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 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.

# Middle Years

## History/Geography

Prior to attending the exhibition, gain an insight into the students’ knowledge and understanding of slavery in Australia and the history of Australian South Sea Islanders. Use the following provocations to facilitate a discussion with students.

* What is slavery?
* Do you know of any examples of slavery in Australia (now or in the past)?
* What is blackbirding?
* Who is the Australian South Sea Islander community and what makes them a unique community within Australia?

Following your discussion have students work in small groups using the Australian [South Sea Islander collection](https://www.historypin.org/en/australian-south-sea-islanders/geo/-23.963414%2C148.844153%2C6/bounds/-31.322905%2C144.692639%2C-16.159018%2C152.995667/paging/1) in Historypin to gain more insight and understanding into the topic. Give each group a region on the map and have them share their discovery with the rest of the class.

Establish a timeline of significant dates and events from the arrival in 1863 when the first blackbirding ship arrived in Logan, to official recognition of Australian South Sea Islanders by the Australian Federal Government in 1994 and Queensland State Government in 2000.

Watch the film [***Sugar Slaves***](https://slq.kanopy.com/video/sugar-slaves) and discuss students’ understanding of what blackbirding is.

Determine the usefulness of the interview of Phyllis Corowa as a historical source in helping to understand the impact of the Immigration Restriction Act on South Sea Islanders.

Considering the following:

* Is this a primary or secondary source?
* Who created the source?
* When was the source created?
* Who was the intended audience of the source?
* What was the original purpose of the source?
* Identify and describe the events referred to by Phyllis Corowa in this interview?
* What attitudes and values are expressed by Phyllis Corowa in the interview?
* What conclusions do you draw from this interview about how the Immigration Restriction Act affected South Sea Islanders working in the Queensland sugar industry?
* Does this interview help you understand the issue?

Using the interview of Phyllis Corowa in [***Sugar Slaves***](https://slq.kanopy.com/video/sugar-slaves), determine how the idea of a ‘White Australia’ and the issue of immigration restriction affected South Sea Islanders living and working in northern Queensland during the lead-up to federation.

Using State Library’s [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), research Australian South Sea Islander recognition. Support their research by asking students to:

* Narrow the topic – what are subtopics that relate to the broader topic, what questions do the sources raise and what is interesting about the topic.
* Explore open-ended questions – ‘how’ and ‘why’.
* Consider the ‘so what’ of the topic – why does the topic matter? Why should it matter to others?
* Consider the validity of the sources they are researching.

*\*You can further scaffold this research task for students by taking advantage of State Library tagging and creating a customized tag to use on collection items you want students to consider. For more information on tagging contact learning@slq.qld.edu.au.*

Create a map showing:

* The plantations in Queensland where South Sea Islanders were sent to work.
* Significant communities established from late 19th century to the late 20th century.

## English

In small groups research one of the following significant Australian South Sea:

* Mal Meninga
* Noel Fatnowna
* Evelyn Scott
* Bonita Mabo
* Faith Bandler

Write a short blog or create a vlog on your chosen person, detailing their:

* Family history.
* Significant achievements.
* Why they are significant to the Australian South Sea Islander community.

After viewing the exhibition and/or researching the stories of Australian South Sea Islanders, have students write a narrative from the point of view of a South Sea Islander kidnapped from their home island.

# 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%2C148.844153%2C6/bounds/-31.322905%2C144.692639%2C-16.159018%2C152.995667/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)