**Gerry Martin:** So Civics & Citizenship is essential, really, in enabling students to become active and informed citizens who participate in and sustain Australian democracy. So, again, through the study of Civics & Citizenship, we want students to be able to investigate the political and legal systems and explore the nature of citizenship, diversity, identity and what that means in a contemporary society today.

So it’s really, really important to remember, first of all, Civics & Citizenship is about our society today. History is about the past, Civics is about today. And we want kids to gain knowledge and skills necessary to question and understand and contribute to the world in which they live. Therefore, Civics demands engagement with the contemporary political and social issues, and the issues that impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples particularly. But it also demands that we hear their perspective on the issues – on ALL issues – and their perspective on any political, legal or social issues, such as climate change, you know, responses to COVID-19, and so on. You know, so we can learn a lot from their perspectives, beliefs and cultural practices about how they view the world in which we all live in too. So that’s a really important aspect to think about - perspectives in Civics.

Also, the elements...elements to consider is when... To achieve this, really what we want in a Civics curriculum is to use contemporary events and issues to teach the content. It’s very easy to teach the institutional knowledge or the process knowledge of Civics, but connecting that with contemporary issues and contemporary events is really, really important, because that’s what really bring Civics alive. So, you know, also, it’s about engaging with those democratic principles and values of fairness, laws, how representative our community is, and how we engage with that. Again, it’s about understanding our local responsibilities, the responsibilities of our government, both at a local and a national level, as well as a global level.

And really, at the end of this, we want our students to be active citizens, who participate as volunteers, interest groups, protesters, dare I say, and consider how they might act individually, but also as in groups, to make our society a better place. And really, what sits at the heart of Civics & Citizenship is that student voice and agency, and their ability to engage civically and participate in society, and that is part of the Civics curriculum.

And, of course, the curriculum is organised through three strands, which can be looked at separately, but also can be looked at holistically. I’m going to give an example of looking at the curriculum holistically in a few minutes.

At the focus of Civics & Citizenship really is contemporary issues. It’s about getting students to develop thinking and creative capacity to engage with issues that affect our society today. And these issues provide models of ways that citizens can participate and question and improve our democracy.

Through investigating contemporary issues and events, students learn to value their belonging in a diverse and dynamic society, develop points of view, and possibly contribute locally, nationally, regionally and globally. And really, it means...it requires, then, linking students to political institutions, legal institutions, the role of the media in representing our contemporary issues and challenges. So it requires that application of contemporary issues. So you can draw on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ perspectives and experience when exploring contemporary issues.

Also, students appreciate and understand the nature of democratic government decision making, and the impact that has on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and what’s their perspective on what democratic government means in Australia today, for decision-making process, and what can we learn from their practices of governance and decision making? So there’s really lots of rich opportunities.

And making those connections is vitally important in Civics & Citizenship, and integrating the events and issues into that teaching and learning enables the curriculum to be taught through those relevant and contemporary issues.

And at the end, we want kids to be active and informed, we want them skilled to investigate contemporary issues themselves, foster a participation in Australia’s democracy. And really what we want, what sits at the heart of Civics, is practices of making citizens, so that we can empower young people with the belief that they actually can make a difference. And that really...to do that really requires exposing students to multiple perspectives, a range of views, different policies, different practices, different beliefs around those contemporary issues in relation to governance, democracy, law, citizenship and identity and diversity. And it’s an opportunity to give the students voice, and opportunity for them to act in that society.

So, within the Civics curriculum, there’s lots of opportunities to engage with Aboriginal perspectives directly, but also, when looking at those contemporary issues, seek opportunities to incorporate, what is the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective on this?

So again, up on the slide is the Level 7 and 8 content descriptors. And you could deal with these three strands separately, but you could also engage with them holistically when developing a unit of learning or a unit of teaching and learning for Civics & Citizenship. So, for example, you could choose an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issue such as constitutional recognition, and teach all of these content descriptors through that one contemporary issue. So, the Uluru Statement from the Heart was a national Indigenous consensus position on Indigenous constitutional recognition, which came out of a constitutional convention of 250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island delegates.

So again, first of all, you can see – how do we make decisions? How are decisions made? So you could look at the construction of the Uluru Statement from the Heart. It was held at Uluru, in Central Australia, on the land of the Anangu people. And the statement called for the establishment of a First Nations voice – I mean, fundamentally, that sits at the heart of civic identity, having a voice - and enshrine that in our constitution. So again, an opportunity to look at government, democracy, our citizens, and then what citizenship, diversity and identity means within our society and constitution. It also called for the establishment of a Makarrata Commission, to provide agreement making and truth-telling between government and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Uluru Statement was the culmination of 13 regional dialogues held around the country. So again, looking at how actually consensus was brought about, how people actually came together, talked, discussed, shared stories, and came to consensus. That’s Civics & Citizenship at its heart. And therefore, it’s really an opportunity to explore that as a different way of government and democracy in Australia, not what we conventionally know. So, really, it’s a really great opportunity.

So, when looking at government democracy, you can look at the First Nations Voice to Parliament, in relation to features of the Australian constitution, and constitutional change. You could look at the Uluru Statement and the process of creation as an example of active participation within the Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander community, You can look at what happened since, and how Australians have responded, both people and government, to the demands of the Uluru Statement from the Heart. Again, looking at law and citizens, in the legal section, you can link the statement to some contemporary Aboriginal issues, such as deaths in custody or the disproportionate imprisonment rates amongst that community, again, linking it through. And, of course, in the third strand, citizenship, diversity and identity, look at the call for Makarrata. You know, a word, it comes from the Yolngu people in the Arnhem Land, and it means two parties coming together after a struggle, to heal the wounds of the past and live again in peace. The word, the core message, acknowledging that something was wrong and...something was wrong and had been done, and to seek and make things right. And really, that sits at the heart of that citizenship, diversity and identity strand.

And the second goal is about truth telling. So, an agreement...talks about the agreement-making process, which enabled both parties to meet and share stories of the past, and decide how they will work together for future partnership. And this is currently occurring with the Victorian government as well, at the moment. So you could look at our local context there too. As for the second goal, the Makarrata really is about truth telling of that history. This commission provides the avenue for experience to be articulated and heard, and create a path to reconciliation.

So again, it links to this idea of describing Australia as a multi...secular society and multi-faith, identifying the values of cohesion, freedom, responsibility, civil civility, respect, inclusion, fair go, and explain how groups express their identities, including religious and cultural identity, and how expression can influence their perceptions and other people’s perception of them, and examine the concept of national identity and how we can shape it through new movements, such as the Uluru Statement from the Heart, constitutional recognition and looking Aboriginal perspective on that. So it’s a really rich opportunity to explore a topic through one issue.

And again, the last thing to think about when engaging with perspectives in contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander is to understand the range of perspectives when looking at Civics and contemporary issues. We’ve got conservative perspectives, we’ve got progressive perspectives. It’s really important to engage with these different perspectives. Dealing with contemporary issues can be quite challenging, you know, about bias in our personal views, but it’s important to show those range of perspectives as well as showing a range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait perspectives and showing a range of non-Indigenous perspectives. So again, it’s about engaging with a range of perspectives on a particular issue and showing students that there is different views and it’s OK to disagree and it’s OK to have a different perspective.

And so the really key message I want to leave you with, when teaching Civics & Citizenship, engage with contemporary issues to illustrate the knowledge, and then look for opportunities to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, and also issues that affect them, but also engage with their perspectives on broader political, legal and social issues in Australia.

So that’s my bit of a summary of the Civics curriculum, and I’ll hand over to...I think, back to Zeta now.

**Zeta Wilson:** Alright. Thank you, Gerry and Leonie.

Alright, the protocols and resources. So, here I’ll just consider one resource as regards to the protocols, and then I will briefly explore some localised and Victorian resources available to support teachers to embed Aboriginal perspectives in the humanities curriculum.

So, here’s one. Resources for the Protocols in the humanities. It’s the Koorie Cross Curricular Protocols for Victorian Government Schools, and what it provides is principles and guidelines, so you need to read through that, and then it will give you reference to further links. So, it’ll support teachers to really understand the protocols, so the cultural protocols for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture in the classroom. Now, having a good understanding and knowledge of the cultural protocols is a good starting point, ‘cause it will help teachers to develop that confidence in how they can incorporate Aboriginal perspectives across the curriculum. So, have a look at that website.

Alright, so, here’s another resource. The Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated – VAEAI. They have developed some resources there, which then I’ll hand over to Vaso, who will explain about and showcase some of the resources that are available to support teachers. So over to you, Vaso.

**Vaso Elefsiniotis:** Hello, Zeta, and thank you for introducing me, and hello to everyone out there. My name is Vaso Elefsiniotis and I work at VAEAI. I am Senior Project Officer around Languages, Education and Curriculum. And I’d like to share some of our resources that many of you would be aware of, but maybe many are not so aware, particularly to support the... We have so many that can support the History and Civics & Citizenship and Geography - the humanities area.

So I’m taking you straight to our website – vaeai.org.au.

And if you have a look up here at the Resources tab, and scroll down to Koorie Education Resources, you will see our...quite a few resour...quite a few documents. We have the Koorie Education Calendar. And many of you may have been in the talk last Monday, when we talked more in detail about our resources, but pegged around significant dates throughout the year, these resources really focus on Victorian content. And the Koorie Education Calendar is updated annually. Feel free to have a look. And there’s suggested activities and multimedia resources that are out there online.

We produce and put out every couple of months a Koorie Perspectives in Curriculum Bulletin, which is based on the calendar, but much more updated and much more contemporary. And that’s particularly significant when Gerry was talking so strongly and rightly about Civics & Citizenship and contemporary events and issues to make this whole area really relevant.

And I’ll just show off the last issue of the Koorie Perspectives, just so you can see what it looks like. There are significant dates. In August, it was Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children’s Day and, of course, it was Science Week as well. But we have, like, the International Day of World’s Indigenous Peoples, and a lot of resources to support activities on those days. In particular, at that time, the Australian Black Lives Matters, and BTN, such a fantastic resource out there for decades, since my own childhood, making programs about contemporary issues. You can see all the curriculum links to the Vic curriculum.

And in Geography, so much talking about place, space and interconnections. So, if I can just scroll down. I think that was just... that’s just the science aspect. History – William Barak. And... I forgot where I was going to go to... (LAUGHS) ...with that. But what I did want to highlight was, we had Indigenous Literacy Day that was mentioned earlier. But What’s New? And, as you can see, the new videos that Leonie was referring to are referenced in this bulletin as well. So that’s just the last bulletin.

And...but if you have a look down at Briefs & Features, there are so many content descriptors in history and Civics & Citizenship, particularly around rights and freedoms. We have a special on the 1967 Referendum and the 1965 Freedom Rides. This is what the ‘67 Referendum looks like. There are videos you can just... All these are resources that are out there.

And, in particular, you know, Gerry was talking about authentic resources, and Zeta, about Aboriginal perspectives. When we’re making these resources, we try and source, as much as possible, from Aboriginal authored and Victorian Aboriginal authored products. So you can get a really...really, really good perspective.

1965 Freedom Rides, and Charles Perkins is also mentioned in the content descriptors. And we have a feature also... There he is, back in Moree back in the day. Just to highlight, back in 2017, there were previously unpublished photographs from the 1965 Freedom Ride. So you can explore these photographs. And this is where your unit starts to become cross-curricular. So you can look at media arts as well as history, and you can look at place and rights and freedoms and... Yeah. That’s sort of what you can look at in your own time. You can see Rights and Freedoms. So, World Human Rights Day. Of course, these calendar dates are just a framework, really, for planning and presenting work. You can take these topics any day of the year. And I really encourage you to explore, in your own time, and to join our mailing list if you’re not on, or explore the website when you can. So, that’s me.

**Zeta Wilson:** Thank you, Vaso. Alright. How do we get back to the...

**Vaso Elefsiniotis:** So... There.

**Zeta Wilson:** (CHUCKLES) Ah, thank you. Alright. Moving along. So, here’s another resource. Again, some of you’ll be quite familiar. Some of them are localised Victorian resources. I just really want to highlight the one, and that’s the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. What it has there, basically, is just an access to a wide range of collection of resources, of publications, books and research to support the knowledge about the diversity of the culture and history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. That’s briefly, and as you know, you can see some of those - Koorie Heritage Trust, the Tuckerbag Indigenous and Melbourne and Culture Victoria.

Here, if you want to keep up-to-date and be informed about any further professional learning, the VCAA Bulletin or F-10 Update, you can subscribe. All you have to do is go to the VCAA website, F-10. And down there also, too, is Vaso’s contact details as well.

Alright, now we are over to Craig Smith and we’ll do the Q&A. Alright, over to you, Craig.

**Craig Smith:** Thank you, Zeta. And thanks, panellists. Just before we start, a couple of housekeeping things, really. So, that last link that Zeta shared to our subscribing services at the VCAA, that’s one way we publicise when we’ll put up today’s PowerPoint, transcript of the recording, and a recording...a copy of the recording itself. It does take a little bit of time. So there is a bit of a lag between today’s session going up on our professional learning pages. So one way of knowing when it will be up is simply subscribe to either the F-10 Update or the Bulletin, and we will publicise when we’ve got each recording loaded.

We’ve had several questions, and perhaps the first one I want to start with is... It’s come up on several occasions through the chat box. And really it’s around the importance of naming and of language, and the use of language. And rather than sort of rehearsing, because I think we did cover off early in the presentation, via Zeta, how to respond. If you haven’t done so already, I’d also highly recommend you have a look at Daryl Rose’s entry in the chat box, and some of the origins dating back to the Tent Embassy in the early 1970s.

In terms of questions, we’ll start with Claire. And thanks for waiting. Claire asks for suggestions where to direct students to research for reliable information that is correct and endorsed by First Nation peoples. And I know we’ve just run through a number of recommendations for where to go for resources. But I think it raises an interesting question around, as educators, how do we tell that the source is reliable and appropriate?

**Zeta Wilson:** Well, quite often, you’ll see traditional owners, they will produce some resources and that, so you can start there with traditional owners for your area. Secondly, often you’ll see some resources that will often say and state that they’ve worked in collaboration with Aboriginal people. So, if you see resources like that, then you know the...yeah, the context is there, collaboration with Aboriginal people. So, that’s the two things I can think of so far, apart from what we’ve shared already, some of those resources. Anybody else like to add to that?

**Vaso Elefsiniotis:** I’ll just add that I agree with Zeta in exactly those ways. Just having a little bit of a dig will show who the author is or, if it’s co-authored, if it’s endorsed. With the resources that we make at VAEAI, we try hard to make sure they’re well endorsed or well written, and particularly Koorie written resources. And, you know...and use ones that are particularly endorsed by Aboriginal organisations.

Daryl Rose also put in the chat – and hi, Daryl – the Gunditjmara land justice story. They’re the sort of resources that we try and seek out to promote in the bulletin. So that’s just...that’s just one source. But have a look, have a look at the publication details, and...and be aware. (CHUCKLES)

**Craig Smith:** Thanks for that. It’s a great question and a great response. You know, very topical. Vaso, I might get you just to... Yeah. And very topical given, you know, our current situation of news, false news and all the rest of the sorts of news.

Moving on. Brad asks, “Are there no references to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures and histories in economic and business?” I’ll throw that over to our curriculum managers to start.

**Zeta Wilson:** I’ll jump in. When you look at, you know... We know there are Aboriginal entrepreneurs and businesses – they’re there. So, if the curriculum doesn’t specifically state to have some Aboriginal mandated content in there, you still can talk about Aboriginal businesses and entrepreneurs. So, you still can include that in your discussion. So, we know that there are plenty of business around, especially when people are looking at – I’m just thinking of one example – bush tucker and that. I suppose bush foods and that. There’s businesses around. You can... They’re endless, I can say. You just need to do your research, and you can highlight some of those businesses that are available for students to learn about, really. So there’s content there that you can actually talk to your students about.

**Gerry Martin:** Also, if I can add, if you talk about looking at the Level 9 and 10, talk about resource allocation and making choices in the economics and business curriculum. So, for example, explain the links between economic performance and living standards, and including the variations that exist within and between economies in Australia, and give reason for the possible causes of variation in Australia. So, that would be really interesting to explore, the Indigenous experience in the variation of economies, also living standards in Australia. And looking at that idea, the business environment, work and work futures. Well, what do you mean by enterprising behaviours and capabilities? And look at some of the businesses that have emerged from...run by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and using creative opportunities and innovations around that gives a really good opportunity to explore Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in economics and business.

**Craig Smith:** Thank you for that. And, so, just to, you know, frame that conversation. The references to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures that are there in the...under the cross-curriculum priority area really just makes note of where there is...where there are explicit references in either content description, or in elaboration. It really should be treated as a starting point only. And there are many opportunities across the curriculum to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, and people’s histories and cultures, as you go forward.

I’ve got another question, this time from Deborah. Deborah asks, “Can you speak to the reason why history/geography textbooks have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders histories/geographies separated into their own sections? And how does this make sense in light of some of the things that have been said today?”

**Gerry Martin:** Leonie, do you want to go, or will I go? I suppose, to be honest, VCAA, we don’t have any control over those resources. So, I mean, they would be all commercial products that are produced externally. So, again, I suppose the first question is, looking at those particular resources and texts and actually asking them that question of how they represent, and use of language in their texts. So I can’t really speak for those.

I suppose, in that use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, I think it’s, you know... If we’re talking about looking at Torres Strait Islander geography and history, you’d probably spoke of them Torres Strait Island...using the words Torres Strait Islander. But if looking...say we’re talking about Victoria, you’re more likely to use Aboriginal land management practices, as opposed to using the nomenclature of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. So I suppose understanding the use of the language in context. Craig, does that answer the question?

**Craig Smith:** I’ll leave our audience to judge that, Gerry, but, yeah, I was swayed by it. I think the key takeaway is, resources such as textbooks are developed by third parties. As always, you know, buyer beware. You need to go through and make your own particular judgement around their suitability.

I’m really conscious we are coming near the end of time, so I’ll be quick. A really important question from Rufaro. Rufaro asks, “How do you assist students who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander in the classroom? And how can we emphasise the importance of the warning on the videos? That is to say, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander viewers warning. Some videos have it and, with YouTube videos and other resources, how can you be sure it’s OK to share these videos with classes?” And again, I’ll throw it open to the panel generally.

**Leonie Brown:** Go, Zeta.

**Zeta Wilson:** Craig, go back to that first question. What was the first thing she wanted to know about the students? “How do you identify?” Did she... Was she saying that? Sorry. I was...

**Craig Smith:** That’s quite alright. No, it was, “How do you assist students who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander in the classroom?”

**Zeta Wilson:** Oh. OK. My mind is thinking on that one. Well, quite often, I suppose, there’s lots of things. You develop a relationship with your students by having a conversation. I think a good starting point is often, because Aboriginal people, there’s that cultural diversity, so I think you need to start with where they’re from. And then, once you make that connection, then it can grow from there. So it’s, you know, the cultural identity. Just talk about, you know, “Where are you from?” and that. So I’ll talk about my connection. My connection is back in South Australia. Where here, even though I’m living in Victoria. So you need to understand where your students’ background is. It’s like everything, in that, once you establish that, then you can extend from there. Because, and what you can do then is, basically, once you know where they’re from, you can suit and tailor the learning from their background, really, and that. And so that’s a good starting point. That’s all I’ve got to share, so I’ll open it up to others.

**Vaso Elefsiniotis:** The only thing I’d add to that is to be aware also... And it speaks to what Zeta’s talking about – get to know your students. Try not to assume. And many...many of my colleagues that I work with talk about their own school experiences. When the teacher and the whole classroom turns to them too, with the expectation that they are going to be the experts on Aboriginal history. So be really aware of that. Get to know your students, and don’t assume. But talk to them first about what they know, and what they might be willing to share with your classroom or might want to do research with their own families. But be aware to not expect your students to be the experts on all matters Aboriginal. And that goes for your teachers as well, Aboriginal teachers in your schools. I’m talking fast because I’m aware of the time there, Mr Craig Smith and Zeta. (LAUGHS) But I just wanted to add that as well, you know? And it goes with what you’re saying, I think, Zeta, about getting to know your students.

**Craig Smith:** Thanks for that, Vaso. And I appreciate the speediness.

We’re just about out of time. I just wanted to add there’s a great response there from Nola sharing her experiences of how she deals with sensitive issues in the classroom. So, again, utilise the chat box, take away ideas, references and so on that you could find useful in your classroom settings.

Zeta, I’m going to throw over to you to take us home. Thank you.

**Zeta Wilson:** Alright. Thank you. So, tomorrow is the final series of the webinar for secondary, and will be on STEM. So, for those who are interested, you can register still. And that’s what the topic will be about – STEM and Aboriginal perspectives.

And I also would like to say, too, thank you to the panellists and also, too, for the participants for attending today these series of webinars throughout the two weeks. And finally, of course, my contact details are there for you to get, if you need to contact me.

So all I want to say is, thank you for attending, and good evening to all. And that’s it. Bye.

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