

Australia's First Nations Peoples — Knowledge Organiser

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Key facts

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the First Nations peoples of Australia.
- They have lived in Australia for at least 65,000 years — among the world's oldest continuous cultures.
- There were hundreds of distinct nations, each with its own language, Country and laws.
- Torres Strait Islander peoples come from the islands between the tip of Queensland and Papua New Guinea.

Key vocabulary

- Country — the land a group belongs to, including its plants, animals, stories and ancestors.
- The Dreaming — the beliefs and stories explaining creation, law and the connection of all things.
- Elder — a respected older person who holds and passes on knowledge.
- Songlines — paths across the land recorded in song, story and dance.

Connection to Country

First Nations peoples see themselves as part of the land, not owners of it. Knowledge of food, water, seasons and care for the land has been passed down for thousands of generations through story, art and ceremony.

Respectful learning

Many schools begin events with an Acknowledgement of Country, recognising the Traditional Owners of the land. We name peoples and Country specifically where we can, and treat these living cultures with respect.