

Boobarran Ngummin Trip
Understanding Cultural landscapes
Teachers Kit for Grades 5-6



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Background on Chullawong, Gummingurru, Boobarran Ngummin and the Bonye Bonye Festival Trip.

Chullawong Rock Art Site

Chullawong is a sandstone rock art site near Gatton in southeast Queensland. Located approximately 97 kilometres south-southwest of Brisbane, the Jagera people (also known as Yuggerah, Yuggerapul or Jagerapul) visited this site when travelling north toward Esk and the Bunya Mountains. The Jagera people occupied an area spanning from Brisbane to the Toowoomba Range, and north to Esk. They are one of many peoples who would travel to the Bunya Mountains for festivities held every three years (Ross, 2008).



The site is a sandstone overhang with many engravings including drilled holes and lines, inverted arcs and what is believed to be bird tracks. As seen in the image above, the engravings are unlike other forms of rock art as they do not seem to depict animals and other 'beings'. It is presumed that these markings tell a story of the frog dreaming. The markings found at this site are similar to those used for weapons decoration and body scarring (Morwood 1986).

Gummingurru Stone Arrangement site

Gummingurru is one of many Aboriginal stone arrangement sites in Australia. It is located in south east Queensland on the Darling Downs (Figure 1). Stone arrangements which have been uncovered include a Fish, Kangaroo, Emu, Bunya Nut, Rings, Turtle, Water hole, and Carpet snake

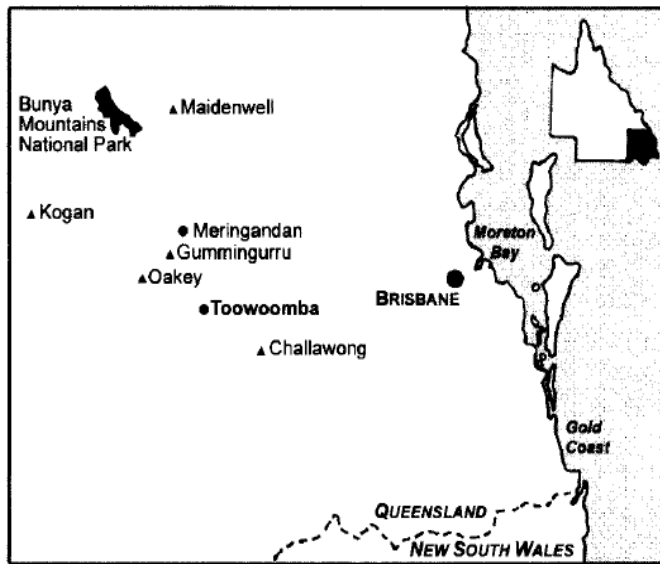


Figure 1 Situation of Gumingurru in Queensland

In the past Gumingurru was a sacred Aboriginal men's site. Today it is located on land that was once European farmed land; this land was given back to the traditional owners by descendants of the European settlers. Gumingurru is currently managed by the Gumingurru Aboriginal Corporation. The resident caretaker is Brian Tobane, a descendant of traditional Jarowair elders.

The environment surrounding Gumingurru has slightly undulating hills of agricultural farm land and patches of vegetation. The stone arrangement site is within close vicinity of an ochre quarry, a creek, a women's site (whose location is not fully known), and a campsite. These associated sites can be seen in figure 2.

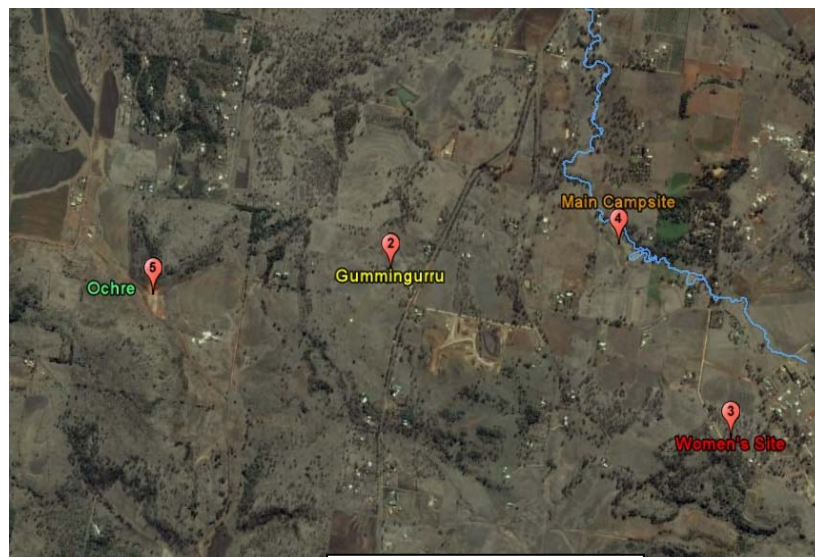


Figure 2 Gumingurru and associated sites (Google Earth 2009)

Gummingurru is home to the Jarowair Aboriginal people, one of many Aboriginal groups that attend the Bunya Mountains triennial feast and ceremonies. Every three years Gummingurru held ceremonies in conjunction with the Bunya festivals and provided a primary base on the path to the Mountains. Gummingurru was attended by Aboriginal groups both from the Darling Downs and from the coast in the quest to initiate members of their clans so that they could join in on the activities held in the Bunya Mountains.

Bunya Mountains

Boobarran Ngummin, more commonly known as the Bunya Mountains, is an outcrop of the Great Dividing Range situated 60km north east of Dalby on the Darling Downs. It is the remains of an ancient shield volcano which has been eroded over time to produce rich fertile soils (Stevens 2000). The mountains rise up out of the surrounding plains to heights of 1300m above sea level. It is a place of both high natural and cultural significance, and is recognised on the Register of Natural Estate. Mount Mowbullin, which is a place of extreme significance on the Bunya Mountains, is known as a men's dreaming place for the rainbow serpent and is strictly off limits to women (Rowlings-Jensen 2004). The main reason large groups gathered here was because of the large number of resources the mountains provided. The major resource was the *Acacia bidwilli* or Bunya Pines, which produced large crops of bunya nuts every three years. These nuts are high in protein and have a long storage life when kept dry. Aboriginal people either roasted the nuts or ground them into a paste and baked them into cakes. Strict protocol was used when it came to accessing the mountains and the Bunya nuts (Rowlings-Jensen 2004). The mountains' open grassy balds also provided good hunting lands; these grassy balds have been created by direct influence of fire stick farming from Aboriginal traditional owners.

The Bonye Bonye or bunya festival was not only a time of great feasting but also a celebration, with many ceremonies held throughout the 3 month period. Many creative exchanges of information, song, dance and story occurred (Rowlings-Jensen 2004). This was also a time to trade resources and technologies and in some cases arrange marriage alliances and the settlement of disputes through ritualised fighting.

Competitions such as wrestling, boomerang throwing and fighting were held during the festivals. This gathering also gave time for groups to formalise war campaigns in the post European settlement era, which shows that there was a form of politics undertaken during this time. Boobarran Ngummin has the same cultural importance to southern Queensland Aborigines as Uluru has to Northern Territory Aboriginal people (Rowlings-Jensen 2004).

Boobarran Ngummin Teachers Kit for Grades 5-6

The project “Boobarran Ngummin Trip” is developed to give students an insight into some Aboriginal culture and history but also to show the wider cultural landscape within which this festival is situated. It also shows the deep connection that Aboriginal people have to their land, which needs to be respected. Coochin, a member from the Jagera Aboriginal group from the Brisbane Ipswich area, is used as a narrator throughout the PowerPoint presentation and he guides the students through the cultural landscapes.

The presentation discusses three main areas of Aboriginal culture: art, ceremonies and childhood to adult initiation. Aboriginal art is recognised at the Chullawong site, which is an Aboriginal rock art site near Gatton. With the use of the PowerPoint presentation, the site will give the students an insight into the relationship has to Aboriginal life and land. The Gummingurru section of the PowerPoint presentation will give detail on the importance of initiation in the wider Aboriginal landscape and relates the site back to forms of modern day initiation to allow the students to gain a better understanding of the importance of initiation. Finally the Bonye Bonye part of the PowerPoint presentation will give detail on the activities undertaken by Aboriginal groups throughout the three month festival, and also enlighten the students about the high significance of the Bunya Mountains.

Activities – Boobarran Ngummin Trip – Understanding Cultural Landscapes

PowerPoint presentation

This presentation has been designed as a self-guiding/teacher assisted student activity which contains the written word and animated pictures. The students will then be asked to complete 3 activities each one relating to the three step journey to Boobarran Ngummin from Jagera lands. These three activities will provide the students with the chance to apply the knowledge they have gained from the PowerPoint presentation. The activities are to be completed during each step of the three step journey. The three activities for the Bonye Bonye Festival, Gummingurru and Chullawong Sites should be printed out and handed to the class. The presentation and activities should only take 45-60 mins for the class to complete.

The presentation is told as an informative story by the Aboriginal cartoon man ‘Coochin’ who is a member of the Jagera people. It is told in three stages which directly relate to three different areas of Aboriginal culture, these being the Chullawong Site, Gummingurru Site and the Bonye Bonye Festival.

Instructions

To progress through the PowerPoint presentation, click the left mouse button or press the Enter or Page Down keys on the keyboard. When the circle is red, it indicates that there are automated features which work by themselves. To go back to the previous screen/action, either scroll up using the mouse scroll, right-click the mouse and select ‘Previous’, or press the Page Up key.

Worksheets

The worksheets can be completed by the students during the PowerPoint presentation. The students’ copies are able to be printed out on single A4 sheets in black and white with the third activity, the maze, needing to be printed in colour.

Activity 1 – ‘Chullawong Rock Art/ Animal Tracks’

In this activity students are asked to choose which animal the tracks belong to from each question. The final question asks students to draw some tracks of an animal they choose themselves. These activities aim to make students aware of their natural environment and surrounds, much like Aboriginal teachings and lore.

Worksheet 2 – ‘Gummingurru’

This activity requires students to draw lines from words presented on the left hand side of the sheet to the corresponding words on the right hand side of the sheet. This activity is to be simultaneously conducted while the PowerPoint presentation is running and as the slides progress they will reveal the information required to join the sentences. This activity is aimed at engaging the students throughout this part of the PowerPoint presentation. This Gummingurru section of the presentation looks at the relevance of, and similarities between, initiation for Aboriginal people and Europeans. It is developed to try and relate common European ideals to Aboriginal ideals.

Activity 3 – ‘Bonye Bonye Maze’

The Bonye Bonye maze is a fun activity to finish off the PowerPoint presentation, which incorporates the day to day activities undertaken by Aboriginal people during the Bonye Bonye Festival. The maze has three simple rules to follow:

- 1st. Students enter the maze from the left at the campsite and then travel anti clockwise around the maze.

- 2nd. Female and Males must split after the “Ochre diggings” with the males entering the blue area and the females entering the pink, as this is where the sacred men’s and women’s ceremonies are held.

- 3rd. To complete the activity you must do an entire loop of the maze back to the campsite.

Relevant references for further investigation:

- Bartholomai, A. Breeden, S. 1961, 'Stone Ceremonial Grounds of the aboriginies in the Darling Downs Area, Memoirs of the Queensland Museum, vol 13, issue 6, pp. 231-237.
- Morwood, M.J. 1986. Archaeology of Art: Excavations at Maidenwell and Gatton Rock Shelters, Southeast Queensland. *Queensland Archaeological Research* 3:88-132.
- Ross, A 2008 'Managing meaning at an ancient site in the 21st century: the Gummingurru Aboriginal stone arrangement on the Darling Downs, southern Queensland', *Oceania*, vol. 78, pp.91-108.
- Rowlings-Jensen 2004, *Nuts, Mountains and Islands: A cultural Landscape Approach to managing the Bunya Mountains* B Soc Sci Honours thesis, School of Social Science, The University of Queensland, St Lucia.
- Stevens 2000, "Rocks and Landscape Notes- Bunya Mountains", www.qld.gsa.org.au/BBBunya.pdf

Table 1: Relevant core learning outcomes from the teaching syllabus for grades 4 -5 (level 3) for the ‘Gummingurru: Part of Something Bigger’ activities.

‘ <u>Boobarran Ngummin Trip</u>’ - Activities			
	Worksheet 1- ‘Chullawong Rock Art/ Animal Tracks’	Worksheet 2 – ‘Yuris’	Activity 3 – ‘Maze’
<p>Relevant Core learning outcomes from the syllabus (Source: The Office of the Queensland School Curriculum Council, 2001)</p>	<p>CI 2.3 ‘Students participate in diverse customs and traditions to identify how these contribute to a sense of belonging to groups.’</p>	<p>CI 4.1 ‘Students investigate how religious and spiritual beliefs contribute to Australia’s diverse cultures’.</p>	<p>CI 2.3 Students participate in diverse customs and traditions to identify how these contribute to a sense of belonging to groups.</p>
<p>How the activities fulfil the relevant core learning outcomes from the syllabus</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of tracks, awareness of Aboriginal lore. • An understanding of the Jagera people as a specific group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies the close relationship and difference between aboriginal initiation and European initiation. • Provides an understanding of different forms of ceremonies such as initiation (Adulthood/ becoming of age) and how they relate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks at the concepts of ceremonies, hunting gathering and the importance of the Bunya Mountains to aboriginal people. Gives perspective of the Aboriginal journey to the Bunya Mountains.

References

FAIRA Aboriginal Corporation 2000, Landrights news room, 'Rock art must be preserved for future generations', <<http://www.faira.org.au/lrq/archives/200004/stories/rock-art-story.html>>, viewed 28th of April 2009

Google Earth (Updated 29th April), MapData Sciences Pty Ltd,
<http://maps.google.com/maps?ll=-27.459403,151.87753&z=11&t=h&hl=en>

Jensen 2004, "Nuts, Mountains and Islands: A cultural Landscape Approach to managing the Bunya Mountains" *The University of Queensland*, pg 29-34

Ross, A (2008) 'Managing meaning at an ancient site in the 21st century: the Gummingurru Aboriginal stone arrangement on the Darling Downs, southern Queensland', *Oceania*, vol. 78, pp.91-108.

Stevens 2000, "Rocks and Landscape Notes- Bunya Mountains",
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The Office of the Queensland School Curriculum Council, 2001, *Studies of Society and Environment, Years 1 to 10 Sourcebook Guidelines*, The State of Queensland.

Triggs, B., 2004, *Tracks, scats and other traces: a field guide to Australian mammals*, Oxford university press, New York.

