

**N G
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ACCESSIBLE LEARNING WITH

**RONA
PANANGKA
RUBUNTJA**

ARTWORK IN FOCUS



Rona Panangka Rubuntja
I'm black (Nicky Winmar), covered vase 2015
 earthenware
 (a-b) 53.1 x 24.8 cm diameter (overall)
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 Purchased, Victorian Foundation for Living
 Australian Artists, 2015
 2015.448.a-b
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OVERVIEW OF RESOURCE

The Accessible Learning with Art resources are designed to provide opportunities for students with diverse learning abilities to view and meaningfully respond to works of art and design from the NGV Collection. The resources promote the development of close looking skills and introduce strategies to encourage students to critically respond to visual elements, ideas and artmaking processes.

The video component focuses on a single artwork and is intended to be used as a starting point to inspire exploration, discussion and artmaking. Each self-contained video is accompanied by a PDF support document, which can be utilised by teachers and/or parents to scaffold and extend student learning. The level of support given should be adjusted based on the age and abilities of the students. Observe student engagement levels to inform how far to progress with the video and related activities. Each video can be watched in full or paused as needed.

In this video, students are invited to respond to a sculptural work created by an artist named Rona Panangka Rubuntja, who is part of a community of fellow artists known as the Hermannsburg Potters. Students are invited to consider stories and meanings expressed by the artist in *I'm black (Nicky Winmar)*, covered vase, 2015. Through this resource, students are also encouraged to reflect on their own experiences and preferences and discover ways to communicate these through visual storytelling.



LEVEL

Primary

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Explore difference and diversity.
- Understand and identify focal points in artworks.
- Make meaning from the stories found within artworks.
- Use artmaking to express their own message or story.

CURRICULUM LINKS

VISUAL ARTS

Respond and Interpret

Identify and discuss how ideas are expressed in artworks from a range of places, times and cultures, including artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples ([VCAVAR028](#))

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CAPABILITY

Self-awareness and Management

Define and recognise examples of stereotypes, discrimination and prejudice and discuss how they impact on the individual ([VCPSCS0030](#))



SUPPORT NOTES FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS

The following suggestions are provided to support teachers and parents to empower young people to actively engage with works of art and design, explore ideas and establish connections to their own lives and to each other.

PRIOR TO WATCHING

The Hermannsburg Potters are a dedicated group of Western Arrarnta artists who belong to a small community 130 kilometres south-west of Alice Springs. They are famous for their colourful terracotta pots which are crafted from clay by hand. The community has embraced this art form and its potential for introducing a new language to communicate, share and celebrate First Nations culture. The pot decorations tell stories about Western Arrarnta history, Country, community, daily life and sporting heroes.

PREPARE YOURSELF

- Familiarise yourself with the content and structure of the Rona Panangka Rubuntja video resource.
- Identify and prepare any necessary visual cues required to further support student understanding of concepts explored in the video, guided discussion and activities.
- Discover existing NGV learning resources and past exhibitions about the Hermannsburg Potters and their work:
 - [Hermannsburg Potters: Indigenous Art, Football and Community Education Resource | NGV](#)
 - [Our Land is Alive: Hermannsburg Potters for Kids | NGV](#)
- This resource explores themes associated with racism and discrimination. As such, educators are encouraged to remain mindful of the diverse nature of classrooms and learning environments and should continue to exercise sensitivity as necessary.

PREPARE YOUR STUDENTS

- Introduce the activity when students are feeling calm and at ease.
- Explain to students that they will be looking at a three-dimensional artwork and learning about the person who made it. A person who makes art is called an artist.
- Introduce art galleries as places for displaying works made by artists. Talk about what students might see if they were to visit an art gallery. This may include drawings, paintings, sculptures, photography and films.
- Look at photos of the NGV and/or navigate through [interactive virtual self-guided tours](#) accessible on the NGV website. Explain that the artwork students will be looking at, as well as other works of art and design, can be viewed in real life on display at the Gallery, where anyone can go and visit.

- Explore editable [social stories](#) about visiting the NGV to familiarise students with the gallery experience.
- Ensure adequate time is allocated for students to slow down and look at the artwork, with minimal distractions.
- Introduce the topic of racism by explaining to students that is when someone is targeted because of their race or culture, which includes where they are from or what their beliefs are or even the colour of their skin. Racist comments are hurtful and can make people feel really bad for lots of different reasons.

DURING AND/OR AFTER WATCHING

GUIDED DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITIES

The video covers three key themes that you may wish to explore in more depth. You will find suggested discussion points and activities to assist on the following pages. They are intended to be flexible, so choose the ones that best suit the interests and needs of your students. You may like to encourage their efforts by modelling your own responses to questions or by trying the activities together.



THEME 1: FOCAL POINT

TUNING IN

The artwork in focus is a pot and lid made from terracotta, which is a type of reddish-brown clay.

Invite students to look closely at Rubuntja's pot and generate curiosity by using guiding prompts, such as:

- What do you think this pot could be used for?
- Have you seen any other pots or vases that are a similar shape to this one? If so, what were they used for?
- Do you notice anything unusual about this pot?

Once students are engaged with the physical form of the artwork, encourage them to continue investigating the visual qualities of the pot. Draw their attention to the figure at the top of the pot and ask students if they can see this figure repeated anywhere else on the pot. Encourage them to consider why the figure might be on the top and on the side of the pot.

Introduce the concept of a focal point. You may wish to link this to the word 'focus' and what this means. A focal point is the part of the artwork that the artist really wants us to look at. Artists may use a focal point in their artwork to help tell their story or get their message across to the viewer.

If necessary, scaffold the discussion with prompts, such as:

- If you watch a football game on TV, often the camera person zooms in on the players that the commentators are talking about to draw our attention to them.
- What is different about the main figure compared to the other players, or even the crowd painted on the artwork? Why do you think this is?

ACTIVITIES

- Print out or display an image that contains several elements or subjects. Provide students with a large piece of paper or cardboard with a hole in the centre, and invite them to lay it over the top of the image. The cut-out area will function as a frame to allow students to 'zoom in' on a section of the image. They can then draw this section on another piece of paper.
- Ask students to identify their favourite icon or hero. Invite them to draw their chosen figure large on the page, or if further support is necessary, paste a cut out image or photograph instead. Then, using chalk pastels, draw a crowd of people in the background. For example, their favourite singer performing in front of a big crowd of people, or a pet dog at the park with other people and pets around. The chalk pastels can be smudged to create a blurry or out of focus effect for the crowd, drawing attention to the main figure in the student's artwork.

THEME 2: TELLING A STORY THROUGH ART

TUNING IN

The Hermannsburg Potters are famous for their colourful terracotta pots which visually tell stories about their culture and where they live: their Country, bush tucker and, of course, football.

Pictures can tell a story, without needing any words. Initiate a discussion of what students like about looking at images, and how images can tell a story. Pictures without text can appeal to people of all ages and from all language groups. This storytelling ability is used by artists all over the world. No matter what language they speak, we can 'read' their stories through their art.

Invite students to share the names of any books that they liked to look at when they were very young. Prompt them to consider what those books looked like. Usually, books made for very young people do not have many words in them, but they do have lots of pictures. Show students a picture book and a picture-free novel. Inquire about which is more appealing to them and why.

ACTIVITIES

- Encourage students to brainstorm simple, one-line phrases or titles that they have seen or heard before. These could be jokes, such as "Why did the chicken cross the road?" or song titles, such as "Dance Monkey." Invite them to choose one phrase or title and draw or paint an image that tells the story without using any words. You may wish to first demonstrate a few examples and have the class guess your story.
- Challenge students to develop a short story, suitable for 3- or 4-year-olds, without any written language. If students have younger siblings, you could invite them to bring simple picture books to school to share examples with the class.
- Read a simple picture book to the class, covering any illustrations. Ask students to choose a page from the story to illustrate, based on what they heard being read. These could be compiled into a class version of the book.



THEME 3: POSITIVE MESSAGES IN ART

TUNING IN

Explore the issue of racism, through discussing Nicky Winmar's experience, and in a broader context. Invite students to share why they think that some people treat others differently based on where they are from, or the colour of their skin. Take this opportunity to encourage peer accountability if they see anything discriminatory in the school yard. Standing up and saying "NO" to unjust treatment is a positive message, and one that Rubuntja has illustrated through the imagery on her pot. Ask students to list other positive messages that they think could be spread through art. Some ideas might include saving the environment, adopting animals from shelters, donating money to good causes, helping others, recycling and eating healthy food. Draw connections between art as a way of storytelling and the way it can be used by artists to spread positive messages.

ACTIVITIES

- Invite students to choose a positive message from those brainstormed in the discussion above, and create an eye-catching poster that uses images as the main method of communication to get the idea across to others. These can be drawn painted or even created using a digital online platform, such as Canva. Once complete, these could be displayed around the school to encourage all students to take positive actions.
- Lead a discussion around pride and what it means to be proud of yourself. Ask students to share things they have done that they are proud of. Nicky Winmar was a First Nations football player who used to play for St Kilda. He is proud to be Black and wanted the whole world to know it. Invite students to share if they have ever experienced a similar feeling. You may wish to encourage them to think of a time they were proud of a mate or a sibling, if they require further support to think of an example. Facilitate an opportunity for students to tell the class about their example and then encourage them to illustrate it. Once complete, display the works and invite students can guess which picture belongs to which story.
- Foster a guided discussion about protests. A protest often happens when a group of people want a change to happen. Examples to research and show images from could include the Climate Change protests, where school students walked out of school to protest. Instruct students to collect pictures of protest signs through an online image search and in a group discussion explore which signs and artworks the students feel are most eye catching and effective at getting their message across. Prompt students to consider why, for example, colour, size, imagery or content.
- As an extension activity, they could each make their own protest sign about a relevant issue, such as Climate Change, or a campaign for no homework.



EXTEND THE LEARNING

Plan a visit to the NGV for your students to see the artwork they have learnt about on display.

Please note that sometimes artworks are moved around the Gallery or are taken off display. We recommend checking their location in advance by searching [Collection Online](#).

For information on accessible programs, services and facilities at the NGV, visit the website or email education.bookings@ngv.vic.gov.au to talk to our bookings staff or NGV Educators about program options for your group.

A range of resources to help you prepare for your visit are available on the NGV website.



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Developed in collaboration with Specialist Art Educator, Karlee Sangster, Croxton Special School.