Contents

How to use this resource .................................................. 3
Neville Bonner – Heart + Soul ........................................... 4
An Indigenous politician’s life ......................................... 5
Emblems of a political life ................................................. 7
The stylish senator .......................................................... 9
Appendices ...................................................................... 11
Curriculum Links ............................................................. 15
Welcome to the Museum of Australian Democracy’s (MoAD) resource *FINDERS KEEPERS – personal objects as primary sources*.

This resource is designed to support the use of objects from the museum’s collection in the upper primary classroom. MoAD is located in the nationally listed heritage building Old Parliament House in Parkes, Canberra. Old Parliament House was the home of the Federal Parliament from 1927 to 1988.

**FINDERS**

Museums collect objects with stories to tell – objects both ordinary and extraordinary. We are story-finders. MoAD collects objects that reveal the stories behind the ideas, movements, individuals and events that have shaped Australia’s democracy. We seek stories that reveal the workings of Australia’s government and our society’s popular movements, about the lives of our prime ministers and those who have most influenced our political life.

**KEEPERS**

Some of us collect things for the stories they tell about our lives and our families, or about where we come from. Others collect things that have personal, aesthetic or emotional appeal for them.

**NEVILLE BONNER**

**Australia’s first Indigenous federal parliamentarian**

This resource focuses on the museum’s *Neville Bonner Collection* and has been developed for upper primary students. Neville Bonner was Australia’s first Indigenous federal parliamentarian and the collection includes personal objects donated to the museum by his family.

This resource includes:

- A short biography of the collector
- A selection of objects from the collection
- Information about the objects
- Suggestions for analysing these objects with students
- Suggested extension activities

This resource aligns with the Australian Curriculum v8.3.

We hope you enjoy exploring this collection – more information can be found at the following MoAD Learning websites:

- Onsite schools programs
- Resources

MoAD Learning, 2017

MoAD Learning would like to thank the donors of this collection for sharing their collection and stories with the museum.
Neville Bonner was Australia’s first Indigenous federal parliamentarian. He represented Queensland as a senator from 1971 to 1983. He is remembered as a man of great gravitas, and as a hard worker dedicated to his state, to his party and to the cause of advancing Aboriginal people. Neville’s collection reflects his personal qualities of quiet strength and determination, as well as his great love for his family.

Australian Curriculum links v8.3
- Humanities and Social Sciences
  Year 5; Year 6/7
- Visual Arts
  Year 5 and 6
- Media Arts
  Year 5 and 6
- English
  Year 5 and 6

Want to know more?
- MoAD Blog
  From the Oral History collection: Heather Bonner
- The Biographical Dictionary of the Australian Senate
- ABC Splash
  Australia's first Aboriginal member of parliament
An Indigenous politician’s life

This bark painting was made by Bill Congoo, an Aboriginal elder and occasional artist on Palm Island. The bark painting shows Senator Neville Bonner’s life in four scenes. It was probably given to the senator during one of his frequent visits to Palm Island where he had lived for many years.

The first scene shows Neville’s birthplace at Ukerebagh Island, Tweed Heads, NSW. Baby Neville is sitting on his father’s lap, near a humpy. The second scene depicts the time when Neville lived on Palm Island with his wife Mona and five sons, and hunted dugongs and turtles. The third section of the painting tells of Neville’s move to Ipswich where he began to mix more with Europeans and became involved in politics. The final panel in the artwork is of Neville as a senator and shows him sitting in a circle with three other politicians.

Bark painting by Bill Congoo c1970s
MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY COLLECTION
Suggestions for analysing this source

- Begin by showing your students the bark painting (Appendix A). Allow time for your students to think about it.

- Start with the bottom section of the bark painting. Ask your students to use the sentence starter ‘I see …’ to describe what they see for the whole class.
  The aim is that each student either mentions a new detail or elaborates on what was said before. At this stage students avoid interpreting the section.

- Repeat this activity for the remaining sections of the bark painting.

- Start with the bottom section of the bark painting. Ask your students to use the sentence starter ‘I think …’ to describe what they think is happening in each section.
  Follow up their response with the question ‘What did you see that makes you think that?’
  This encourages students to justify their thinking by referencing details in the bark painting.

- Repeat this activity for the remaining sections of the bark painting.

- Share the museum label with your students. Are any of their initial thoughts confirmed or challenged? Do they have any new questions?

- Get your students to research other parts of Neville Bonner’s life. Use the links to MoAD’s website to get started.

- Using this additional research, students, either individually or in small groups, select up to four events from Neville Bonner’s life not depicted in the bark painting.
  Students then create an artwork to depict these other life events.

Suggestions for extending this activity

- Get thinking
  Ask your students to think about some important events from their life. How could they use media or visual arts to represent these events?

- Get doing
  Using media or visual arts get your students to create an artwork telling their story.

- Get sharing
  Display your students’ artworks in the school library or another suitable area.
  Make sure they create a museum label for their artwork. Use the label for the bark painting as an example.

Want to know more?

- MoAD Blog
  A life recorded on bark – Senator Neville Bonner

- MoAD Collection
  Boomerang
  #2006-2443
In the 1960s Neville Bonner became interested in local politics and joined a group which became the One People of Australia League (OPAL). The pin represents Neville’s lifetime commitment to the organisation as well as his hopes for Aboriginal people.

‘One People of Australia League’ (OPAL) pin
MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY COLLECTION
Suggestions for analysing this source

- Ask your students to think about why people wear badges and pins. Is anyone in class wearing a badge or pin? What does it tell you about the wearer?
- Show your students the picture of the OPAL pin (Appendix B) and get them to think about the shape, images, patterns and the acronym used. Allow time for your students to consider the object and write down their initial thoughts and questions.
- As a whole class or in small groups get your students to brainstorm:
  - What they think they know about this object
  - What they want to know about this object
- Share the museum label with your students and revisit the ideas from the brainstorming session. Are any of their initial thoughts confirmed or challenged? Are any of their questions answered? Do they have any new questions?
- As a whole class, in small groups or individually create a list of questions for further investigation. Students then research and report back to the whole class what they have found out.
- Using the information students have already collected about Neville Bonner, repeat this activity using Neville Bonner’s Liberal Party of Australia Life Member badge.

Suggestions for extending this activity

- Get thinking
  What organisation or issue would your students wear a badge or pin for? Are there any organisations or issues in the local community they feel strongly about?
- Get doing
  Get your students to design and make a badge that highlights this organisation or issue.
- Get sharing
  Display your students' badges in the school library or another suitable area. Get your students to write a short explanation about the organisation or issue they chose and the design they created.

Want to know more?

- MoAD Collection
  ‘One People of Australia League’ (OPAL) pin #2006-2438
- MoAD Website
  Wear Your Colours
Neville Bonner was a debonair man who, with his colourful ties and luxuriant head of hair, appeared dignified and elegant among his fellow senators. Items such as his R.M. Williams boots and personalised briefcase convey something of his individual style.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT
Items belonging to Neville Bonner – Spectacles; Multi-coloured tie; Black briefcase; Black leather boots
MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY COLLECTION
Suggestions for analysing this source

Everyday items often reveal much about our personal and professional lives. These objects from the museum’s Neville Bonner Collection give us an insight into who he was and his life before and after politics.

- Begin by showing your students the photo of Neville Bonner and his personal objects (Appendix C and D).
- Ask your students to describe the items thinking about the colours, shape, size, why and when they would have been used and if they look the same today. Do your students think these objects tell the whole story of Neville Bonner’s life or just a small part?
- Share with your students some information about Neville Bonner. Use the links at the start of this resource as well as the information below:
  
  Neville Bonner loved his R.M. Williams boots. They were a reminder of his early years as a rural worker when he travelled widely, working as a dairy hand, station hand and stockman, picking vegetables, clearing land, ringbarking trees and building fences.

- Give your students a copy of the museum label. Ask them to circle any of the words they don’t know the meaning of and then find a definition for it.
- Get your students to use a thesaurus to find alternative words with a similar meaning. If you use these alternative words does the description still make sense? Has the meaning been changed?
- Get your students to rewrite the museum label for someone their age.

Suggestions for extending this activity

- Get thinking
  Ask your students to select 6–8 personal objects and write a list of up to 10 descriptive words about themselves.

- Get doing
  Get your students to swap their objects and list of words with someone else in the class. Your students now become the curator – using the list of words and up to four of the objects, students write a short description similar to the museum label.

- Get sharing
  Display the objects alongside the descriptions in the classroom. Invite other students to write a response to the description and object selection.

Want to know more?

- MoAD Collection

  [MoAD’s collection](https://moad.com.au/collection) includes a number of objects owned by former Australian politicians. Find out about former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd’s pair of R.M. Williams riding boots.
Appendix A

Bark Painting by Bill Congoo c1970s
MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY COLLECTION
Appendix B

‘One People of Australia League’ (OPAL) pin
MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY COLLECTION
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT
Items belonging to Neville Bonner
Spectacles; Multi-coloured tie; Black briefcase; Black leather boots
MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY COLLECTION
Neville Bonner 1971
NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF AUSTRALIA, A1200, L96581
HASS

Year 5

ACHASSI094 - Develop appropriate questions to guide an inquiry about people, events, developments, places, systems and challenges

ACHASSI095 - Locate and collect relevant information and data from primary sources and secondary sources

ACHASSI097 - Sequence information about people's lives, events, developments and phenomena using a variety of methods including timelines

ACHASSI098 - Examine primary sources and secondary sources to determine their origin and purpose

ACHASSI099 - Examine different viewpoints on actions, events, issues and phenomena in the past and present

ACHASSI101 - Evaluate evidence to draw conclusions

ACHASSI104 - Reflect on learning to propose personal and/or collective action in response to an issue or challenge, and predict the probable effects

ACHASSK118 - How people with shared beliefs and values work together to achieve a civic goal

Year 6/7

ACHASSI122 - Develop appropriate questions to guide an inquiry about people, events, developments, places, systems and challenges

ACHASSI123 - Locate and collect relevant information and data from primary sources and secondary sources

ACHASSI125 - Sequence information about people's lives, events, developments and phenomena using a variety of methods including timelines

ACHASSI126 - Examine primary sources and secondary sources to determine their origin and purpose

ACHASSI127 - Examine different viewpoints on actions, events, issues and phenomena in the past and present

ACHASSI129 - Evaluate evidence to draw conclusions

ACHASSI132 - Reflect on learning to propose personal and/or collective action in response to an issue or challenge, and predict the probable effects

ACHASSK135 - Experiences of Australian democracy and citizenship, including the status and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, migrants, women and children

ACHASSK137 - The contribution of individuals and groups to the development of Australian society since Federation

Visual Arts

Year 5 and 6

ACAVAM114 - Explore ideas and practices used by artists, including practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, to represent different views, beliefs and opinions

ACAVAM115 - Develop and apply techniques and processes when making their artworks

ACAVAM116 - Plan the display of artworks to enhance their meaning for an audience

ACAVAR117 - Explain how visual arts conventions communicate meaning by comparing artworks from different social, cultural and historical contexts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artworks
Media Arts
Year 5 and 6

ACAMAM062 – Explore representations, characterisations and points of view of people in their community, including themselves, using settings, ideas, story principles and genre conventions in images, sounds and text

ACAMAM063 – Develop skills with media technologies to shape space, time, movement and lighting within images, sounds and text

ACAMAM064 – Plan, produce and present media artworks for specific audiences and purposes using responsible media practice

ACAMAR065 – Explain how the elements of media arts and story principles communicate meaning by comparing media artworks from different social, cultural and historical contexts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media artworks

English
Year 5

ACELA1500 – Understand that the pronunciation, spelling and meanings of words have histories and change over time

ACELA1504 – Understand how texts vary in purpose, structure and topic as well as the degree of formality

ACELY1698 – Show how ideas and points of view in texts are conveyed through the use of vocabulary, including idiomatic expressions, objective and subjective language, and that these can change according to context

Year 6

ACELA1518 – Understand how authors often innovate on text structures and play with language features to achieve particular aesthetic, humorous and persuasive purposes and effects

ACELA1525 – Investigate how vocabulary choices, including evaluative language can express shades of meaning, feeling and opinion

ACELT1618 – Create literary texts that adapt or combine aspects of texts students have experienced in innovative ways

ACELY1714 – Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, choosing and experimenting with text structures, language features, images and digital resources appropriate to purpose and audience