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TOPIC: Australia

Texts:

1. "Advance Australia Fair" by Peter Doods McCormick (national anthem)
2. "Waltzing Matilda" by A.B. "Banjo" Paterson (song)
3. "Going Home" by Archie Weller
4. "The Stolen Generation" by Terry McCarthy
5. "The Slap" by Christos Tsiolkas (movie)

Most important themes / aspects:

Important (historical) events:

60.000 years ago the Aborigines came to Australia, and they were hunters and gathers. The Aborigines believed in Dreamtime, which they say is the creation period where the landscape was created and plants, animals and humans were given life. The Dreaming sets up a spiritual relationship between humans and nature.

In 1788 the first settlers came to Australia, and they made it a colony. The first people were from the Nederland's. Prisoners from the overcrowded prisons in Europe also came to Australia. When the settlers came there lived about 300,000 Aborigines in Australia. However, a lot of Aborigines were killed from diseases transmitted from the Europeans or from direct conflict. From 1900-1970 many thousands of children were taken from Aboriginal families and placed in institutions run by the government. The Aborigines became full-citizens in 1967. The Aborigines still live in Australia both in the cities and in the outback. Today they have the right to determine their own future and preserve their cultures. Still there are a lot of prejudices and intolerance against them

Text 1: "Advance Australia Fair" by Peter Doods McCormick (national anthem)

Short summary:

The song is the national anthem of Australia. It focuses on the characteristic nature and history of the country. The song also states what the Australian values are, for

example diversity and freedom.

Themes:

- Patriotism
- Pride
- Nature

Analysis and interpretation:

Purpose of the song:

- Represent the land
- Unify people
- Create a national feeling
- To instil pride
- National identity/ conception of land
- Creates a bond – a diverse population

Adjectives describing Australia from the national anthem:

- Island
- Beautiful
- Hard-working
- Progressive
- Fair
- Big
- Diverse
- Proud
- Young

Text 2: “Waltzing Matilda” by A.B. “Banjo” Paterson (song)

Short summary:

The poem is about a swagman who finds a waterhole. Along comes a sheep, which he kills and cooks. When the sheep’s owner, a farmer, arrives with three police officers the swagman commits suicide by drowning himself in the nearby waterhole.

Themes:

- Free spirit

- Defiance of authority

Analysis and interpretation:

- Waltzing: moving to the music, free, freedom of movement
- Matilda: The title is Australian slang for travelling by foot with one's goods in a "Matilda" (bag) slung over one's back
- Swagman: he is self-reliant, stays alive by doing what he has to do, free – doesn't want anyone to control him or meddle in his life (hence the suicide).

Words:

- Billabong = a small waterhole
- Jumbuck = sheep
- Swagman = itinerant worker - Australian man travelling around to work in the bush
- Glee = happiness
- Tucker-bag = food bag
- Squatter = farmer/pastoralist
- Trooper = soldier
- Billy = kettle/tin
- Thoroughbred = well-bred horse

Text 3: "Going Home" by Archie Weller

Short summary:

Going home is about a young man of aboriginal heritage who has left his "black" environment to go to college and therefore struggles with his identity as both an aboriginal and a "white". William Jacob is the white boy doing well in school, being a great football player and an talented artist. Billy is the aboriginal boy who left his past without looking back, being hated in the eyes of his own people for trying to be somebody else

Themes:

- Identity
- Heritage
- Racism
- Prejudice

Analysis and interpretation:

Billy/William is struggling between two identities as the names show. Even though no matter how he acts, his skin will always be black and his eyes brown. He is raised by aborigines, so he will always be affected by the black heritage. He is raised in this certain way, and even though he tries escaping it, he will not succeed. While the heritage affects him, the people around him will also judge him because of his looks. The story proves that people will always be prejudice towards him, even though he tries his hardest to become white. He will be reminded of his past every time a black aboriginal looks him in his eyes. The racism towards aboriginals is very extreme in this society. All the aboriginals look like drunken bastards, and it's almost impossible to escape the stereotypes. That's why the government and police are trying to stop the aboriginals

Text 4: "The Stolen Generation" by Terry McCarthy**Short summary:**

The text is about how Aboriginal children, who were half white, were removed from their families in effort to "civilize" them by assimilation into white society. Terry McCarthy uses Roach as an example in the text. Roach got his third foster parents when he was 14 years old and they were the first to treat him well. But his sister sends him a letter telling him that his parents aren't dead and then he drinks for the next 14 years and lives in parks.

Themes:

- Racial discrimination
- Racial policy

Analysis and interpretation:

The text is published in TIME Magazine and it is informative. Terry McCarthy uses examples and quotes, which gives him more reliability. The text tries to be objective but the text is still influenced by Terry McCarty's subjective opinion.

Text 5: "The Slap" by Christos Tsiolkas (movie)**Short summary:**

Themes:

- Racism
- The real suburbia
- The Australian identity
- Multiculturalism
- The Australian dream

Analysis and interpretation:Tekst 6: "Took the children away" Archie Roach (Song)

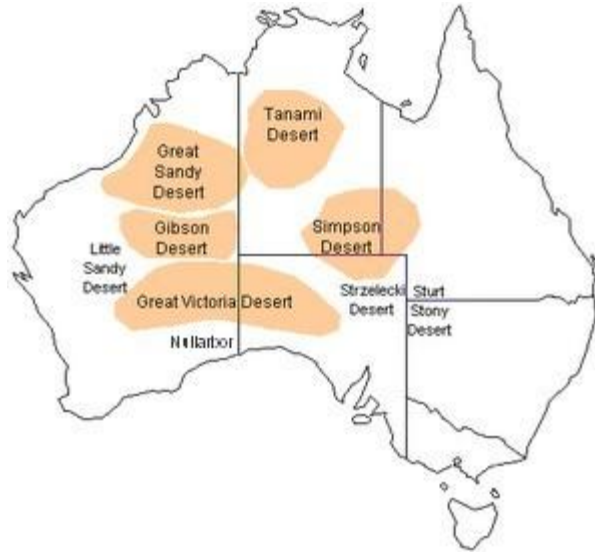
The song is about the White government that takes children who is half white and half aboriginals away from their families so they can be raised in an all white family instead.

Australia and the Outback

The outback is by definition, a remote rural country part or the bush, which means that it is remote from any settlement. The estimated population of Australia in 2012 is 22.800.000 people, and a total area of 7.600.000 km², witch means there is a density of 330000 m² per person, or to give an idea of the seize, 12 Australia rules football fields per person. Despite the amount of land per person, 90% of the population lives on the coastline and less then 700.000 people live in the outback. The cause this is probably the fact that 75% of Australia is arid, and receives less then 250 mm of rain per annum.

The expression 'the outback' covers the vast arid areas of Australia. The outback consists of desert-like flat landscapes and is known for its red sand and bizarre rock formations like the Uluru. These areas are mainly located in the inland of Australia and that is why 90% of the Australian population lives at the coast in urban cities. Although the outback is almost uninhabited by humans it is still home for a diverse set of animals such as the emu and the kangaroo. Furthermore there are many stories and myths associated with the Australian outback. For example the worlds second largest rock 'the Uluru' is located in the outback. The rock is sacred to the aboriginal people and it has been a source to many legends and myths.

There are five big deserts in Australia. However the 'Great Victoria desert' is the greatest one and it covers 424.400 square kilometers. The first European to cross the desert was the British explorer Ernest Giles and he named it after the British monarch queen Victoria.



History

In aboriginal mythology the creation of the outback belongs to the Dreamtime. Ancient spirits moved across the land and gave life to animals, plants, rocks and other landforms. The first English colonists came to Australia in the 1770s and settled on the continent's east coast. By the mid 1880s the settlers began to explore Australia's arid interior driven partly by a desire to realise the Outback's mineral and agricultural promise.

The outback and the history of its exploration provide Australia with a rich cultural history that goes back 50.000 years. The settlers desire to realise the Outback's mineral and agricultural promise have also created many stories and songs about bushrangers and swagmen. For example the popular song Waltzing Matilda.

Two unique Australian phenomenons that are taking place in the outback are the bushwalk and the aboriginal walkabout. Bushwalking is an antonym to such activities as hiking and hill walking. A bushwalk might consist of a walk along a trail through urban parks or forest near where you live, sometimes called a Green Walk or it could be a full day walk in a national park or reserve.

The walkabout is a rite of passage where an aboriginal male undergoes a journey into the outback to become a man. In this practice they would live in the bushes for up to six months and trace the paths, or songlines, that their people's ceremonials ancestors took.

Wildlife in the Outback

Australia is widely known for its wildlife, and the fauna of the outback is no exception. With all sorts of animals such as, kangaroos, dingoes, crocodiles, lizards, camels and so on.

There are a lot of dangerous animals in the Australian Outback, including spiders. One of the most dangerous spiders is the Funnel-Web spider. It is poisonous and it can kill you. It is big, black and aggressive. It often wanders into houses during the summer in its search for females.

In the Australian outback there are a lot of kangaroos. Actually there are 60 different species of kangaroos. The most famous kangaroo is the Red Kangaroo. The kangaroo has become almost the symbol of the Australian animals.

Another dangerous animal is the crocodile. The Australian saltwater crocodile is one of the most well-known crocodiles. It is extremely dangerous.

Australia and the White Australia Policy

The Immigration Restriction Act:

The White Australia Policy was a set of laws formed by the Australian government in 1901, prohibiting people with dark-colored skin from living as citizens in Australia. One of the laws under the White Australia Policy listed the kind of people that were not allowed in the country:

1. Anyone who was insane
2. Anyone who would have to be looked after by the government or a charitable organization
3. Anyone with an infectious or contagious disease
4. Anyone who was not a nice person
5. Anyone who was dangerous
6. Anyone who was a criminal or a prostitute
7. Anyone on a contract to do hard physical work
8. Anyone who could not pass a dictation test.

The illustration to the right from 1886 illustrates what some Australians thought would happen if Chinese people came to Australia.

The dictation test was designed to avoid people with dark skin, from entering Australia. But the government did not want to be criticized for being racists, so the requirements for passing the test were to be able to read and write. Persons wanting to live in Australia had to write something and then read it in a European language. The first tests were in English but the government thought that Japanese people and Afro-Americans would be able to pass the test, which they were not interested in. To prevent this from happening they would be given a test in a language that they had no knowledge of.

World War II:

During World War II Japan threatened to invade Australia, making the relations between Asia and Australia even more strained. As a result the Australian Prime Minister John Curtin was not blind to make a public statement about the greatness of The White Australia Policy.

The first steps towards a more liberal immigration policy were taken after World War II, where some of the non-white refugees that had come to Australia to escape the war had married Australian citizens, and hence wanted to stay with their spouse. To begin with the immigration minister Arthur Calwell wanted to deport all of them, but the decision led to protest amongst the Australian citizens. In 1949 it was decided that 800 non-white refugees were allowed to stay in Australia.

End of the White Australia Policy

After a review of the European Policy in 1966, immigration Minister Hubert Opperman announced that migration applicants would be accepted if their qualifications were an asset to Australia, and they would easily be integrated in Australia.

At the same time Harold Holt decided that non-Europeans could become permanent residents and citizens after living in Australia for 5 years, which was already the case for Europeans.

In 1973 the White Australia Policy was abolished, resulting in an increase particularly in the number of immigrants from the Middle East and Asia.

Australia today

Today everybody can apply for entry into Australia, irrespective of race, religion etc. if they comply with the criteria set in the law. However the number of immigrants is still regulated. In terms of the split between nationalities around 6 million people originate from countries outside Australia, out of a total population of 22.8 million people (Australian Bureau of Statistics, June 2011), and only some 500.000 people are of aboriginal heritage.