

Our Special Land: A Reconciliation Week Art Adventure

Materials Needed:

- Large sheet of paper or cardstock (e.g., A3 size)
- Washable paints (various colours like blue, green, brown, yellow, red, orange)
- Paintbrushes (various sizes), sponges, or fingers for painting!
- Child-safe glue
- Natural materials (optional, gathered safely beforehand): leaves, small twigs, grass, sand, small smooth pebbles
- Coloured paper scraps (greens, browns, blues, yellows)
- Crayons or oil pastels
- A smock or old t-shirt to protect clothing
- Water pot for rinsing brushes
- Wipes or a damp cloth for cleaning hands
- (Optional) A simple, age-appropriate picture book about Indigenous connection to land or about caring for the land.

Lesson Plan:

1. Introduction: Our Amazing Land and Special Friends (5-7 minutes)

Hello! This week is a very special week called Reconciliation Week. It's a time to remember that Australia's First Peoples, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, have been here for a very, very long time, and they have a super special connection to the land. The land is like their family, their home, and it tells many stories. Reconciliation means being good friends, listening to each other, and learning together.

Let's think about the land around us. What do we see when we look outside our window or when we go to the park? *(Pause for child's response. Prompt with examples: sky, grass, trees, paths, flowers, maybe hills or water).*

The land is important for everyone, but it's extra special for First Peoples. They are the first storytellers of this land.

2. Exploring Landscapes (5 minutes)

Landscapes are all the things we see outside – the sky, the ground, hills, rivers, trees, and plants. Different places have different landscapes!

(Optional: If you have a relevant picture book, read a few pages showing different Australian landscapes or talk about a recent outdoor experience.)

"Imagine a beautiful place outside. What colour is the sky? Is it sunny or cloudy? What's on the ground? Are there tall trees or small bushes? Maybe there's water like a river or the sea?"

3. Creative Time: Painting Our Special Landscape (15-20 minutes)

Today, we're going to make our very own artwork of a special landscape to celebrate the land and think about its First Peoples.

1. **Set up:** Make sure your paper is ready, paints are accessible, and you're wearing your smock.
2. **Sky and Ground:** Let's start by painting the sky at the top of our paper. What colour will your

sky be? Then, let's paint the ground or the earth at the bottom. What colours make you think of the earth? (*Guide the child as needed, but encourage their choices.*)

3. Adding Details: Now for the fun part! What lives on your land?

- You can paint trees, flowers, hills, or maybe a river or a pond.
- We can also use our other materials! Maybe you want to glue some green paper scraps for grass or bushes? Or use a real leaf for a tree? Perhaps some brown paper for a path or a twig for a tree trunk?
- You can use crayons or pastels to draw details too, like a sun or animals.

Remember, this is *your* special landscape. It can look any way you want it to! There's no right or wrong way.

4. Talking About Our Art and Caring for Land (5-7 minutes)

As your child works or once they are finished, engage in conversation:

- "Tell me about your beautiful landscape! What have you created?"
- "What is your favourite part of your land picture?"
- "The First Peoples of Australia have looked after this land for thousands of years. They have special stories and songs about it. It's very important to them."
- "How can we all help to look after our land?" (*Listen to their ideas. Suggest simple things like: not throwing rubbish on the ground, being gentle with plants and animals, saving water.*)

This is our way of showing we care about the land, just like the First Peoples do.

5. Tidy Up and Conclusion (5 minutes)

Great job creating such wonderful landscapes! Let's carefully put our artwork somewhere safe to dry.

Remember, the land is special, and it connects us all. During Reconciliation Week, and every day, we think about being friends and respecting the First Peoples of Australia and their deep love for this Country.

Give your child a high-five for their wonderful work and participation!