Symbols of AUSTRALIA

FOCUS ACTIVITY: Middle Primary Students

Symbols of Australia

Aims

This *Symbols of Australia* activity aims to:

- introduce students to the formal and informal symbols of Australia
- encourage students to consider how objects can symbolise aspects of our national identity.

Students explore many objects and images that have become symbols of Australia and discuss the concept of a symbol and what symbols of Australia say about the Australian way of life.

This activity may precede or follow a visit to the *Symbols of Australia* exhibition

Focus activity

- Introduce the activity and exhibition theme. Ask students what they think a symbol might be and to give examples of symbols they may already know (such as a student's school uniform or logo, or a sporting club symbol). Following this, ask the students to build on these ideas by suggesting symbols that might be used to represent Australia.

- Divide the class into small groups and distribute objects (one or more per group) from the suitcase. Ask each group to examine the objects and discuss what their objects symbolise about Australia (allow 8 -10 minutes to for object handling).

- Ask each group to report on their objects by explaining to the class what aspect of Australia they think the objects symbolise. Ask them what it is about the collection of objects that leads them to this conclusion. Discuss what this tells us about ourselves as Australians, ie. the things that are important to us as a nation.

- Extend the discussion with the use of posters contained in the kit as aids to discuss changing national symbols, multiculturalism, and continuity and change in Australia.

national museum australia