

HARMONY WEEK EDUCATION KIT FOR SCHOOLS

Harmony Week is a great opportunity to get together as a whole school and celebrate the diversity of backgrounds, languages, beliefs and family stories that reflect your community.

However, there is no need to limit exploring other cultures to just one day or week. Below are some curriculum-aligned ideas for developing intercultural understanding and integrating the themes of harmony and diversity into a range of school subject learning areas at any time of year.



Young learners

Same but different

As a class, discuss the word 'diversity' and brainstorm the types of ways that people can be 'diverse' (for example, looks, who they live with, where they come from, their interests, etc). Then pair up with a friend and give a short oral presentation about how you are similar and different to each other, and why you get along.

Middle/late childhood learners

Writing prompts

Type in the words 'people harmony diversity' into a search engine and look at the images that come up. Discuss:

- How do the images make you feel and why?
- Who and where might the different people shown in the pictures be?
- What are they doing? What might they have been doing before and after this photo was taken?

Choose one image and use it as a prompt to write a short story. For an extra challenge, re-write your story from a different point of view.

Teen/secondary school learners

Songs of harmony

Listen to [songs](#) relating to race, diversity and harmony, then discuss:

- What is the background of the person who wrote the lyrics?
- What values or attitudes are communicated in the song? What makes you say this?
- To what extent is the message of the lyrics relevant to Australia today?
- Other than these song lyrics, can you name examples of other forms of popular culture that explore the theme of diversity (for example, films, video games, comics)? Are the messages they contain generally positive or negative?

Debate: Radio and TV stations should only be permitted to screen or play material that supports cultural diversity.



Young learners

Celebrations and commemorations

Harmony Week is a time to celebrate Australia's diversity. What other things are [celebrated or commemorated in our community?](#) Make a list of special family events such as birthdays, religious festivals and community events you have taken part in and talk about the sorts of things you do during these times. Discuss: does everyone celebrate the same things, in the same way?

Often, celebrations are a time to get together to share special food with friends and family. On a template of a dinner plate, draw your favourite 'celebration' food. If you like, you can pretend to eat it, too! Will you be eating with your hands? A knife and fork? With chopsticks? Or in some other way?

Middle/late childhood learners

Cultural collages

Chose an Aboriginal language group or a country from around the world and create a collage that represents its culture. Some things you might include in your collage are pictures of traditional clothing, staple foods, significant places, religious and other festivals, traditional crafts or popular games and sports. Annotate or label the images you use.

Make a list of questions you have about the culture of your chosen country, and see if there is anyone in your class or school that you could interview to answer them.

Teen/secondary school learners

Origins of a tradition

Harmony Week was originally based on the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, commemorated on 21 March. 21 March is the anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre, when South African police fired on a peaceful demonstration against apartheid.

Visit the National Library of Australia's [Trove](#) website to find newspaper reports relating to the incident. (You will need to type in 'Sharpeville Massacre' into the search bar, and then choose 'digitised newspapers and more'.)

List 10 facts about the event you learned by reading the articles, then write a one-paragraph response to the following question: 'Is it right to celebrate Harmony Day on the anniversary of a day that was not harmonious?'

OR

The good, the bad, the interesting

Working in small groups, complete a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis associated with cultural diversity in Australia.

Questions you might want to consider include:

- What goods and services might be consumed or produced more as we become more culturally diverse?



	Young learners	Middle/late childhood learners	Teen/secondary school learners
English			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are there any job opportunities that open up because of our cultural diversity?• Does cultural diversity affect how we socialise, relax and spend our leisure time?• What government services might be provided in response to cultural diversity?• How might imports and exports be affected by Australia being multicultural?• Are there any ways that business operations may need to change when their customers and employees come from different cultures?
Maths	<p>1, 2, 3</p> <p>How many different ways can you count to 10? Ask a classmate who speaks a different language to teach you how to count in their language, or learn how to write numbers using different writing systems from around the world.</p>	<p>Everyone counts</p> <p>Create an online survey on a topic linked to Harmony Week. Your survey could pose questions about your classmates' cultural backgrounds, languages they speak, or how they would like to celebrate Harmony Week. Once you collect the data, present your findings as graphs, percentages or ratios. About a third of people who live in WA were born overseas. Is your class more or less multicultural than the rest of WA?</p> <p>You can also find out how far away different people's birthplaces were from where you live today. Who was born farthest?</p>	<p>A universal language</p> <p>Our standard base 10 number system has its roots in Hindu-Arabic culture—but it is not the only way that numbers are grouped and organised. Check out these 12 mind blowing number systems from other languages, and investigate traditional Aboriginal number systems used in Australia. Given these different ways of thinking about numbers, why is it sometimes said that 'Maths is a universal language'?</p>



Young learners

Special animals

Many countries have a national animal, which appears on that country's flag or emblem, or which is otherwise considered special. Choose some examples of [national animals from different cultures](#) and talk about what sorts of environments they live in, what they eat and what their features are. Can you suggest a reason why the animals are considered special?



Middle/late childhood learners

Inventing a better world

Brainstorm a list of inventions or discoveries that have helped to bring people together by making it easier to travel, see and communicate with each other. Find out who made these inventions and discoveries, and which countries they came from.

Teen/secondary school learners

Quick three

Each day of Harmony Week, challenge yourself to learn three new facts about Aboriginal scientific knowledge. To get you started, here are some topics you could investigate:

- [The physics of a boomerang](#)
- [Noongar concept of seasons](#)
- [Science behind the didgeridoo](#)
- [Traditional medicine](#)
- Chemistry of [balga](#) or [spinifex](#) resin
Aboriginal knowledge of historic [sea level changes](#)
- [Fire management](#)
- [Astronomy.](#)



Young learners

Middle/late childhood learners

Teen/secondary school learners

Arts

Dancing feet

Have a brain break and dance to music from around the world. Bring and share music recordings that are special to your family and, if you can, demonstrate traditional dance steps to others in the class. Alternatively, watch a [video of traditional dances](#) and then work your way through some fun dance tutorials!

- [‘Dancing on the clock’ African dance tutorial](#)
- [Bollywood party dance moves](#)
- [Hula dance](#)
- [Haka cartoon tutorial](#).

Paper fun

Many countries have traditional paper crafts. Have a go at creating beautiful designs or fun art projects from around the world. Here are some tutorials and ideas to get you started:

- [Origami](#) (Japan)
- [Papel picado](#) (Mexico)
- [Wycinanki](#) (Poland)
- [Paper fans](#) (Vietnam)
- [Lantern craft](#) (China).

You might like to try other [craft activities from around the world](#), too!

Signs and symbols

How would you communicate the concepts of ‘harmony’, ‘peace’, ‘respect’ and ‘celebrating cultural diversity’ without using words? Brainstorm as many different ideas as you can think of with your friends and then design a logo for Harmony Week.

Technologies

Different ways to live

Explore the different ways people [live, farm](#) and garden around the world, comparing the types of plants they grow, the animals they raise, and what they build their houses from. Make sure you try to find out what both the outside and the [inside](#) of the houses looks like. Then, use a range of different materials to build your own model house, garden or paddock.

Tasting the world

Some types of foods and clothing are strongly associated with a particular country or region. The making of these items generally started on a small scale, meeting the needs of individual families and their close communities. Explore how modern technology allows mass production of food and fibre, making it easier for people today to access unique and regional products from around the world.

For example:

Europe: [Olive oil](#) | Australia: [Macadamia nuts](#)

Asia: [Silk](#) | Africa: [Coffee](#)

North America: [Maple syrup](#)

Central America: [Cocoa](#)

Sharing food, sharing culture

Find and cook a recipe from another country. If you need some inspiration, check out these [Dishes for Harmony](#) or [Easy International Recipes](#).

Once the food is ready, eat it while practising good table manners from that country. (See [table manners around the world](#) to get you started).



Young learners

Sing-along a song

Did you know that some nursery rhymes have travelled around the world and have been translated into different languages?

Learn how to sing foreign language versions of 'If you're happy and you know it' or 'Baa baa black sheep', and have a go at other [traditional songs](#) from around the globe.



Middle/late childhood learners

Friendly words

Brainstorm a list of words and phrases that indicate inclusiveness, acceptance, respect and friendship. For example:

- Would you like to play?
- Let me help you with that.
- Let's do this together.
- Tell me about yourself.
- Are you OK?
- Come join us!

Ask your classmates or teachers who speak a different language to teach you how to say the phrases in their language—and then practise using them throughout Harmony Week (and beyond!).

Teen/secondary school learners

Rate an app

Learning a language is a great way to appreciate and get to know another culture. There are many apps available to help you get started or develop your foreign language skills. Some that you can try for free include:

- Memrise
- Duolingo
- TripLingo
- Busuu
- HelloTalk
- Rosetta Stone.

Pick an app you are not familiar with, and use it to practise a language; you can try to improve on a language you are studying at school, or start learning a new one.

What criteria would you use to rate a language-learning app? Try out several different ones, and use your criteria to rate them from least to most effective. Compare your rating with friends—do you all agree which app is the best?



Young learners

Let's play together

Play some games that focus on [cooperation](#) and teamwork rather than competition, or try some [popular schoolyard games from other countries](#).

Middle/late childhood learners

Aaaaand relax

Tai Chi is a type of Chinese martial art that is practised around the world as a form of gentle exercise. The movements of Tai Chi are slow and tranquil, and help to promote a peaceful mind and body. Likewise, Yoga, which originates from India, is an exercise and philosophy based on balance and harmony within each person and with each other. Have a go at doing some simple [Tai Chi](#) exercises or [Yoga](#) stretches when you need a break from sitting down.

Teen/secondary school learners

Let's play!

Many people believe that Australian Rules football may have been influenced by a traditional Aboriginal game from Victoria, called marn-grook. Have a go at playing marn-grook and other [traditional indigenous games](#) from different language groups around Australia.

