

Study Guide for the Australian Collaboration Fact and Issue Sheet

INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

FOR REVIEW

1. Basic facts about Indigenous Australians

- 1a. What is the most widely accepted date for the first arrival of Indigenous people in Australia?
- 1b. Name two Indigenous sites that were among the first to be placed on UNESCO's World Heritage List.
- 1c. What is the size of the Indigenous population of Australia? What percentage of the total population of Australia does this figure represent?
- 1d. Has the size of the Indigenous population been increasing or decreasing over recent years?
- 1e. Which part of Australia has the largest Indigenous population as a proportion of the total (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) population?
- 1f. Which state has the largest share of the total Indigenous population?
- 1g. Is the Indigenous population of Australia "young" or "old" when compared with the non-Indigenous population? (Provide three forms of evidence for answer.)

2. European settlement and subsequent attitudes and policies

- 2a. When did Europeans first discover the mainland of Australia?
- 2b. When did the British colonisation of Australia begin?
- 2c. In terms of official government policies that have been directed at Indigenous people since colonisation, which came first, assimilation or integration? Based on the information provided, how do you understand the difference between the two?
- 2d. In what year was ATSIC established, and what policy framework did it exist within? When was it abolished? Is there a new national Indigenous body? Name it and briefly describe its aims.
- 2e. Name two recent developments within Indigenous policy in Australia.

3. Sovereignty, native title and self-determination

- 3a. In what year was the Aboriginal Tent Embassy established, and what is its purpose?
- 3b. In what year was the Mabo decision handed down, and what was one of its main consequences?

4. Reconciliation

- 4a. What are some of the aims of "reconciliation", and what is the name of the body that is currently responsible for promoting reconciliation?

5. The current situation of Indigenous people and Indigenous attitudes

- 5a. Name four broad areas in which Indigenous people are currently experiencing significant problems.
- 5b. What are some of the views on how to tackle these problems, as expressed by Indigenous people themselves?

FOR DISCUSSION

For each of the statements below, work in pairs or as a class to decide whether you agree or disagree, and explain why:

1. "At many times during the last 200 years or so, Indigenous Australians have been mistreated and discriminated against by the Australian government."
2. "The poor levels of health and education of Indigenous Australians are inexcusable in a country as wealthy as Australia."
3. "The current problems faced by Indigenous people in Australia are a direct consequence of the history of colonisation."
4. "The history and culture of Indigenous people in Australia is of immense interest and importance, and requires greater understanding and acknowledgement from the wider non-Indigenous population than has hitherto been given."
5. "Indigenous people should take more responsibility for their own problems."

FOR RESEARCH

1. Use the internet to learn more about World Heritage listed Indigenous sites such as Kakadu, and what makes them so unique and significant.
2. Use the internet and/or any of the works on the list provided under Useful Sources to investigate one of the controversies that have surrounded the question of Indigenous disadvantage and other issues such as native title and self-determination in recent history.

For advanced students:

3. Use the internet to investigate how the policies and experiences of other comparable nations (for example, New Zealand, Canada or the USA) have differed and/or been similar to those of Australia in relation to the question of the treatment and status of Indigenous people.