

# AN INTRODUCTION

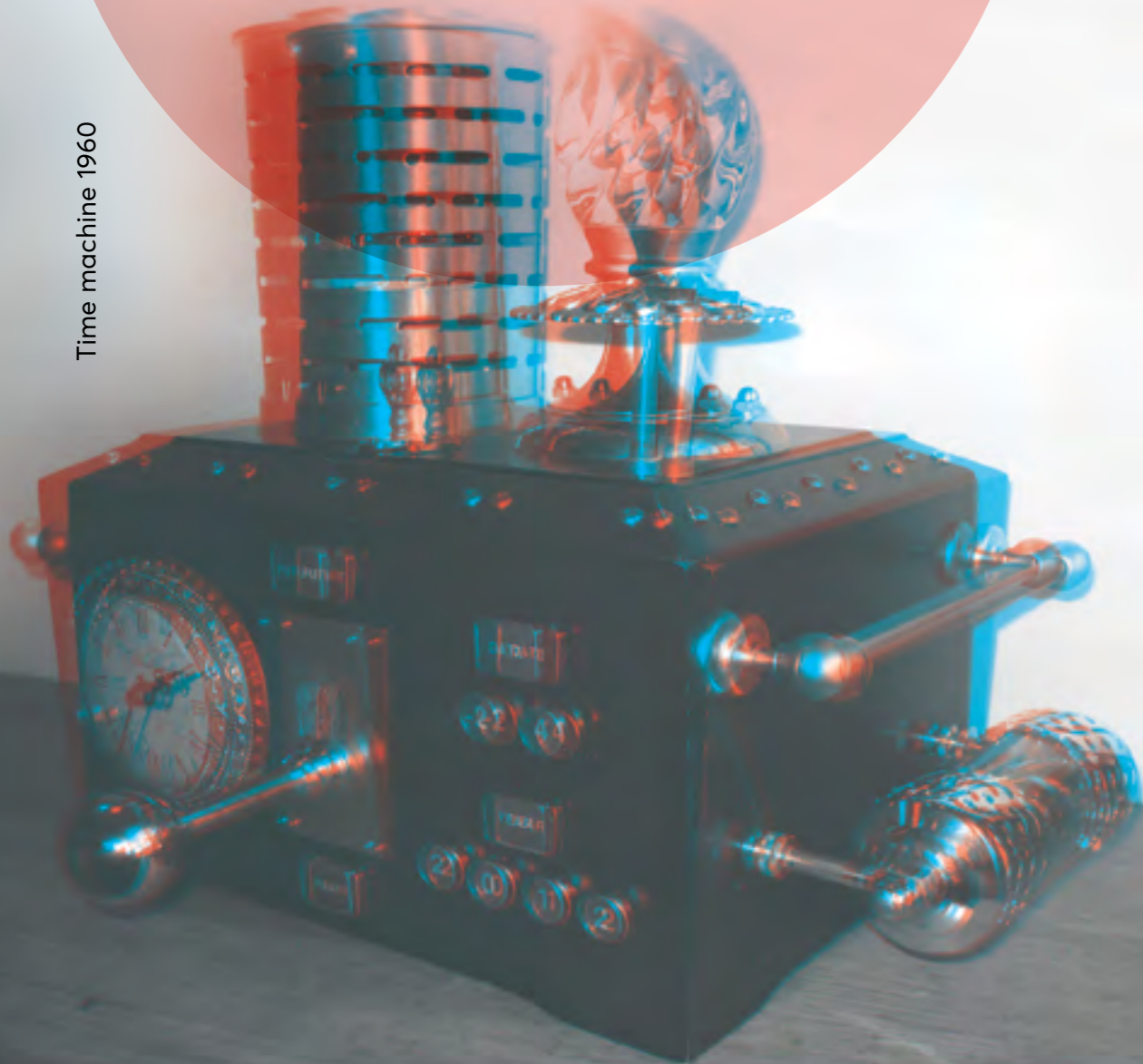
## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

● NORPA and all of the creatives on this project acknowledge and pay respect to the past, present and future Traditional Custodians and Elders of this nation and the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Ancestors have walked this country and we acknowledge their special and unique contribution to our shared histories, cultures and languages. We recognise the collective contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians in educating all people across this country.

# THE UNDERLIBRARY OF UNOFFICIAL HISTORIES

PRESENTED BY **norpa**



## INTRODUCTION

■ Part immersive theatre, part game and part interactive research project.

The Underlibrary of Unofficial Histories is a theatrical delight, designed wholly around the Stage Two History Syllabus.

## THE STRUCTURE

The experience begins with a series of mysterious postcards, a newspaper article and artefacts 'arriving' at the school, follows up with an in-school performance and culminates in an interactive puzzle hunt as students race to discover the clues that will help Zelda, a girl from the future, reunite with her long lost brother and save all of history!

### ● PRE SHOW //

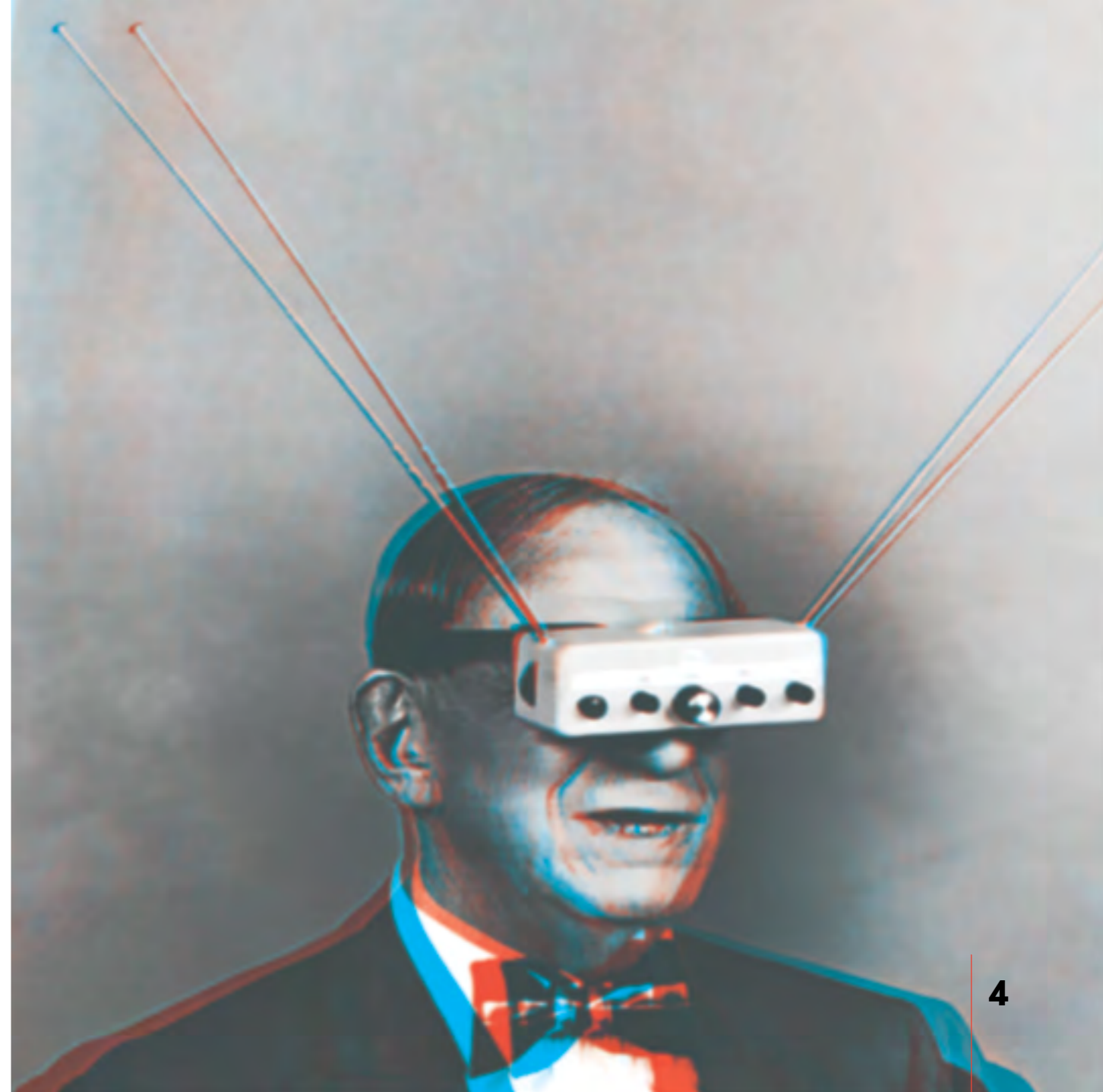
Two weeks prior to the performance, the pre-show engagement package (containing postcards, artefacts and an old newspaper article) will be sent to the school. Teachers will begin to set the scene for the performance through the creative delivery of the package contents to their class.

### ● PERFORMANCE DAY //

A 45-60 min show in the classroom or school hall followed by 45-60 minutes of activities around the school yard.

### ● POST SHOW //

Creative provocations are provided for the students to continue their connection to the story and history.





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## THE STORY

the future, there is a library called History's End. The library is huge, though most of its bookshelves are empty. The library is open, though no one visits, except the moths.

The library has a hundred books, but only one title, as every copy is the same. It's a history book, from way back in 2021. No one knows what came after; that's the year history stopped. And with each nightly visit from the moths, a little more disappears.

By day, the librarians mend the books as best they can, but covers and bindings both are easier to replace than all the many missing words. Picture it: whole pages are riddled with holes, gulping words and sometimes

sentences and paragraphs too, until all that's left is lace. And then it's the librarians' job to look at what's left, guess at what's gone and fill in the gaps as best they can. This means that chapters are always changing, as words come and go, and a book you picked up on a Monday might contradict itself by Tuesday and by Friday be another book entirely!

The head librarian is a man named Mr Finch and it's his job to make sure the few books left all tell the same story, so there can never be any confusion or doubt. And as the library lends its books out to all the surrounding cities, it's Finch who has the last word on history. Every afternoon he reviews the day's revisions, making sure they all add up. Those that

don't are dispensed with: torn up and tossed out. It might seem harsh, but with so few books left, history is far too valuable to get into fights about. That's how wars used to start! Which is why it's so important every history book agrees on what happened in the past and when and why. The system isn't perfect, but so long as there's only one book, and the moths keep coming, there's nothing else to do.

Twins, Albus and Zelda, work in the library and it's their job to dust the books and shoo away the moths. While Zelda is curious, always asking questions and getting into trouble, her brother Albus is quiet and cautious,

though he delights in riddles. Zelda loves history but Albus prefers mysteries — though he's never read one as none are left in the library. But when a mysterious crate full of brand new books from the past appears late one night, the brother and sister will discover a secret library where they'll learn that history is far more complicated than they thought. But when Albus is seized by Mr Finch and the two fall through time, along with a couple of moths, so begins Zelda's quest to bring her brother home, and save the future.



This is a rescue mission.

To find Albus and restart history.

And Zelda needs your help.

Because her brother is here.

She's just not sure when.

## CREDITS

Co-creators ..... **Valley Lipcer & Caleb Lewis**

Writer & Game Designer ..... **Caleb Lewis**

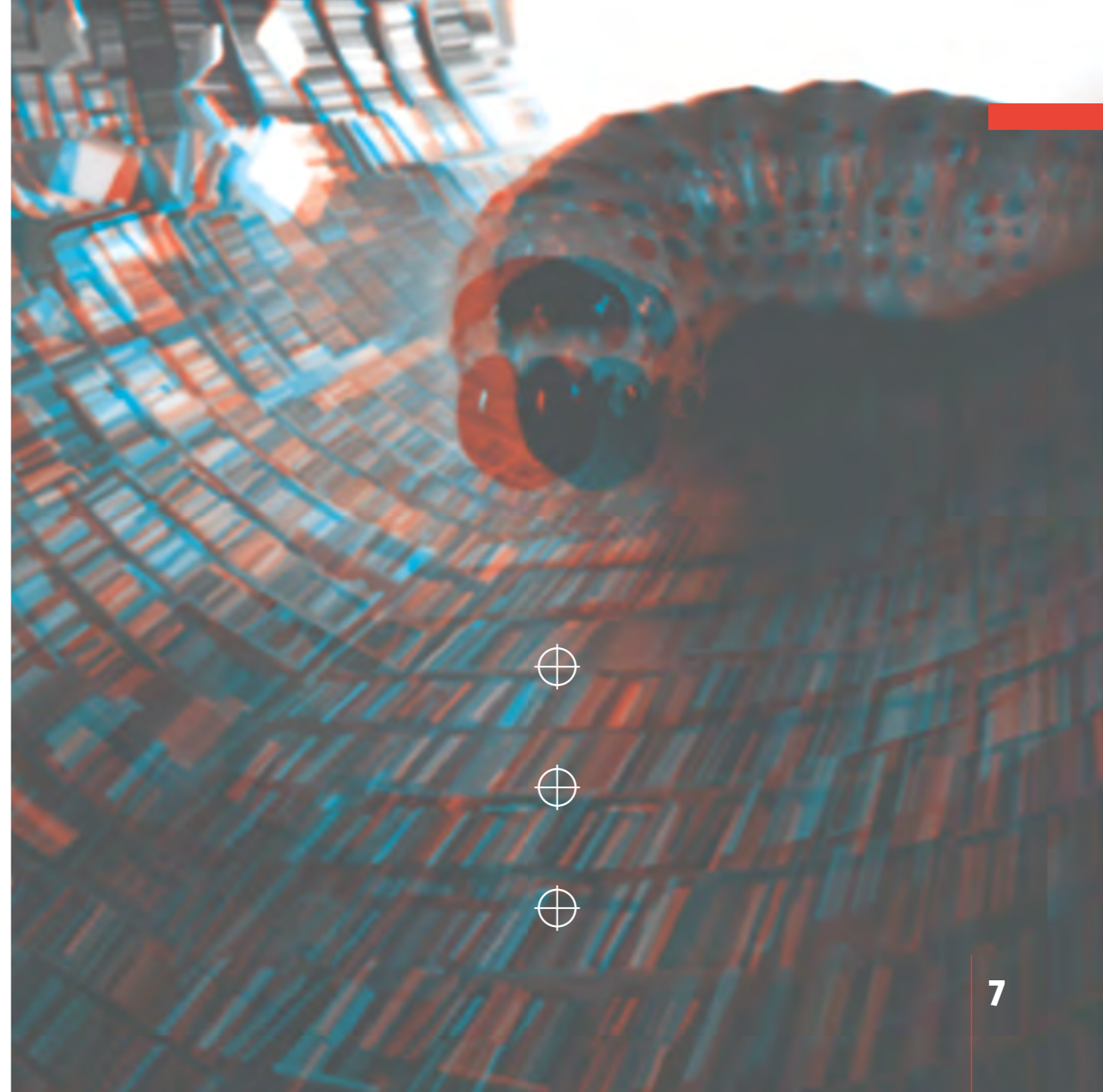
Director & Dramaturg ..... **Valley Lipcer**

Performer ..... **Melia Naughton**

Costume & Set Design ..... **Charlotte Haywood & Ed Horne**

Education Resources ..... **Valley Lipcer**

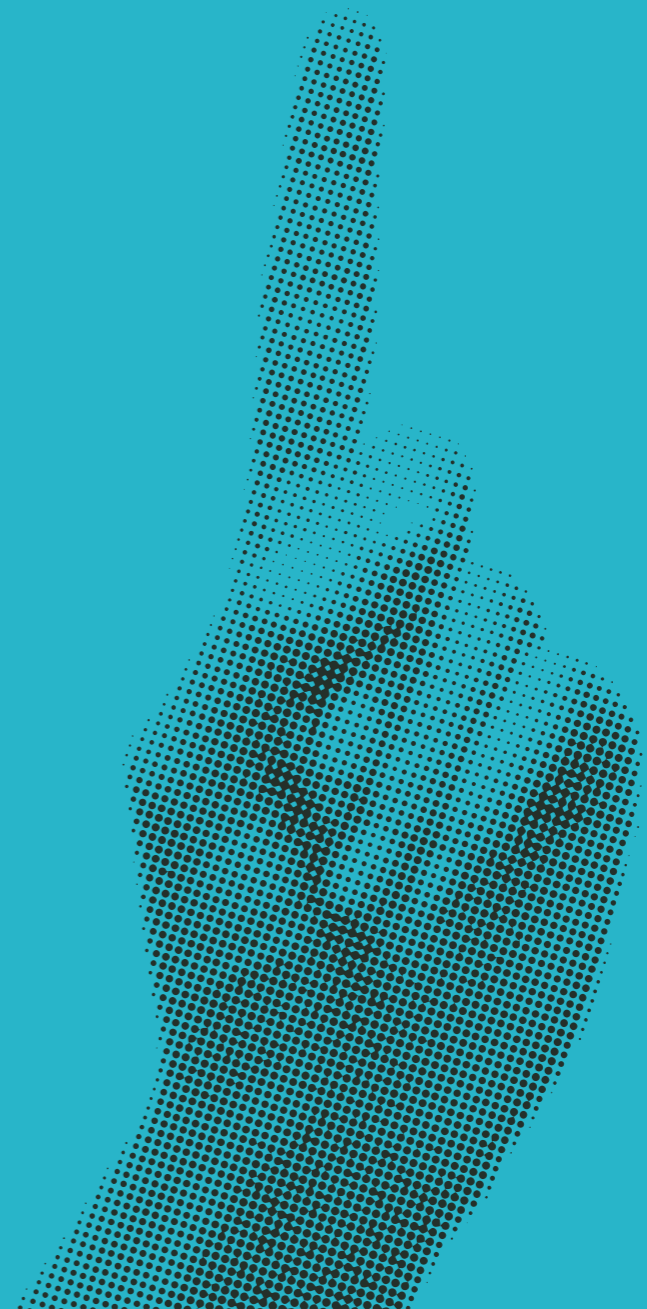
Graphic Designer ..... **Anja Roehrdanz**



# THE STRUCTURE



# PRE-SHOW //





## PRE-SHOW //

The teacher plays an important part in helping to establish the 'world' of the play prior to the performance day and in keeping the magic and historical enquiry alive in its wake. The more the teacher engages and plays along, the more exciting the project will become for the students.

### TWO WEEKS OUT FROM THE PERFORMANCE...

Mention to your class that something odd is happening at the school that has the teachers baffled. A mystery. Multiple copies of the same history book have been disappearing from the library. And every time they order another copy in, it goes missing again. Also, someone has also been trying to eat the library books ... which isn't funny.

### A FEW DAYS LATER ...

Remind the class that there are still missing books... tell them that someone will visit in the coming week to investigate. If anyone has any ideas about where the books might be disappearing to or what thing might be eating them, can they please let the teacher know.

### A WEEK OUT FROM THE PERFORMANCE...

Begin to use the contents of the 'pre-show' package (as outlined in detail below) to both set the scene for the performance and begin a creative exploration of history with your students.

## PRE-SHOW // PACKAGE CONTENTS

### 1. POSTCARDS (x6)

These postcards are from Albus and addressed to Zelda c/o of your class. They are all from different times in history, but always written on January 26<sup>th</sup>.

### 2. FICTIONAL NEWSPAPER ARTICLE from the past.

### 3. ARTEFACTS and 'curiosities' from the past.



## PRE-SHOW // DETAILED TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

### 1. POSTCARDS (x6)

The postcards from Albus should begin to 'arrive' at the classroom, one per day, on consecutive days in an interesting way. For example – the postcard could be slid under the door, found resting on the window sill, or perhaps you could ask someone from the office to deliver a postcard to the class during class time.

The teacher should read the curious postcards out loud to the class and wonder why they are being sent to the class.

The postcards are provided to build intrigue about the character of Albus. Ask the class (and yourself) how can one person have witnessed all these things? Who is this boy? And who is Zelda?

The postcards reference key events in Australian history, which the class might discuss after each postcard is read:

- I.** 1400 – Pre-contact.
- II.** 1849 – First Contacts / Cedar fellers / Convicts.
- III.** 1901 – Federation.
- IV.** 1941 – Internment / World War 2.
- V.** 1975 – Vietnam war/ Aboriginal citizenship.
- VI.** 2021 – Australia Day / Invasion day protests.

When you have read the postcards, display them in the classroom. They will be used during the show.

### 2. FICTIONAL NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

The newspaper article can be 'found' by the teacher in the classroom – for example it might be mysteriously stuck up on the white board when they come in after lunch.

The article is set during the time of forced removal of Aboriginal children. As well as referring to a time travelling boy; the article is designed to prompt conversation about Australia's past and what it would have been like for Aboriginal families.

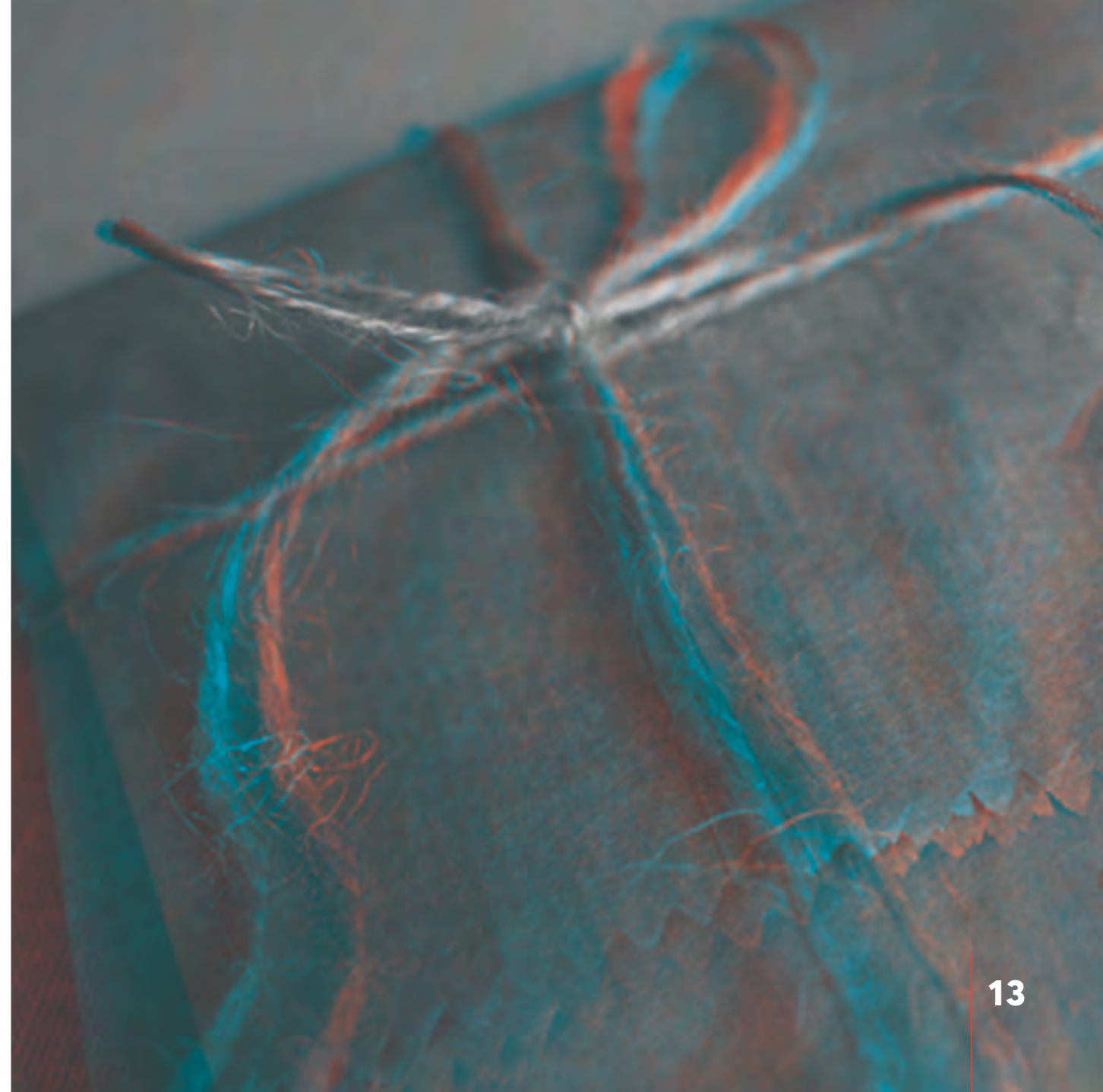
This might lead to the class being detectives and figuring out if the article could be true. What other sources might we check to see if this really happened? Legislations, first-hand accounts? Discuss primary and secondary sources.

### 3. ARTEFACTS

On two separate days a new and unexplained artefact will 'arrive' on the teacher's desk, wrapped in brown paper and string, addressed to Zelda and your class / stage or school. As the teacher, you will express surprise and should ask the students if they know anything about it. Did they put it there? What is it? Who could have sent it?

Unwrap the packages that have 'arrived' as a group and examine the artefacts together, using historical detective skills. You can use five simple questions as starting points to interpret the historical evidence: What? Where? When? Who? Why? Maybe you could attempt to label the artefacts based on your conclusions. There is no right answer...

The artefacts are to be assembled as they 'arrive' on to a table in the classroom, becoming a 'cabinet of curiosity'. Students should be encouraged to look at the objects in their own time and wonder about their origin.





# PERFORMANCE DAY





● The class has **not** been told that there is a performance happening on the day. Their 'normal' activities are interrupted by an officially dressed 'Investigator'.

The Investigator introduces themselves and begins to ask questions about the disappearing books when they are interrupted by a loud fracas outside.

Zelda, the cause of the noise, enters abruptly through the door pulling an unusual suitcase behind her.

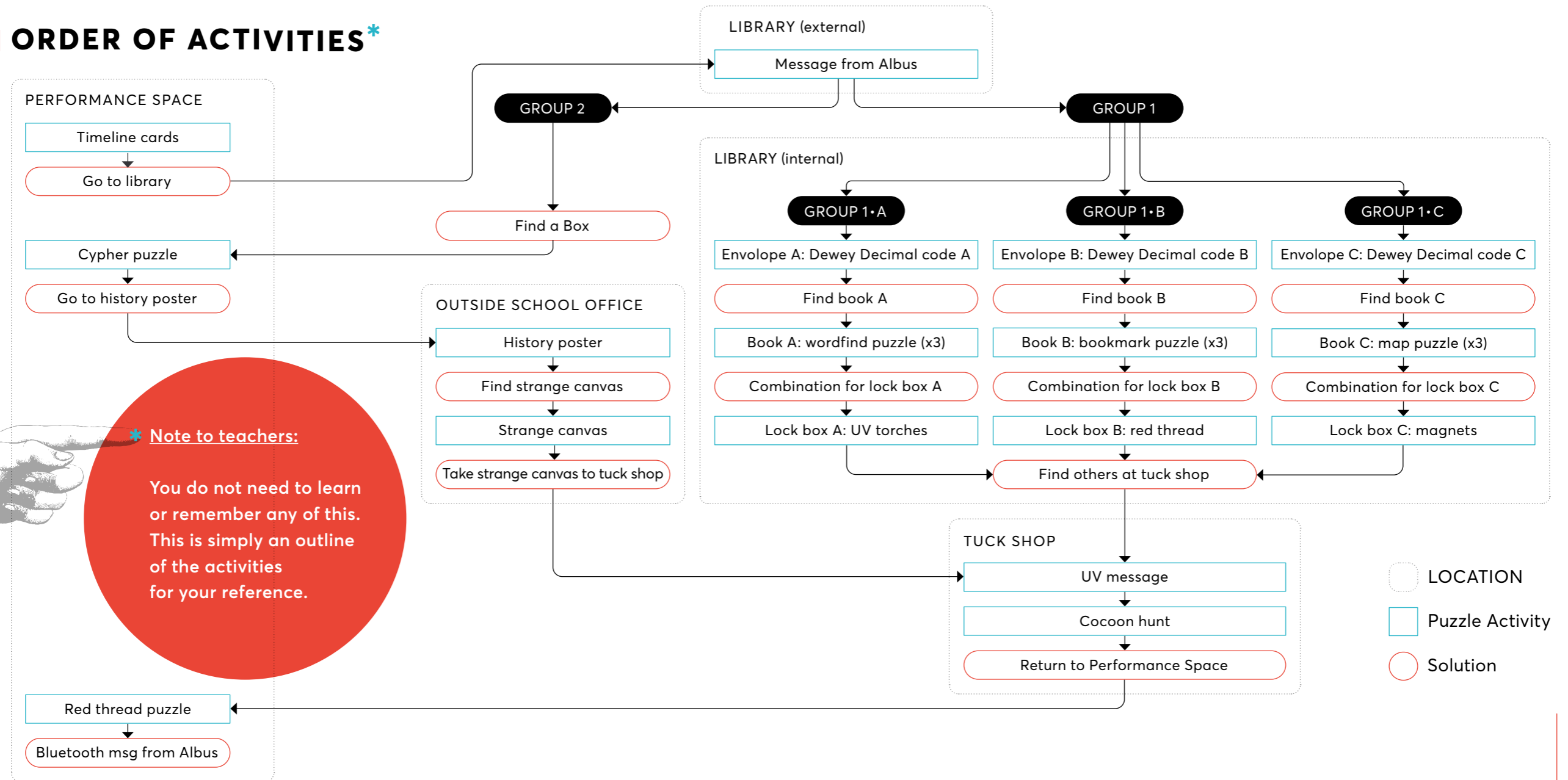
Zelda, with her box of strange props and puppets, tells the story of the library at the end of history and her brother Albus' disappearance.

After the story there is a **CALL TO ACTION**. Students are enlisted as time-detectives by Zelda to help find her brother by searching the school yard for clues, solving puzzles and unlocking the past.

Each activity is designed to ignite the imagination and develop group problem solving skills, inviting students to reflect on the nature of history.

The activities will be led and explained by Zelda and her ad-hoc assistant (the Investigator). The teachers' role will be to support the children in solving the puzzles, and also to act as a 'participant' who is curious to discover the mystery themselves.

# ORDER OF ACTIVITIES\*



**STEP 1 //** Location: PERFORMANCE SPACE. ● WHOLE CLASS

Directly after the show the whole class will participate in the Timeline Puzzle led by Zelda.

A clue on the back of the cards will lead the class to go to the School Library.

**STEP 2 //** Location: SCHOOL LIBRARY (external). ● WHOLE CLASS / Split into two Groups

There is a note from Albus to Zelda that she will find posted on the external door of the library. The note directs the class to break into 2 equal groups- GROUP 1 and GROUP 2.

**STEP 3•1 //** Location: LIBRARY (internal). ● GROUP 1 enters the Library.

GROUP 1 is further divided into 3 groups of equal numbers - A, B & C.

The groups are tasked with locating 3 books and solving 3 separate puzzles. The puzzles answers help them to open the combination locks of 3 different locked boxes. The locked boxes contain magnets, red thread and UV torches and a note telling them to meet GROUP 2 at the TUCKSHOP.

**STEP 3•2 //** Location: PERFORMANCE SPACE. ● GROUP 2 returns to Performance Space.

GROUP 2 find a box of puzzles near the library door and is directed back to the performance space to solve them.

The first clue leads GROUP 2 to the School Office where they find Finch's History Posters on an outside wall.

Students decipher the message on this poster with their anaglyph glasses this message leads them to the strange Canvas (close to the school office).

The clue on The Strange Canvas directs them to reunite with GROUP 1 at the TUCKSHOP.

**STEP 4 //** Location: TUCKSHOP. ● GROUPS 1 & 2.

GROUPS 1 & 2 reconvene at the TUCKSHOP.

Students in GROUP 1 use their torches to reveal a hidden message on the strange Canvas brought by GROUP 2.

The hidden message directs all of the class to hunt for cocoons.

**STEP 5 //** Location: TUCKSHOP. ● WHOLE CLASS.

The whole class locates up to 50 hidden Cocoons and a pin-board poster.

A clue from Albus attached to one of the cocoons leads the class to the beginning – the PERFORMANCE SPACE.

**STEP 6 //** Location: PERFORMANCE SPACE. ● WHOLE CLASS.

The whole class solve the last clue with the pin-board poster, postcards, magnets and the red thread.

We hear Albus' voice on a Bluetooth speaker telling Zelda of his location.

Final Goodbye and Thank you from Zelda as she rushes off to find Albus.



**POST-SHOW //**



## POST-SHOW //

### 1. 30 minutes after the show:

A photograph of Albus and Zelda together 'arrives' at the school. On the back of the photograph is a thank you to the class for helping the siblings to be reunited. There is a request for the class to write their own history down (so that the twins can learn about them in the future).

### 2. In the weeks following the performance:

I. The teacher will ask the students to write or draw a special memory of something that happened to them or their community during the year, that they think people in the future would want to know.

II. The teacher will then prepare the students' work into a 'History book of Class X'. This book will be kept in the school library history section so that future students at the school will know what it was like in the past.

III. The class will then receive a letter from Albus and Zelda (from the future) letting the students know of the changes that they have affected at History's End and thanking them for their book. The letter tells them that their book 'History book of Class X' is being borrowed by a lot of people (in the future) who are curious about the history of Australia and in particular what it was like for kids.



# TEACHER RESOURCES



Through this project we aim to imaginatively inspire children to think critically about history and their place in it. You can use the resources provided with the show to enhance the delivery of your Stage Two learning outcomes and develop new skills and concepts. Below are some links and ideas for further activities.

## RESOURCE 1 // POSTCARDS FROM ALBUS

### Suggested extension activities:

**1.)** Imagine you are Jiembra. Write a postcard to Albus telling him something about your day. You will need to research the indigenous culture of your area to be able to imagine what Jiembra might write about.

**2.)** Imagine that aliens have landed in your town and are camped out in your school oval (you have been told to stay home from school while the adults work out what to do). Write a postcard to your friend in another town telling them about your first impressions of the aliens and express to them your feelings. Are you scared? Excited? Curious? Do you want to go and meet them and befriend them or are you unsure? If you are unsure why?

### Useful Resources:

<http://www.reconciliation.org.au/schools/>

Information about reconciliation:

<https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/map-indigenous-australia>

The AIATSIS map was created in 1996 as part of the Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia project and attempts to show language, social or nation groups based on published sources available up to 1994.

### Syllabus Links:

- Celebrations and commemorations of significance in Australia and the world
- People, events, actions and consequences of world exploration.
- Importance of Country to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and impact of British settlement in Australia.

### Skills / Concepts:

- Comprehension ● Analysis and use of sources ● Perspectives and Interpretations
- Empathetic understanding ● Research

## RESOURCE 2 // TIMELINE CARDS

### Suggested extension activities:

**1.)** Study some different types of timelines, think about cause and effect. How do certain events lead to others?

Examples of different timelines:

**a)** A Reconciliation timeline

[https://www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/reconciliation-timeline\\_2017.pdf](https://www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/reconciliation-timeline_2017.pdf)

**b)** A local history timeline of your area, provided by your local historical society or local Council.

**c)** A timeline of the women's movement.

**2.)** Make a timeline for your town starting from around 60,000 years ago, when the first indigenous people inhabited the area. What things do you think are important to include? Would everyone have the same idea of what to include?

**3.)** Make a timeline of your life. Listing all the important things that have happened to you since you were born. The students could draw their timeline with chalk somewhere in the school yard or write important milestones on cards and lay them on the floor. Then students could travel in pairs or in a group along someone's timeline and ask questions/ make comments.

### Syllabus links:

- Celebrations and commemorations of significance in Australia and the world.
- Identify the importance of Country to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and explain the impact of British settlement in Australia.

### Skills / Concepts:

- Analysis and use of sources
- Significance ● Cause and effect
- Research

## RESOURCE 3 // FICTIONAL NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

■ This newspaper article will be set between 1910 and the 1970s, during this time many First Nations children were forcibly removed from their families because of various government policies. The generations of children removed under these policies became known as the Stolen Generations.

### **Suggested extension activities:**

Children and teachers become historical detectives to find out if this article could really be true. The teacher can use this fictional newspaper article, together with a few different primary and secondary sources – such as legislations at the time, individual's first-hand accounts and other newspaper articles to talk about the Stolen generations.

### **Useful Resources:**

Teaching about The Stolen generation Fact sheet.

<https://bth.humanrights.gov.au/teaching-resources/additional-resources>

■ This Year 3 unit is designed to give children an introduction to the presence and significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the Stolen Generations. It is designed to align with National Sorry Day (26 May), National Reconciliation Week (27 May–3 June) or NAIDOC Week (July) but it can be delivered at any time of the year.

[https://healingfoundation.org.au/app/uploads/2020/05/Healing\\_Foundation\\_Schools\\_Kit\\_Year3\\_May2020\\_V1.pdf](https://healingfoundation.org.au/app/uploads/2020/05/Healing_Foundation_Schools_Kit_Year3_May2020_V1.pdf)

### **Syllabus links:**

- Identify the importance of Country to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and explain the impact of British settlement in Australia.
- Describe people, events, actions and consequences of world exploration.

### **Skills / Concepts:**

- Analysis and use of sources
- Perspectives and Interpretations
- Empathetic understanding
- Research
- Significance
- Cause and effect

## RESOURCE 4 // CREATION OF THE CLASS HISTORY BOOK

### Suggested extension activities: LOCAL HISTORY RESEARCH PROJECTS //

**1.)** Identify native bush tucker in their area / food that Albus may have eaten pre-colonisation. Are there still any of those foods growing? What foods did Indigenous people eat prior to white settlement?

**2.)** Travel to the town graveyard and find someone who was alive during each of the timeline events listed on the timeline cards. Imagine how the event would have affected that person from your town.

**3.)** Are there any statues in your town? Can you find out about them? What is written on them? Who in your town, class, family, would make a good statue and what would you write on the stone? If you were to be a statue what you be remembered for?

**4.)** In your local area there are many sacred sites which have special meaning to the local Indigenous people. What are some of the sites and what are the stories attached to them? Who could you ask to tell you about them? How have these stories survived for thousands of years, since before writing was invented?

**5.)** Find the oldest building in your town and take a photo of yourself in front of it. Compare this photo to an old photo of that building. What has changed? What has stayed the same in the photo? What other things have changed in your town over the past 100 years? If you could change your town, what would you do? What do you think your town will look like in 100 years?

**6.)** Interview the oldest person you know about an event referenced on the postcards.

#### Syllabus links:

- Apply skills of historical inquiry and communication
- Describe and explain how significant individuals, groups and events contributed to changes in the local community over time.

#### Skills:

- Perspectives and Interpretations
- Research
- Explanation and communication



## RESOURCE 5 // ARTEFACTS

### Suggested extension activities:

**1.)** Make a time capsule (or a list of things you could put in a time capsule if easier). The capsule should show people in 100 years what life was like in 2021. When you choose the item, explain why you think that item would represent 2021. What story does your item tell about the world today?

**2.)** Visit your local museum. What questions could you ask to help you understand the artefacts? What can we learn about people and how they lived from artefacts? What might be some of the problems with studying the past through these sources? Explore perspectives, subjectivity, reliability of sources.

**3.)** Ask students to bring 3 personal artefacts from their rooms/home that

they feel would represent them (they could bring them wrapped up like the ones from the story). The teacher can then unwrap the students' artefacts and as a group the class must guess - who brought the artefact in, why it might have been significant to them, what its use is, what it tells us about the owner or the place it has come from etc.

### Syllabus links:

Historical inquiry and communication

### Skills:

- Comprehension
- Analysis and use of sources
- Perspectives and Interpretations
- Research
- Explanation and communication

### Useful Resources:

[www.bbc.co.uk/handsonhistory](http://www.bbc.co.uk/handsonhistory)