

Bridge of Memories – Education Kit

INTRODUCTION

This education kit is aimed at students in years 9 and 10 and is written in accordance with VELS documents. It contains activities and suggestions for pre and post visit activities and worksheets for students to complete while at the museum.

VELS LINKS – Discipline Based Learning – Humanities Level 6

Historical knowledge and understanding	Descriptors
Level 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “post World War II immigration”• “the development of multiculturalism” (described in the ‘Learning Focus’)
Historical reasoning and interpretation	
Level 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “They identify, comprehend and evaluate a range of primary and secondary sources, including visual sources”• “They critically evaluate sources of evidence for...information...and bias”• “They recognize that in history there are multiple perspectives and partial explanations”• “They use evidence to support arguments and select and use appropriate written and oral forms to communicate [and] develop historical explanations in a variety of oral [and] written...forms.”

From:

Victorian Essential Learning Standards, History Level 6 (Years 9 and 10) (ON LINE),
5th of August 2009,

<http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/essential/discipline/humanities/history/level6.html>

EXHIBITION – BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

Bridge of Memories

Bridge of Memories explores the complexities of “identity” through the personal experiences of Chinese Australians who have migrated from many parts of the Asia Pacific region to Australia since 1950.

The exhibition provides an understanding of the diverse make up of the Chinese Community – their differences in cultural background and personal experiences, created through previous migrations by their forebears over hundreds of years from different regions of **China** to surrounding countries of **Cambodia, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Indonesia, East Timor** and **Vietnam**.

Through research funded by the Australian National University, the exhibition highlights the various changing world and local economic, social and political circumstances over the past 50 years that have impacted the make-up of today’s multicultural society. This is not a new phenomenon – but can be seen through Australia’s 200+ year history of migration.

China has had long ties with Australia with merchants trading in the seas off northern Australia from the early seventeenth century. The first recorded Chinese settler, Mak Sai Ying, arrived in Sydney in 1818. Chinese immigration did not become significant, until the 1850s gold rushes, when the Chinese-born population is believed to have exceeded 50,000. Legislation that specifically restricted Chinese immigration and more appealing economic opportunities elsewhere saw the number of Chinese in Australia who were either born in China, or whose parents were, drop to just over 38,000 in 1881 to around 30,000 in 1901 and just over 9,000 in 1947.

In the last 50 years, over 500,000 migrants of Chinese descent have arrived as a result of world events and changing government policy. Malaysian students came under the Colombo Plan of the 1960s, the Vietnamese “boat people” arrived in 1979, while in the 1990s, many Taiwanese, Indonesian and Singaporean Chinese came for business opportunities under the business migration plan.

During the past 50 years, the Chinese community has evolved from being an isolated group of “new Australians” to active participants who prosper and contribute to all areas of life and have become an integral part of Australia society.

The story of migration is also told through interviews highlighting diverse life experiences

and providing personal insights into the meaning of migration. Drawing together the experiences of people of Chinese heritage from many Asian Pacific countries, the audio-visual interviews reveal why people have settled in Australia, their expectations on coming here and what they hoped to find.



Pre visit activities

1. Brainstorm the students' knowledge of Asian countries which contain people with ethnic Chinese background and see if they can locate these countries on a blank map of the region (provided at the end of the education kit).
2. Brainstorm reasons why people might have migrated to Australia in different periods, how they might have felt about migration and what challenges they might have faced. Invite students in the class to share their own migration stories or those of their families.
3. Read through the 'Background and summary' document with the students. Start a glossary of key words students will encounter in the exhibition including: migrant, emigrate, refugee, visa, multicultural, white Australia policy. You may like to refer to the Multicultural Australia website provided below for this activity.
4. Break the students into pairs or threes, so that you have a small group allocated to each country featured in the exhibition. Get the students to conduct a bit of background research into the history of that particular Asian country to prepare them for their visit. Read through the task worksheets with students before bringing them to the museum to make sure that any queries are answered before you arrive and students are clear about the task requirements.

While in the exhibition

Two worksheets are provided for students to use in their investigation of the exhibition and the country allocated.

Presentation of History – These relate to the way history has been presented and the use of historical sources in the construction of history.

Country Investigation – These relate to the content presented for each country.

Teachers can decide whether they want students to complete both sets of questions or focus on one or the other. If you decide to only explore the 'Country Investigation' questions and not the 'Presentation of History' questions, we recommend still reading the explanation about the exhibition at the start of the 'Presentation of History' sheet with your students, so that they understand how the information in the exhibition is arranged.

The following websites will also assist in some background research into Chinese migration to Australia, previous government policies and multiculturalism:

Chinese Heritage of Australian Federation (ON LINE),

3rd of October 2008, www.chaf.lib.latrobe.edu.au

This is a fantastic website which celebrates and documents the role of Chinese people in Australia's history. It has lots of great primary and secondary documents, and a special education section. In the education section you will find a brief history of the Chinese in Australia, lots of lesson plans, useful teaching resources (great web links), and even a webquest which explores the White Australia Policy.

Collection Interactives: Harvest of Endurance Scroll (ON LINE),

3rd October 2008, http://www.nma.gov.au/collections/collection_interactives/

This is a 50 metre long scroll which depicts two centuries of Chinese-Australian history. The scroll features individual pictures with accompanying text. It's a bit like a modern version of the Bayeux tapestry or a historical comic book. You can click to see individual scenes located under subject headings and it can be viewed in HTML or Flash. A great resource!

Making Multicultural Australia for the 21st Century (ON LINE), 5 August 2009,

<http://www.multiculturalaustralia.edu.au/>

An extremely rich resource aimed at educating people about multicultural Australia in the past and present. It has a huge range of resources to explore including lessons, quizzes, documents, video, images, glossary, and search facility. It's very professional and well worth logging onto with your students.

Personal story

- Read the panel and watch the interview on the television screen.
- Why did this migrant come to Australia?

- What challenges did they face?

- How were these challenges resolved?

- What attitudes or feelings do they express about Australia?

- Choose one or two other things about their story that you find interesting and would like to share with the class.

Profile of their Australian communities today

- How many people from this country live in Australia today?

- Where do they live?

- What jobs do they do?

- What are some of their attitudes towards Australia? Write down some key words they use or copy out a whole quotation which you feel best sums up their attitudes.

Once you have completed the questions for your group you are free to wander around the rest of the exhibition reading panels and listening to stories which are of interest to you.

Use the table below to record similarities between two countries that have been investigated in the exhibition.

Name of Country		
Historical Background		
Issues faced		
Personal story		
Profile of Australian communities today		

Post visit activities

Once back at school, the following activities can be used to debrief the museum visit with the students:

1. Class discussion. Read through and discuss their answers to the general questions of and impressions about the exhibition, exploring issues such as selection and presentation of information, use of primary and secondary sources and inclusion of information in a range of formats and colours.
2. Have students prepare an oral presentation for the class, showcasing the information and stories they have learned about their allocated country. You could have them present information in a range of ways including role play, poster, PowerPoint presentation or another format you choose.
3. Get students to write a 300-400 word extended response using the information and evidence they recorded from their visit.
4. Use the comparison table provided for students to take notes while back in class listening to other groups' presentations and then synthesize the information. Otherwise, you could choose to have students look at two countries while in the exhibition, if time permits and you wish to take this approach.

Map of Asian Region

