

Year 3 – Commemorating with Coins

Introduction

Every Australian coin helps to tell a small piece of our nation's story. Exploring the images on commemorative coins can help students to see the events and people that have made an impact on our country.

In the following activities students will explore what commemoration means and which events and people we commemorate as a nation. They will engage with the idea of symbols, emblems and rituals as important parts of commemorations.

These activities could be undertaken within a larger History unit.

Links to the Australian Curriculum (v8.2)

Humanities and Social Sciences

Inquiry and skills

Questioning

- Pose questions to investigate people, events, places and issues ([ACHASSI052](#))

Researching

- Locate and collect information and data from different sources, including observations ([ACHASSI053](#))
- Sequence information about people's lives and events ([ACHASSI055](#))

Knowledge and Understanding – History

- Days and weeks celebrated or commemorated in Australia (including Australia Day, Anzac Day, and National Sorry Day) and the importance of symbols and emblems ([ACHASSK064](#))

Learning outcomes

After participating in these activities, students will be able to:

- define 'commemorate'
- list some important Australian events that we commemorate
- explain how symbols and emblems are used to commemorate important events.

Resources

Activity 1: What is a commemoration?

- **'Commemoration concept map'** activity sheet
- computers with internet access
- interactive whiteboard

Activity 2: Symbols, ceremonies and emblems

- **'What, when, why and how?'** activity sheet
- computers with internet access
- interactive whiteboard

Activity 3: Commemorative coins

- **'What is a commemorative coin?'** fact sheet
- **'Commemorative coins'** sheet
- **'What's on the commemorative coins?'** activity sheet
- computers with internet access
- interactive whiteboard

Activity 4: Design a coin

- paper and pencils to design a coin

Activities

Activity 1: What is a commemoration?

Write the word 'commemoration' on the board. Read it to students and ask them to think about what it means. Write some of their ideas on the board.

A basic definition of commemoration is: 'a ceremony or celebration in which a person or event is remembered'.

Now that students know what a commemoration is, provide pairs or small groups with a copy of the **'Commemoration concept map'** activity sheet where they can record some familiar commemorations and then make notes about those events. Suggestions could include ANZAC Day, the Olympic and Paralympic Games, Australia Day, 50th Anniversary of Play School etc. Depending on the prior knowledge of your students, it may be necessary to provide some research time to assist in completing the activity sheet.

After completing the '**Commemoration concept map**' activity sheet, ask students to share their ideas. Make a class list of the commemorations on the board and note which are the most commonly mentioned amongst students.

Activity 2: Symbols, ceremonies and emblems

Using the commemorations identified in activity 1, have small groups of students research one of these and record the information on the '**What, when, why and how?**' activity sheet.

You may wish to have a class discussion about one event and work through the activity sheet together (as an example) before students work independently.

Once students have gathered their information, create new groups of students who have researched different events and allow them to share their information (for example, the new groups will have four members who each researched a different event). Students may wish to record the similarities and differences between their events.

As a class, discuss how symbols, ceremonies and emblems are used to commemorate events.

Activity 3: Commemorative coins

Provide students with a copy of the '**What is a commemorative coin?**' fact sheet. Read through this sheet and discuss as a class.

Display the images on the '**Commemorative coins**' sheet on an interactive whiteboard, or provide copies for students. Do they relate to any of the events that students researched in activity 2? What symbols or emblems appear on the coins? Do these match the information students found? What other information appears on the coins? Look for the date and the word 'Australia'. Students can record their findings on the '**What's on the commemorative coins?**' activity sheet.

Activity 4: Design a coin

Individually, ask students to design a commemorative coin for the event that they researched in activity 2 (or a different one). They should use emblems or symbols that would be recognisable to others. Students to present their designs to the class (or a partner), explaining their ideas and concept. As an extension to this, you could use the 'gallery walk' strategy so students can comment on others' designs.