State Library of Queensland acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which State Library is located. We pay respects to their Ancestors who came before them and to their Elders past, present and future. The location of State Library, on Kurilpa Point, was historically a significant meeting, gathering and sharing place for Aboriginal people. We also acknowledge the significant contributions made by the Australian South Sea Islander community to Queensland’s diverse history.

# Plantation Voices

Emerging from the sugarcane farms of tropical Queensland to cut a path to freedom, the stories of Australian South Sea Islanders are steeped in strength and resilience.

Through never-before-seen original photographs, rare and restricted historical papers, and newly commissioned artworks, Plantation Voices repatriates the living history of the unknown names and faces of people tricked or kidnapped into servitude as cheap labour in Queensland’s cane fields.

More than 150 years later, the exhibition also charts the pathways of descendants in reclaiming their lost past and forging their identities into the future.

Through this free exhibition, State Library’s heritage collections give voice to the untold stories of a community that played a vital role in the shaping of our nation, and who fought so fiercely to call Australia home.

# Learning Notes

# How to use Plantation Voice Learning Notes

These learning notes have been designed to support educators to engage with State Library’s exhibition ***Plantation Voices*** and the collection items which give voice to the unique and rich stories of Australian South Sea Islanders. These notes are designed to live beyond the exhibition, as an entry point into the exhibition and a springboard to support the delivery of the Australian National Curriculum and Queensland Senior Syllabuses outcomes.

Plantation Voices learning notes link directly to a range of State Library collection items which can be used to scaffold learning experiences in the classroom and during your visit to State Library. More information on the exhibition and the collection items showcased can be found by visiting [Plantation Voices](https://www.slq.qld.gov.au/discover/exhibitions/plantation-voices).

Note that in reference material the terms South Sea Islanders and Pacific Islanders are used interchangeably.

# Junior Years

## English/HASS

Watch the Queensland State Archives’ [***The Australian South Sea Islander Collection***](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zmz4e2flozU) and answer the following questions:

1. Why did Australia start looking to the Pacific Islands to recruit workers for agricultural development?
2. When did the first group of South Sea Islanders come to Australia?
3. What was the main industry South Sea Islanders were “recruited” to work in?
4. How many South Sea Islanders were recruited between 1863-1904?
5. Which two main areas/islands were islanders “recruited” from?
6. What is blackbirding?
7. What kind of information is listed in the registration records?

Using a map of the South Pacific, locate and name the island nations the Australian South Sea Islanders came from.

1. Discuss and explain the term ‘blackbirding’ – ‘blackbirding’ is a term used to describe the kidnapping of South Sea Islanders to work on, or be sold to, sugar plantations and cotton farms in Queensland, Australia. Between 1863 and 1904, more than 62,000 South Sea Islanders from Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, New Caledonia and other Pacific Islands, were sent to Queensland.
2. Ask students to talk or write about their own personal journey, thinking about where their families have come from. Encourage students to consider the stories and journeys taken by their family members. Share the stories in small groups and as a class.

View the resource [25 years of Australian South Sea Islander National Recognition](http://onesearch.slq.qld.gov.au/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=slq_alma21231390200002061&context=L&vid=SLQ&lang=en_US&search_scope=SLQ_PCI_EBSCO&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=all&query=any,contains,south%20sea%20islander%20photographs&sortby=rank&offset=0) using their knowledge of South Sea Islanders and blackbirding, have students imagine they are journalists who have to interview South Sea Islanders on their journey to Australia. Ask students to brainstorm a list of questions they could ask a South Sea Islander upon their arrival to Australia about their journey, their family and their experience.

# Appendix

[One search](http://onesearch.slq.qld.gov.au/primo-explore/search?query=any,contains,kanaka%20OR%20Australian%20south%20sea%20islander%20OR%20south%20sea%20islander&tab=slq&search_scope=SLQ&vid=SLQ&lang=en_US&offset=0) – Australian South Sea Islanders

[Australian South Sea Islander Blog](http://blogs.slq.qld.gov.au/assi/)

[Australian South Sea Islanders historical photographs](https://www.flickr.com/photos/statelibraryqueensland/collections/72157702874750372/)

[Mal Meninga](https://vimeo.com/70444543)

[The Old Place: Lot 71](https://vimeo.com/316666310)

[Joskeleigh: A Place to Call Home](https://vimeo.com/316953127)

[Reclaiming Kanaka Town: Recollections from Mr Nelville Willie digital story](https://vimeo.com/316952823)

[Historypin: Images and experiences of the original South Sea Islanders and their descendants, the Australian South Sea Islanders.](https://www.historypin.org/en/australian-south-sea-islanders/geo/-23.963414,148.844153,6/bounds/-31.322905,144.692639,-16.159018,152.995667/paging/1)

[31843 The Past is ahead, don't look back](http://onesearch.slq.qld.gov.au/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=slq_alma21231390170002061&context=L&vid=SLQ&search_scope=SLQ_PCI_EBSCO&tab=all&lang=en_US)

[31872 Stop and Stare drawings](http://onesearch.slq.qld.gov.au/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=slq_alma21232702750002061&context=L&vid=SLQ&search_scope=SLQ_PCI_EBSCO&tab=all&lang=en_US)

[31842 25 years of Australian South Sea Islander National Recognition](http://onesearch.slq.qld.gov.au/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=slq_alma21231390200002061&context=L&vid=SLQ&search_scope=SLQ_PCI_EBSCO&tab=all&lang=en_US)