhibited in the 'Telkaya' exhibition of the Koorie Arts and Design students at the Swan Hill Art Gallery in March 2015.

I exhibited at the Swan Hill Art Gallery in June 2015 with an exhibition called 'Cultural Sistas' and again in March 2016 with my cross-media exhibition 'Weave On' to show my weaving design in other dimensions to extend and multiply the life of a piece of weaving.

From July – October 2016 my weaving work was featured at the Koorie Heritage Trust as part of the 'Carved out of Life' exhibition."

*-Suzanne Connelly August 2018*



## SUGGESTED PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

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The following activities are designed for teachers and students to explore before *Emu Weaving Story Online Workshop*.

### Activity 1: Aboriginal Weaving Research

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, weaving expresses cultural identity and traditions that date back tens of thousands of years.

Traditional objects are handmade from plant materials gathered from the bush or string made from animal and human hair. These ancient skills have even expanded and diversified through the introduction of new ideas and techniques.

- Ask students to research Aboriginal weaving; what it has been used for, what materials are commonly used.
- Think about what properties make a material suitable for weaving. Consider things like flexibility, strength, texture, waterproof properties, and ability to be torn.
- Make a list of potential weaving materials with these properties in mind.



### Resources

[Aboriginal Weaving- University of Melbourne Resources.](#)

### Activity 2: Collecting Found Materials

Take students on a walk of the school grounds or other nearby natural area and gather potential weaving materials, keeping their research from Task 1 in mind.

Ask students to collect more materials from home to decorate and incorporate in to their weaving project. These could include materials like feathers, bark, grasses, brightly coloured materials like string and wire.

These materials can be saved and used in the workshop.

### Activity 3: Family Heritage Research

Ask students to research their heritage through talking to their family if possible. Perhaps they will be able to find out stories about where their family originated from e.g. European, Koorie or another background. Maybe their family might have old photographs to show them or a family tree. Students can try and find out some of the traditions associated with their particular heritage.

Students can then create a poster explaining what they found out from their research- this could be a family tree, a profile of a particular family member or an explanation of some of the traditions associated with their heritage, depending on what the student has been able to find out.

### Activity 4: Aboriginal Land and People of the Area

With the class, research the traditional owners of the land (use the Welcome to Country Map to identify your area) where the school is situated. Research and discuss their traditions and connection with the land.

Use the Museums Victoria website to identify the Aboriginal language of this country, then follow the external links to find out more about that language. Try and learn some greetings or key words with the class.

**Resources:**

[Welcome to Country Map](#)

[Museums Victoria- Victorian Aboriginal Languages](#)

**Activity 5: First Nations Astronomy**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the oldest astronomers in the world. They developed a number of practical ways to observe the Sun, Moon and stars to inform navigation, calendars, and predict weather. Australia's First Nations people assign meaning and agency to astronomical phenomena, which informs Law and social structure. It also serves as the foundation for narratives that are passed down the generations through song, dance, and oral tradition over tens of thousands of years. "Indigenous astronomy" is the first astronomy – the astronomy that existed long before the Babylonians, Greeks, the Renaissance, and the Enlightenment.

Watch the [ABC video on Aboriginal Astronomy](#) and discuss with the class.

- How does First Nations astronomy differ from other forms of Astronomy?
- Why is Astronomy so important to Aboriginal people?
- *Activity-* ask students to retell the story of 'the canoe' they saw in the video, through a storyboard of artworks.
- Encourage students to look for the Canoe and the Emu next time they look up at the night sky.

**Resources**

[ABC video on Aboriginal Astronomy](#)

[Aboriginal Astronomy Website](#)

[Koorie Seasons and Astral Calendars](#)

[Star Stories of the Dreaming Guide](#)

[Indigenous Astronomy – University of Melbourne Resource](#)

## **SUGGESTED POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES:**

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(Activities that dissect and expand upon the content of the workshop that the teacher and students can engage in post-workshop).

### **Activity 1: Continue Weaving**

Ask students to experiment with weaving using different materials to those they used in the workshop and see how it this changes their artwork.

Students can also try making practical objects from their weaving, like vessels or bags.

### **Activity 2: Sharing New Knowledge**

This workshop teaches an Aboriginal skill, one that has been practised for thousands of years. In Aboriginal culture, the passing down of stories, knowledge and craft techniques to future generations is very important. Ask students to go home and teach a family member their newly acquired weaving technique, sharing their skills.

### **Activity 3: Invite Aboriginal Elders to your School**

Invite Aboriginal elders into your school to share their culture and stories with the class, deepening their knowledge gained from the workshop.

Initiate opportunities for the celebration of Aboriginal cultural days/weeks.

### **Activity 4: Adding Value to the Community**

Consider how else this project can add value to the community. Perhaps the school could host a lunch or morning tea for the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community of the school? This could be a way of sharing the artwork created in the workshop with the community. It could also offer local people a chance to try weaving and give students the opportunity to share their new skills with the community.

## FURTHER READING

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[Koorie Heritage Trust](#)

[Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated \[VAEA\]](#)

## CURRICULUM LINKS – Victorian F-10 Curriculum

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Learning Areas	Capabilities
<p><i>The Arts- Visual Arts</i></p> <p><b>Strand: Explore and Express Ideas</b> Explore visual arts practices as inspiration to explore and develop themes, concepts or ideas in artworks</p> <p>Explore how artists use materials, techniques, technologies and processes to realise their intentions in artworks.</p> <p><b>Strand: Visual Arts Practices</b> Experiment with materials, techniques, technologies and processes in a range of art forms to express ideas, concepts and themes in artworks</p> <p><b>Strand: Present and Perform</b> Create and display artworks, describing how ideas are expressed to an audience.</p> <p><b>Strand: Respond and Interpret</b> Identify and connect specific features of visual artworks from different cultures, historical and contemporary times, including artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p> <p><b>Achievement Standard:</b> By the end of Level 8, students identify, analyse and evaluate how other artists use materials, techniques, technologies, processes and visual conventions to express ideas and convey meaning.</p> <p>Students plan and make their art works in response to exploration of techniques, technologies and processes used in the work of other artists. They demonstrate the use of materials, techniques, processes, visual</p>	<p><i>Intercultural Capabilities</i></p> <p><b>Strand: Cultural Diversity</b> Explain the role of cultural traditions in the development of personal, group and national identities.</p> <p><b>Strand: Cultural Practices</b> Analyse the dynamic nature of own and others cultural practices in a range of contexts.</p> <p><b>Achievement Standard:</b> By the end of Level 4, students are able to compare a range of cultural practices and explain their influence on people's relationships. They explain what they have learnt about themselves and others from intercultural experiences.</p> <p>Students explain the role of cultural traditions in the development of various identities. They develop critical perspective on and respect for their own and others cultures.</p> <p>By the end of Level 8, students explain how cultural practices may change over time in a range of contexts. They understand how cultural groups can be represented, and comment on the effects of these representations.</p> <p>Students understand the challenges and benefits of living and working in culturally diverse communities.</p>

conventions and technologies to express ideas and convey meaning in their artworks.

Students identify and describe artworks and exhibitions from different cultures, times and places and how ideas are interpreted by audiences.

*The Arts- Visual Communication*

**Strand: Respond and Interpret**

Analyse and evaluate the factors that influence design decisions in a range of visual communications from different historical, social and cultural contexts, including presentations by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Analyse and evaluate the use of methods, media, materials, design elements and design principles in visual communications from different historical, social and cultural contexts, including presentations by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**Achievement Standard:**

By the end of Level 10 students analyse and evaluate the visual communications they make and view, and how visual communications from different historical, social and cultural contexts communicate ideas and information.

*Personal and Social Capability*

**Strand: Social Awareness and Management- Collaboration**

Demonstrate skills for effective participation in group tasks and use criteria provided to reflect on the effectiveness of the teams in which they participate.

**Achievement Standard**

By the end of Level 4, students describe factors that contribute to positive relationships with peers, other people at school and in the community. They explain characteristics of cooperative behaviours and they use criteria to identify evidence of this in group activities.

*Humanities- History*

**Strand: Historical Knowledge- Community Remembrance and Celebrations**

The significance of Country and Place to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who belong to a local area.

The role that people of diverse backgrounds have played in the development and character of the local community and/or other societies.

One significant narrative, myths or celebration from the past.

**Strand: Historical Knowledge- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures**

How physical or geographical features influenced the development of Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander peoples' communities, foundational stories and land management practices.

The importance of conserving the remains of the ancient past, including the heritage, culture and artefacts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**Achievement Standard:**

By the end of Level 4, students explain how and why life changed in the past, and identify aspects of the past that remained the same. They describe the experiences and perspectives of an individual or group over time. They recognise the significance of events in bringing about change.

Students sequence events and people (their lifetime) in chronological order to identify key dates, causes and effects. They identify sources (written, physical, visual, oral), and locate information about their origin and content features. They describe perspectives of people from the past and recognise different points of view.

By the end of Level 8, students identify and explain patterns of change and continuity over time. They analyse the causes and effects of events and developments. They identify the motives and actions of people at the time. Students evaluate the significance of individuals and groups and how they were influenced by the beliefs and values of their society. They evaluate different interpretations of the past.

*Humanities- Geography*

**Strand: Places and Connections to them:**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Country/Place on which the school is located and why Country/Place is important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the ways in which they maintain special connections to particular Country/Place.

**Strand: Factors that shape places and influence interconnections**

Influence of people, including the influence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

peoples, on the environmental characteristics of Australian places

**Strand: Place and Liveability**

Spiritual, cultural and aesthetic value of landscapes and landforms for people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, that influence the significance of places, and ways of protecting significant landscapes.

**Achievement Standard:**

By the end of Level 2, students identify how people are connected to different places and explain the value of places to people. They describe different ways that places can be cared for.

By the end of Level 6, students describe and explain interconnections and their effects. They identify and compare responses to a geographical challenge, describing the expected effects on different groups.

By the end of Level 8, students explain processes that influence the characteristics of places. They identify, analyse and explain interconnections and spatial characteristics and identity and explain their implications. They compare strategies for a geographical challenge, taking into account a range of factors and predict the likely outcomes.

*Humanities: Civics and Citizenship*

**Strand: Citizenship, Diversity and Identity**

Investigate why and how people participate within communities and cultural and social groups.

Describe the different cultural, religious and/or social groups to which they and others in the community may belong.

**Achievement Standard:**

By the end of Level 4, students can describe how people participate in their community as active citizens and factors that shape a person's identity and sense of belonging.

*Languages- Victorian Aboriginal Languages*

**Strand: Communicating- Informing**

Discover key information about Country/Place by exploring Country/Place and listening to stories from respected community members.

**Strand: Communicating- Socialising**

Interact with each other, the teaching team and visiting respected community members, using language and gestures to greet and talk about self and family

Participate in guided tasks that involve following instructions, making things, cooperating with peers, planning for and conducting shared events, activities or school performances

**Strand: Communicating – Identity**

Describe aspects of self, such as family, school/class and language/s spoken, considering how these contribute to their sense of identity. Recognising the relationship between language, place and family in the formation of identity in Aboriginal communities. Exploring the idea of collective identity through symbols and practices such as Aboriginal flags, items of dress, use of colours and patterns

**Achievement Standard:**

By the end of Level 2, students recognise that many different languages are spoken at their school, in their local community, and in other parts of Australia. They identify how language use reflects where and how they live and what is important to them. Students identify the importance of learning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, including the benefits to communities of language revival.

Contact the Arts & Education team at [education@rav.net.au](mailto:education@rav.net.au) with further questions or, even better, examples of your work!

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