



that's AUSTRALIA

A **STUDYGUIDE** BY SALLY CAMPBELL

**REBEL
FILMS
AUSTRALIA**

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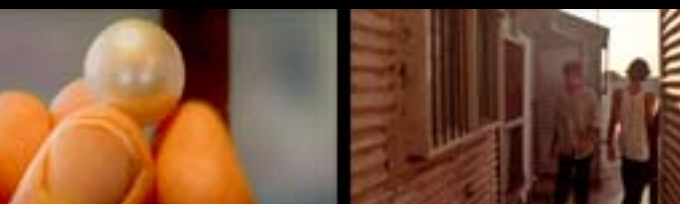
BIGGEST BANANA – BANANA GROWERS OF MURWILLUMBAH, NSW, GATHER TOGETHER FOR AN ANNUAL COMPETITION TO SEE WHO HAS GROWN THE YEAR'S BIGGEST BUNCH.



A RINGER'S LIFE – THE TOUGH LIFE OF KIMBERLEY RINGERS ON REMOTE CATTLE STATIONS, A WORLD OF DUST & DANGER.



DESIGNER BRIDE – BEHIND THE 'SEAMS' AT A MELBOURNE BRIDAL SALON TO SEE THE MAKING OF THE PERFECT BRIDAL GOWN.



WILD WEST FRONTIER – INSIGHT INTO BROOME'S UNIQUE HISTORY OF PEARLING, INCLUDING RIOTS, OPIUM DENS, GROG AND VAGABONDS.



RODEO RIDERS – ABORIGINAL MEN OF THE KIMBERLEY, COLIN AND MAXIE, LIVE FOR EIGHT SECONDS OF FAME ON THE BACK OF A BULL AND HAVE THE SCARS TO PROVE IT.

SYNOPSIS

That's Australia is a compilation of twenty-six short films representing a range of different people, environments, histories, and industries that are reflective of the Australian experience. In this unique collection of short stories, the viewer is taken inside the lives of fascinating characters, exploring where and how they live. The stories range across Australia's cultural landscape, with topics as varied as the adventures of an Aboriginal folk hero, Jandamara, to the world of a Melbourne fashion designer. *That's Australia* provides an ideal opportunity for topical discussions on a broad range of issues within the classroom and beyond.

» CURRICULUM LINKS

This film will be of interest for teachers and students from middle to senior secondary school in the following subject areas: History, Geography, Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE/HSIE), and Media Studies. The study guide is divided into relevant subject areas to usefully address issues raised in each class and includes questions and activities for general discussion, as well as discussions specific to certain films. Teachers may wish show all the films or, alternatively, a small selection tailored to a specific area of study.

While the films are most relevant to the curriculum categories outlined above, some of the films are also linked to Community and Family Studies, Aboriginal Studies, and Earth and Environmental Science. Questions and activities related to these subjects are integrated throughout the Study Guide.

» FILM SUMMARIES The film summaries (under each photo on left) are included to assist teachers in making selections relevant to specific areas of study.



AFTER WATCHING THE FILMS

FASTEST SHEARER – THE WOOL CAPITAL OF VICTORIA HOSTS THE NATIONAL SHEEP SHEARING COMPETITION, WITH THE FASTEST SHEARING ACTION AND A CROWD GOING WILD.



STONE SHED – THE TOHL FAMILY RUNS A SHEEP STATION IN REMOTE WESTERN AUSTRALIA AND RELIES ON INVENTION TO BUILD THEIR NEW SHED.



MOUNTAIN MEN – IN THE HILLS OVERLOOKING MURWILLUMBAH, QUEENSLAND, TWO SELF-PROCLAIMED 'HILLBILLIES' LIVE IN RAMSHACKLE ISOLATION.



SINGING COWBOY – WAYNE SWAN IS KNOWN AS THE SINGING COWBOY BECAUSE OF HIS VOICE, BUT THIS RODEO LEGEND ONLY SINGS IN HIS SPARE TIME.



DIESEL WARRIORS – A SMALL BAND OF MEN SHOW HOW THEY TURN USED COOKING OIL INTO FUEL FOR THEIR CARS.

THIS SECTION WILL BE USEFUL TO TEACHERS WHO HAVE CHOSEN TO SHOW ALL THE FILMS AND WISH TO ENGAGE STUDENTS IN A DISCUSSION OF THE BROAD RANGE OF TOPICS REPRESENTED. THE QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES COULD BE UNDERTAKEN AS A CLASS OR IN SMALL GROUPS.

- Did you like the films? Why or why not? Which ones were your favourites? Were there any that you did not enjoy? Explain your answers.
- Rate each film on a scale from one to ten, where one is terrible and ten is excellent. As a class, hold an awards ceremony where each student's ratings are considered in choosing the favourite film.
- What do you think of the selection of topics that the filmmakers have made in shooting the twenty-six films? What aspects of Australian life and culture were taken into account in choosing this selection of topics? Do they reflect a particular view of Australia? Consider the following issues in shaping the discussion:
 - What it is to be Australian;
 - Fair or unfair representation of all the geographic areas of Australia;
 - Fair or unfair balance of historic and contemporary issues;
 - Fair or unfair representation of society and its people.

(Please note, these twenty-six episodes are only the first in a series which will be shot over the next few years.)

- Are the topics covered in the films uniquely Australian or generic? In small groups, select five films and outline what is Australian and what is universal in each one.
- Choose one Australian character portrayed in the films to enter in a mock Archibald Prize. Draw, paint or sculpt a portrait of your character and write a corresponding summary of their life to explain the person and your representation of him/her.
- Which of the industries represented in the films resonates most strongly with you? Research your chosen industry and prepare a report summarizing its salient features, its importance to the Australian and global economy, the number of businesses involved in the industry in Australia, and what role would interest you if you were to become involved in it.
- Consider the titles given to each of the films. Are the titles appropriate? Did they catch your attention? Create alternative titles for five of the films that you think might be more appropriately named.
- Choose three of the stories to turn into a news report for radio or television. Research the stories in greater depth and consider the factors in the story that are particularly newsworthy or of special interest to the public. Write and enact the report for the class in person or using audio-visual tools.

» GEOGRAPHY

The setting of each film shapes the audience's understanding of the topics represented. This section provides a geographical



SHADDAP ALREADY – AN INTERVIEW WITH THE FAMED JOE DOLCE, TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AFTER HE LAUNCHED THE WORLD'S BIGGEST SELLING SINGLE.



MEMORY VAULT – IN BROOME, AN INTERACTIVE COMPUTER ARCHIVE IS ESTABLISHED BY AN ORDER OF CATHOLIC NUNS AS A MEANS OF RECONCILING WITH THE DESCENDANTS OF THE 'STOLEN GENERATIONS'.



HORSING AROUND – THE KNIGHT FAMILY FROM WALGET, NSW, ARE OBSESSED WITH RODEO AND TRAVEL THOUSANDS OF KILOMETRES IN THEIR GIANT HORSE CARAVAN TO COMPETE.



DOUG'S NEW DUGOUT – A GLIMPSE INTO THE WORLD OF THE MEN OF COOBER PEDY WHO MAKE THEIR HOMES UNDERGROUND.



LES UNDER THE BAR – THE LIFE AND TIMES OF LES ANDERSON PROVE A TESTIMONY TO MATESHIP AND THE PUB.

perspective on the films, including topics related to Australia's landscape, biophysical and human processes, interactions and trends.

- List the geographical locations covered in the films. Identify the locations by marking them on a map using pins or stickers. Have the producers dealt fairly with all Australia's major geographical areas?
- Discuss the representation of Australia's landscape in the films and whether or not you think they provide a good summary of the country's geography.
- Compare the urban and rural landscapes portrayed in the films. What are the salient features of each? Which one is reflective of the place where your school is located? Did you relate to any of the films' settings? Which ones? Discuss as a class.
- Write a travel article about one of the places described in the films. Support your article with research and explain why the location would be a good place to visit. Consider things to do and see, as well as accommodation and food options, in writing your piece.
- *Cyclone Alley* summarizes the key features of cyclones. Research the science of cyclones and their impact on Australians and their communities. Consider the effect of satellite forecasting, the potential different categories of cyclones, and how cyclones are measured in forming your answer. Have any cyclones occurred in Australia in the past year? If so, where? Have they had an impact on your life? Explain your answer.
- Many of the films take place in the Kimberley Region of Western Australia. Locate the Kimberley on a map. What are the confines of the region and what are its significant geographical features? In small groups, choose one of the films set in the Kimberley and conduct further research about the specific issues covered in the chosen film. Each group should present its research, including visual aids, and post their contribution on the wall. Together, the class can assess the diversity of the region by looking at and comparing the results of their research projects.
- Compare and contrast the following two islands profiled in the films: Lacepede Islands and the High Clifty Islands.
- A number of different habitats are profiled in the films, from the 'hillbilly' shack in *Mountain Men* to the 'dugout' in *Doug's New Dugout*. Identify geographical factors that influence the character's choice of habitats. Did the characteristics of any of the habitats surprise you? What are the most environmentally sustainable interactions and why? Discuss.
- *Diesel Warriors* shows an alternative means of making petrol. Where does diesel come from and how is it made? What are some of the positive and negative associations with oil, whether in cooking or in vehicles? Discuss the importance of oil to our society today and its impact on our communities, environment, and politics.
- *Boab Story* profiles the Boab tree. What makes the Boab unique? What makes it an anomaly in the Australian flora? Research and outline some of the theories for why the Boab exists in Australia. Expand your research to other flora that distinguish Australia from other areas of the world.
- *Disappearing Tribe* is set on the Montgomery Reef. Research the geographic features of the Montgomery Reef and its ecosystem.



JANDAMARRA – THE STORY OF ABORIGINAL FOLK HERO, JANDAMARRA, WHOSE RESISTANCE TO PASTORALISTS AND THE POLICE RIVALLED THAT OF THE KELLY GANG IN VICTORIA.



BROOME AIR ATTACK – GUS WINKLE DESCRIBES HIS HEROIC ROLE IN THE JAPANESE AIR RAID AGAINST BROOME.



DISAPPEARING TRIBE – ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S GREATEST MYSTERIES IS REVEALED IN THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE YAWIJIBAYA PEOPLE FROM HIGH CLIFFY ISLAND OFF THE KIMBERLEY COAST.



THE BOAB STORY – FACTS ABOUT THE BOAB TREES THAT SIT LIKE ANCIENT MONOLITHS AMIDST THE HARSH KIMBERLEY TERRAIN OF NORTHWEST AUSTRALIA.



IRON ISLAND – A SHORT HISTORY OF BROOME'S PEARLING LUGGERS AND THEIR LEGACY IN LUMPS OF GLISTENING ORE THAT CAN BE FOUND SCATTERED ALONG BROOME'S FORESHORE AT LOW TIDE.

» HISTORY

The films outline both major and minor developments in Australia's social, political and cultural history, and their significance to Australian heritage. The questions and activities included in this section seek to examine historical topics raised in the films and the various types of history used by the filmmakers to tell stories about the past.

- Write an essay describing the role of history in the films. Consider the extent to which history is used to tell a story and the tools that are used to make the telling of history both accurate and entertaining.
- The film *Broome Air Attack* tells the story of the Japanese air raid on Broome. Research other Japanese attacks on Australia during the Second World War and prepare a report describing their impact and importance in Australian and world history.
- In *Memory Vault*, history is used as a means of reconciliation and identity. Describe the importance of history in understanding the present, the ways that historical information can help in the process of healing, and its importance to understanding ourselves and our communities.
- 'To predict the future, we must first understand the past.' Do you think this is a valid statement? Why or why not?
- Consider the role of archeologists in uncovering the mystery of the Yawijibaya people. Do you think that archeologists will discover the truth behind the mystery? Can you come up with any additional theories?
- Research The Seven Wonders of the World. What are they and what is their significance? Some people believe that the ancient representations of figurative art depicted in the film *Kimberley Rock Art* should be considered the world's eighth wonder. How does this rock art compare to the other seven sites of antiquity, and should it be included? Debate as a class.
- Aboriginal history is one of the major themes of the films. Research one of Australia's indigenous groups. Write a report or a short story providing details of a historical event that changed their community and the impact this has had on their current situation.

» STUDIES OF SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT

Social, economic, and cultural aspects of Australian communities stand at the heart of the films in *That's Australia*. This section explores the unique and varied portrayal of Australia's society and environment provided in the films.

- In the film *Les Under the Bar*, a plaque dedicated to Les is shown at the end of the film, which reads: 'The measure of this man was shown by the amount of friends he gathered over his lifetime.' Do you think it is reflective of Australian identity? Discuss the importance of 'mateship' in Australian society. Why do you think this film was included in the series?
- In small groups, discuss the importance of art as a source of cultural heritage with relation to the films *Kimberley Rock Art*, *First Contact*, and *Shaddup Already*.
- Should the rock art in the Kimberley and Joe Dolce's *Shaddup Your Face* even be included together when discussing great art?



FIRST CONTACT – ABORIGINAL ARTIST, STUMPY BROWN, RECOUNTS HER DRAMATIC EXPERIENCE OF SEEING A WHITE MAN FOR THE FIRST TIME.



SMALL ISLAND, BIG HISTORY – THE STORY OF THE LACEPEDE ISLANDS, SMALL ATOLLS RISING OUT OF THE SEA NORTH OF BROOME, WHICH PROVOKED AN TERRITORIAL DISPUTE OVER THEIR ONCE-RICH SOURCE OF GUANO (PHOSPHATE FERTILIZER).



CYCLONE ALLEY – A STUDY OF THE COAST BETWEEN BROOME AND PORT HEDLAND, WHICH EXPERIENCES MORE CYCLONES THAN ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD.



KIMBERLEY ROCK ART – A LOCAL VIEW ON THE DISTINCTIVE STYLES OF ANCIENT ROCK ART KNOWN AS THE BRADSHAW PAINTINGS.



BULL BUGGIES – INTRODUCES THE PRACTICAL, YET FANTASTICAL, 'BULL BUGGY' USED BY AN ABORIGINAL STATION MANAGER TO HELP WITH HIS JOB.

- Choose a character portrayed in the films and write a short story about an imaginary day in their life. Use this character as a basis for further study about the society and environment in which they lived.
- Make a list of the different films that focus on the rodeo and Australian ranch life. Describe the lifestyle as portrayed in the films. Is it a lifestyle that is familiar to you? Why or why not? Discuss.
- Invention features in several of the films as a means of changing the environment and supporting small-scaled industries. Which invention did you think was the best? Why? Working independently, create an invention that would improve or assist with your lifestyle or work. Present your invention to the class.
- As a class, listen to the song *Shaddup Your Face*. Have you heard it before? Do you like it? Is the song iconic? Now try to find the song in one of the translations he describes. What has been its impact on the world?
- Imagine that these films are being seen by schoolchildren around the world. Are you happy with the image of Australia that is being presented? Why or why not?
- The film *Mountain Men* refers to discrimination in the discussion about the men being known as 'hillbillies'. One of the men says: 'It's not discrimination, they're calling us what we are.' Do you agree with this statement? Discuss the ways that discrimination affects Australian society and its impact on your life and that of your community. In what ways can discrimination be eliminated? Create an action plan for your school.
- Jandamarra was a Bunuba Aborigine who lived in the Napier and Oscar Ranges for most of his life. Research more about the area where he was from. Write your version of the legend of Jandamarra and draw a picture of Jandamarra as legend describes him. What is the importance of this legend to indigenous society? Is it important to Australian society as a whole? Discuss.
- Several of the films describe industries that are, or have been, influential in Australia. Research one of the industries in more detail and prepare a report on its importance to Australia and the global economy. You might consider one of the following industries: pearling, mining, agriculture/livestock, fashion and shearing.
- The role of migrants in shaping Australia's history feature prominently in several of the films. Create a map of your class ancestry showing the cultural background of each student. Discuss the diversity of the class highlighting any links to cross-cultural ties and immigration.

» MEDIA STUDIES

- What is your opinion of the topics chosen to feature in the films? Imagine you are setting out to produce a similar series. What topics would you select for a film about Australia? Discuss.
- Are any of the stories linked? What do they have in common? Could any of the films be grouped together into a longer segment? Group the films into categories of similarity and discuss how they might be joined to make a longer documentary style film.
- The producers of *That's Australia* also made a documentary-drama called *Bush Mechanics*. Of the two genres, in the first case short documentary films and in the second a longer film produced with a mix of documentary and drama, which do you think would have presented more difficulties to make?



BROOME SHACKS – A HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY TOUR OF THE SHACKS THAT DOTTED THE BROOME SHORELINE AT THE HEIGHT OF THE PEARL SHELL INDUSTRY.

Explain your answer.

- *First Contact* tells the story of Stumpy Brown's first contact with white settlers. Does a short film do this topic justice? What are the advantages and disadvantages of producing this story as a short film?
- *Biggest Banana* is a more comic feature about a banana competition held in New South Wales. As a class, debate whether this film fits well with the other films in the collection. Did you take it seriously? Why do you think it was included? What does it add to the overall portrayal of Australia?
- Discuss the filmmaking techniques used in *That's Australia*. What, in particular, did you notice about the way the films were shot and edited? What about the use of voiceover and music? Dissect the programs into their component parts and compare and contrast the techniques used in each.



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