



**DISRUPT**  
**PERSIST**  
**INVENT**

AUSTRALIANS IN AN EVER-CHANGING WORLD

**LEARNING RESOURCE**  
**SELF-GUIDED EDUCATION PROGRAM:**  
**FACILITATOR'S INSTRUCTIONS**

**NAA**

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF AUSTRALIA

***Disrupt, persist, invent* – learning resource**  
**Self-guided education program: instruction booklet**

National Archives of Australia (National Archives) acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of Country throughout Australia and acknowledges their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

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**Australian Government**

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**National Archives of Australia**

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**National Collecting Institutions  
Touring and Outreach Program**

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**Visions of Australia**

## I Introduction

This learning resource is designed to help teachers facilitate a self-guided visit with their class to National Archives' touring exhibition *Disrupt, persist, invent: Australians in an ever-changing world*.

The learning resource includes information covering the following topics:

- About National Archives
- About the Disrupt, persist, invent exhibition
- About the self-guided education program
- Important information for your visit
- About the student activity sheets
- Additional classroom activities
- Facilitator's instructions
- Curriculum links.

## I About National Archives

National Archives is the federal agency that collects the records of Australian Government decisions and actions as evidence. We do this to connect Australians with the nation's memory, their identity and history.

The national archival collection contains records about key events and decisions that have shaped Australian history since Federation. It includes more than 40 million records, from Federation to now. These records provide evidence of government decisions and actions, making them transparent and accountable.

At National Archives we preserve and share stories from the nation's memory and help to safeguard our democracy. Our records include the stories and people that define our past and shape our future.

## I About the Disrupt, persist, invent exhibition

*Australia, home of the 'fair go'. But is it really the free and fair place you'd hope for? What can we change?*

From noisy protest to quiet persistence, Disrupt, persist, invent explores the many ways people have achieved social change in Australia.

The exhibition tells powerful stories of people and their actions, from the ordinary to the extraordinary. Students will learn about Australia's progress in areas such as women's rights, marriage equality, science, technological invention and much more.

*Disrupt, persist, invent* may even inspire you and your students to create lasting change in your own community, or for all Australians.

From 2024 to 2026 the *Disrupt, persist, invent* exhibition will tour to regional locations around Australia. Visit the [Disrupt, persist, invent exhibition page](#) for tour dates and locations.

## I About the self-guided education program

This self-guided education program is designed to enhance the exhibition experience for students who visit *Disrupt, persist, invent* with their class at any of its touring locations.

The program provides participants with the opportunity to engage meaningfully with archival records, and to question and consider a broad range of social issues. It is designed so that teachers can independently facilitate the program with their class.

The program is aligned with the Australian Curriculum V9 for Years 5–10, with a focus on History and Civics and Citizenship, and is appropriate for state curriculum frameworks. There is also relevant content for Year 11 and 12 students of History, Legal Studies and Politics.

The program should be used with a class of **32 students or fewer**, with **45–60 minutes** spent in the exhibition. It includes facilitator's instructions and activity sheets to guide student engagement as they explore the exhibition in small groups.

Additional classroom activities – for before or after your visit – have also been provided to deepen and extend students' understanding of the exhibition content.

## I Accessing the program if you're unable to visit us

The activities in this learning resource can also be completed by classes who are unable to visit the exhibition in person.

All of the records referred to in the program are available to view on National Archives' website for students and teachers. The curriculum links section of this document includes a complete list of hyperlinked records, with the curriculum relevance of each clearly indicated.

In-class activities could include a 'gallery walk' or small-group inquiry learning with selected records from the exhibition. We strongly encourage you to let the records and activities in this learning resource inspire and inform your teaching of History and Civics and Citizenship.

## I Important information for your visit

### Before your visit

We are thrilled that you have chosen to bring your students to experience *Disrupt, persist, invent* in person. Here is some advice to help get you started.

1. Check the tour schedule on the [Disrupt, persist, invent exhibition page](#) and identify the venue you wish to visit.
2. Contact the venue to organise a viewing time for your group. Remember to ask for their booking requirements – such as maximum group sizes – as this will vary across venues. The program has been designed to be completed by a class of **32 students or fewer** over a **45-60-minute period**.
3. Read this learning resource carefully, familiarising yourself with the teacher instructions, student worksheets and additional classroom activities.
4. Print the facilitator's instructions and the appropriate activity sheets for your group. Ensure all participants bring a pencil and clipboard on the day.

### Behaviour expectations

You are expected to provide appropriate supervision of your group throughout their visit to the exhibition. We ask that you and your group follow these guidelines when visiting *Disrupt, persist, invent*:

- Walk (do not run) in the exhibition spaces
- Speak at an appropriate volume
- Show respect – for other visitors, for each other and for the individuals whose stories are told by our records
- Don't use flash when taking photos as this can damage the original records that we are working hard to preserve
- Leave bags on the bus or in an appropriate space directed by your venue
- Stay COVIDSafe. Keep a reasonable distance from other visitors and staff, practice good hand hygiene and stay at home if you're sick.

You may also wish to ask the venue what their particular expectations are at the time of booking, including their COVIDSafe requirements.

## Accessibility

All of the videos in the exhibition include captions. Transcripts of the records and videos are available online.

Please contact the venue directly to discuss accessibility needs for your class.

For support for blind or vision-impaired students, please contact us in advance of your visit at [learning@naa.gov.au](mailto:learning@naa.gov.au) or on (02) 6212 3600.

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander visitors

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander visitors are warned that the exhibition contains the names, images and voices of people who have died.

## Difficult and distressing content

This exhibition contains content that students may find difficult or distressing, or may require further scaffolding for appropriate class use, including the following stories:

- The establishment of Elsie Women's Refuge – contains references to domestic violence
- The Apology for Forced Adoptions – contains references to the forced removal of babies from their mothers and families
- *Basically Black* satirical comedy – contains offensive language and racial remarks.

The activity sheets do not direct students to engage with this content, but they may notice it as they move through the exhibition. The records used to stimulate student learning have been selected with student safety as a primary consideration.

If you have concerns about this content, please ask the venue staff to show you where it is located so you can decide how to manage your students' access to it when exploring the space in small groups.

We highly recommend discussing that the exhibition contains difficult content with your students before you visit. We also recommend allowing time for students to safely debrief about the exhibition content after your visit.

## I About the student activity sheets

The activity sheets are designed to guide students' exploration of the exhibition in small groups. The activity sheets cater to a range of different learning styles and can be customised to suit the needs of your students.

The education program contains:

**Middle years activity sheets** (broadly suitable for students in years 5 to 8)

**Secondary activity sheets** (broadly suitable for students in years 9 to 12).

In both the middle years and secondary sets, the activity sheets build on the three themes contained in the exhibition title: ***Disrupt, Persist and Invent***.

For the middle years and secondary set, the *Disrupt, Persist and Invent* themed activities should be printed and stapled into separate booklets.

Some small groups may complete all three booklets during the program. Others might just complete the activity sheets for one theme.

We understand that you know your class best. It is up to you decide which sheets to print – and how many – based on the needs of your students.

## Additional activities

Encourage deeper exploration of the stories and themes touched on in the exhibition by completing these additional activities built around the exhibition videos with your class.

- [\*Archival Records are so powerful\*](#) classroom activities
- [\*Campaigning for change\*](#) classroom activities
- [\*Community is everything\*](#) classroom activities
- [\*Making a difference with crochet\*](#) classroom activities
- [\*Inventing wifi: How Australian scientists changed the world\*](#) classroom activities.

Remember to collect your **free classroom activity resource** from the venue on the day. You can use this print resource to further engage students with the theme of social change in Australia.

Visit [Students and teachers | naa.gov.au](https://naa.gov.au) for more learning opportunities linked to the national archival collection.

## I Facilitator's instructions

The following instructions are intended to assist you in delivering the self-guided education program for *Disrupt, persist, invent*.

- 1) Check in at the reception desk at your venue on arrival and follow their guidelines about entry into the exhibition.
- 2) Once you have checked in at the venue, brief your group about the exhibition's key ideas and concepts.

- 3) Divide students into small groups (3-4). Ensure each student has a pencil and clipboard.
- 4) Distribute activity sheets to students. Each group member should have their own activity sheet. You may wish to allocate each group a letter to indicate the theme they should start with: D, P or I. Also let students know they can work on the activities related to their theme in any order. This will avoid 'traffic jams' in front of particular records in the exhibition.
- 5) The **sample script on page 9** provides an example for how you might introduce the education program to your students.
- 6) Circle through the exhibition to support students as needed while they work on the activities in their small groups. Depending on the staff you have available, you may also like to position staff near content that you have identified as potentially challenging for your students.
- 7) Begin to regather your students when you have five minutes left at the venue.
- 8) As soon as possible after completing the program, give students a chance to safely talk about anything they found upsetting or confusing. Below are links to helpful resources for conducting challenging conversations with students:
  - a. [www.waterford.org/education/difficult-classroom-conversation-tips/](http://www.waterford.org/education/difficult-classroom-conversation-tips/)
  - b. <https://schools.au.reachout.com/articles/how-to-have-difficult-conversations>

#### **Other helpful services**

- Parent helplines are available in every Australian state and territory. Google 'Parentline' along with your state or territory to find a service.
  - Relationships Australia: 1800 364 277 or [www.relationships.org.au](http://www.relationships.org.au)
  - Family Relationships Online: 1800 050 321 or [www.familyrelationships.gov.au](http://www.familyrelationships.gov.au)
  - Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800 or [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)
  - Lifeline: 13 11 14 or [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)
  - Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636 or [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)
- 9) Our programs should help students and teachers engage with meaningful opportunities to enhance learning. Please take two minutes to share your thoughts about, and experiences of, the exhibition and this self-guided education program. Your feedback will help us to continue to deliver high-quality education resources.

**Please scan this QR Code to complete the survey**





## Sample Script

Today, we will be viewing an exhibition called Disrupt, persist, invent: Australians in an ever-changing world. This exhibition was created by National Archives of Australia.

National Archives holds records created by the Australian Government. These include forms, maps, letters, photographs, audiovisual material and more. The records in this exhibition tell stories about the many ways people have created change in Australia.

Soon we will have a chance to explore the exhibition and discover these stories of change for ourselves. There are five simple rules to follow while we do this:

1. Walk at an appropriate pace. Please do not run.
2. Speak at an appropriate volume. Please do not yell.
3. Show respect – for your classmates, for other visitors and for the historical records and people shown in the exhibition.
4. Don't use flash if you decide to take a photo. Light from flash photography can damage these very old records.
5. Stay COVIDSafe. This means keeping a 1.5-metre distance from other visitors and practising good hand hygiene.

This exhibition deals with big, important issues – and sometimes big issues can be difficult to learn about. If you see something in the exhibition that you find upsetting or confusing, don't hesitate to find me and speak to me about it. We will also have time to debrief about our experiences at the end of the program today.

You are going to explore the exhibition today in small groups. Please divide yourself into groups of three or four now.

To complete today's program with your group, you will need your pencil, your clipboard and these activity pages [distribute the activity sheets if you have not already done so].

We are about to enter the exhibition and complete the activities. This will be a bit like a treasure hunt. You will need to find the part of the exhibition that relates to your activity. The best way to find the right part of the exhibition is by matching the colour on the wall display, with the colour on your page. Plus, match the title of the activity with what you see written on the wall displays.

When you find one of the records from your sheet, read the label, have a close look at the story or record and then do the activity on the sheet. You will be asked to think about lots of different ideas today and to share your thoughts and opinions with your group.

Your group doesn't need to complete the activity sheet in order. It will be best if we spread out in the exhibition so that we can each see, listen and learn more easily.

You will have 50 minutes to finish your activities.

Let's now go and explore the exhibition.

# DISRUPT PERSIST INVENT

## CURRICULUM LINKS

### Disrupt, Persist, Invent links – overview

Year Level	Curriculum Area		
	HASS	History	Civics and Citizenship
4	Y		
5	Y		
6	Y		
7			Y
8			Y
9		Y	Y
10		Y	Y

### Curriculum links for items related to the Disrupt, Persist, Invent learning resource

Record	Blurb	Curriculum Relevance
<b>Disrupt</b>		
<a href="#"><u>Save the Daintree Postcards (1984)</u></a>	This series of postcards were sent to Senator Donald Chipp to protest the building of a road through the Daintree rainforest in 1984.	Y4 AC9HS4K08, AC9HS4S04 Y5 AC9HS5K04, AC9HS5K07, AC9HS5S06 Y6 AC9HS6S06 Y7 AC9HC7S04 Y8 AC9HC8S04, AC9HC8K01 Y9 AC9HC9K06, AC9HH9S02, AC9HC9S04 Y10 AC9HC10K04, AC9HH9S02, AC9HC10S04

Record	Blurb	Curriculum Relevance
<a href="#"><u>ASIO notes on Merle Thornton (1956)</u></a>	These ASIO surveillance files are about Merle Thornton in the years after she chained herself to a bar in a pub to fight for women's rights.	Y5 AC9HS5S06 Y6 AC9HS6K02, AC9HS6S06 Y7 AC9HC7K02, AC9HC7K05, AC9HC7S03, AC9HC7S04 Y8 AC9HC8K01, AC9HC8S03, AC9HC8S04 Y9 AC9HC9K06, AC9HH9S02, AC9HC9S04 Y10 AC9HC10K02, AC9HH10S02, AC9HC10S03, AC9HC10S04
<a href="#"><u>Campaigning for change - Elly Desmarchelier, Disability rights campaigner, Video Portrait</u></a>	This video featuring Elly Desmarchelier, a national disability rights campaigner, discusses the importance of the NDIS and her work as disability rights campaigner.	Y4 AC9HS4K08, AC9HS4K09, AC9HS4S04 Y5 AC9HS5K07, AC9HS5K06, AC9HS5S06 Y6 AC9HS6S06 Y7 AC9HC7K05, AC9HC7S03, AC9HC7S04 Y8 AC9HC8K01, AC9HC8S01, AC9HC8S04 Y9 AC9HC9K05, AC9HC9K06, AC9HH9S02, AC9HC9S04 Y10 AC9HH10S02, AC9HC10S03, AC9HC10S04
<a href="#"><u>Royal Commission on Human Relationships - what do you think? pamphlet (1974)</u></a>	This record is an advertising pamphlet, asking people to answer questions about difficult topics.	Y4 AC9HS4K09, AC9HS4S04 Y5 AC9HS5K06 Y6 AC9HS6K06 Y7 AC9HC7S03, AC9HC7S04 Y8 AC9HC8K05, AC9HC8K01, AC9HC8S03, AC9HC8S04 Y9 AC9HC9K02, AC9HH9S02, AC9HC9S03, AC9HC9S04 Y10 AC9HH10K18, AC9HC10K05, AC9HH10S02, AC9HC10S03
<a href="#"><u>Yoyo competition inequality - letter to Elizabeth Reid (1973)</u></a>	This letter, written to Elizabeth Reid (the first advisor on Women's Affairs), is written by a young person regarding discrimination in prizes awarded to boys and girls in a yoyo contest.	Y4 AC9HS4K09, AC9HS4S04 Y5 AC9HS5K06 Y6 AC9HS6K06 Y7 AC9HC7K05, AC9HC7S04 Y8 AC9HC8S04 Y9 AC9HH9S02, AC9HC9S04 Y10 AC9HH10K17, AC9HH10S02, AC9HC10S04
<a href="#"><u>Inventing wi-fi: How Australian scientists changed the world - Dr Terry Percival Video Portrait</u></a>	This video featuring Dr. Terry Percival discusses how he and his team overcame challenges to create Wi-Fi technology	Y5 AC9HS5K08, AC9HS5S01, AC9S5H02 Y10 AC9HH10K14

Record	Blurb	Curriculum Relevance
<b>Persist</b>		
<a href="#"><u>Archival records are so powerful - Phyllis Williams Video Portrait</u></a>	This video featuring Phyllis Williams, Director of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement at National Archives of Australia, discusses the importance of keeping archival records, as well as her personal connection to the Larrakia Petition.	Y4 AC9HS4K09, AC9HS4S04 Y5 AC9HS5K02, AC9HS5K04, AC9HS5K07, AC9HS5S04 Y6 AC9HS6S04 Y7 AC9HC7K02, AC9HC7K05 Y8 AC9HC8K06 Y9 AC9HH9S02 Y10 AC9HC10K04, AC9HH10K09, AC9HH10K11, AC9HH10S02
<a href="#"><u>Letter concerning recognition of Neville Bonner as first Aboriginal Senator (1971)</u></a>	This letter discusses whether Neville Bonner should be officially recognised as the first Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander to hold a seat in Federal Parliament.	Y4 AC9HS4K09, AC9HS4S04 Y5 AC9HS5K02, AC9HS5K06, AC9HS5S04 Y6 AC9HS6S04 Y7 AC9HC7K02 Y8 AC9HC8K01, AC9HC8K05, AC9HC8K06 Y9 AC9HH9K04, AC9HH9K06, AC9HH9S02 Y10 AC9HH10K10, AC9HH10K11, AC9HH10S02, AC9HH10S06
<a href="#"><u>Trade Unions - Arthur Blakeley's union tickets (1909-1928)</u></a>	This scrapbook belonged to Arthur Blakeley. It shows the many union membership tickets that he collected over several years.	Y5 AC9HS5K07, AC9HS5S02 Y6 AC9HS6S02 Y7 AC9HC7K02, AC9HC7K05, AC9HC7S04 Y8 AC9HC8K05, AC9HC8S04 Y9 AC9HH9K04, AC9HC9K05, AC9HH9S02, AC9HC9S04 Y10 AC9HH10S02, AC9HC10S04
<a href="#"><u>Pacific Islanders petition to Alfred Deakin (1906)</u></a>	This petition was created by the Pacific Islanders' Association. They were to be deported because of their racial background, but many wanted to remain in Australia where they had made a home.	Y4 AC9HS4K09, AC9HS4S04 Y5 AC9HS5K07 Y6 AC9HS6K02 Y7 AC9HC7K02, AC9HC7K04, AC9HC7S04 Y8 AC9HC8K05, AC9HC8S04 Y9 AC9HH9K01, AC9HH9S02, AC9HC9S04 Y10 AC9HH10K13, AC9HC10S04
<a href="#"><u>Letters to John Howard supporting gun control (1996)</u></a>	These letters were sent to Prime Minister John Howard in support of the proposed gun reform laws.	Y4 AC9HS4K09, AC9HS4S04 Y5 AC9HS5K06 Y6 AC9HS6S06 Y7 AC9HC7K05, AC9HC7S03 Y8 AC9HC8K05, AC9HC8S03 Y9 AC9HC9S03 Y10 AC9HC10K05, AC9HH10S02, AC9HC10S03

Record	Blurb	Curriculum Relevance
<b>Invent</b>		
<a href="#"><u>William Yang's published monologue 'Sadness'</u></a>	This script with images for a monologue written by William Yang was submitted for a grant funded by the Commonwealth Government. It explores identity and emotion.	Y4 AC9HS4K09 Y5 AC9HS5S04 Y6 AC9HS6K03, AC9HS6S04 Y7 AC9HC7K04 Y8 AC9HC8K05 Y9 AC9HC9K05, AC9HC9K06, AC9HH9S02 Y10 AC9HH10K18, AC9HH10K19, AC9HH10S02
<a href="#"><u>CWA: A calendar of puddings (1930-1931)</u></a>	This record is a cookbook created by CWA to raise money for the community.	Y4 AC9HS4K09, AC9HS4S04 Y5 AC9HS5K07, AC9HS5K08, AC9HS5S06 Y6 AC9HS6S06 Y7 AC9HC7K02 Y8 AC9HC8K05 Y9 AC9HC9K05, AC9HH9S02, AC9HC9S04 Y10 AC9HH10S02, AC9HC10S04
<a href="#"><u>Community is everything - CWA video portrait</u></a>	This video shows members of a CWA group discussing the impact of a letter asking for funding to build a protective fence around a community hall.	Y4 AC9HS4K09 Y5 AC9HS5K07, AC9HS5K06, AC9HS5S06 Y6 AC9HS6S06 Y7 AC9HC7K02, AC9HC7K05, AC9HC7S04 Y8 AC9HC8K01, AC9HC8K05, AC9HC8S04 Y9 AC9HC9K05, AC9HH9S02, AC9HC9S04 Y10 AC9HH10S02, AC9HC10S04
<a href="#"><u>Polio Immunisation Campaign Poster (1956)</u></a>	This poster was created by the Government to encourage the public to get the polio vaccine.	Y5 AC9HS5K06, AC9HS5K07 Y6 AC9HS6K07, AC9HS6K08 Y7 AC9HC7S04 Y8 AC9HC8S04 Y9 AC9HC9K06, AC9HH9S02, AC9HC9S04 Y10 AC9HH10K14, AC9HH10S02, AC9HC10S04
<a href="#"><u>Making a difference with crochet - video portrait about Eloise Murphy and marriage equality</u></a>	This video features Eloise 'Treble Maker' Murphy. She discusses the creation and impact of her yarn bomb piece 'Love Wheels', which was created as a statement in support of marriage equality.	Y4 AC9HS4K09 Y5 AC9HS5K07 Y6 AC9HS6K07 Y7 AC9HC7K05, AC9HC7K02, AC9HC7S04 Y8 AC9HC8K05, AC9HC8S04, AC9HC8K01 Y9 AC9HC9K06, AC9HH9S02, AC9HC9S04 Y10 AC9HH10S02, AC9HC10S04