

PADDY BEDFORD

Activity sheet for 8-14 year olds

Gijam-boorroo deg-girrim linga-linga-girrim

Looking and thinking about Gija things



Paddy Bedford *Emu Dreaming* (1998) ochres and pigment with acrylic binder on Belgian linen
122 x 135 cm Hassall collection, Sydney Image courtesy of Museum of Contemporary Art.
Photograph by Jenni Carter. © The Estate of Mr P. Bedford

This exhibition presents the first major survey of work by well-known Indigenous Australian artist **Paddy Bedford**.

Mr Bedford was a **Gija** man from an area known as the East Kimberley in Western Australia. He was born around 1922 and passed away recently in Kununurra. His paintings feature stories and histories of his land and his **Dreamings**. It also features places visited during Mr Bedford's life as a stockman.

Mr Bedford's work is very interesting. He used different kinds of media to tell his stories. He also used his **Gija language** to tell his stories – he had many stories to tell.

Paddy Bedford worked for a long time as a stockman around his **country** or **land**. In 1998 he began to paint to express his life, his beliefs and his culture.

★ Find the East Kimberley region on a map of Australia.

Gallery rules:

- 1.** Children must be supervised by an adult at all times.
- 2.** WALK SLOWLY in the gallery space.
- 3.** Stay at least a metre back from the artworks.
- 4.** DO NOT TOUCH the artworks. Artworks can be very fragile. Use your eyes, not your hands!

★ Activities with this symbol can be completed at home.

1. Paddy Bedford's home - Gija country

The artist Paddy Bedford used aspects of his homeland to create his artwork. He referred to these homelands as '**country**'.

Parts of his homeland relate to his mother (or **mother's country**), and other parts relate to his father (or **father's country**). In this sense, the word **country** does not refer to any particular country like Australia or New Zealand, but rather *place* or *area*.

Country for Aboriginal people is very important as it is also responsible for teaching them about the land and how to work with the land.

Name two places identified in the exhibition as being part of Mr Bedford's **father's country**.

- _____
- _____

Can you identify your own **mother's country** and your **father's country**? (eg. My mother's country is Bathurst, NSW. My father's country is Braidwood, NSW)

Mother's Country: _____

Father's Country: _____

Can you identify **your own country**? What kind of things has **your country** taught you?

- _____

Find the artwork *Wawooleny*
– *Motor Car Yard* (2006).

This artwork uses aspects of the artist's **mother's country**. Can you draw this artwork?



2. Gija Language

To hear Mr Bedford speaking his language you can hire an audio guide from the MCA front desk.

The Aboriginal language of the **Gija** people is very different to the English language.

The **Gija** language, like many other Indigenous languages across Australia, uses certain sounds and mouth movements that are not used in the English language. It can be quite difficult for English speakers to speak in **Gija**.

Sometimes letters can be swapped with other letters because they produce similar sounds, like “G” and “K” (Girl and Kirl sound the same when spoken.) Other letters that get swapped also include “P” and “B” as well as “T” and “D”.

Can you think of some examples where a word sounds the same with the letters swapped? Write them below.

“K” and “G”	<i>Kookaburra</i>	<i>Gookaburra</i>
“P” and “B”		
“T” and “D”		
“V” and “B”		
“F” and “V”		

Try and say the words one after the other - do they sound very different?

Think now of some English words that are hard to say. Write them down in the space below – don’t worry if you don’t know how to spell them, give it a try!

Gija Language *continued...*

Europeans travelling through **Gija country** in the early days sometimes misunderstood the language being spoken - this resulted in some words being mistaken for others. Some of these misunderstandings have continued today.

In the table below, draw a line to connect the words that sound very similar when spoken out loud.

Dress	Branch
Amble	Figtree
Gibb	Pocket
Brand	Trees
Gap	Flood
Blood	Humble
Bucket	Cap
Victory	Keep

Some of Paddy Bedford's artworks were influenced by this difference in language. Find the painting *Medicine Pocket* (1998). Using your answers above, can you think of its alternative title?

Find the painting *Middle Brand* (2002). Can you think of its alternative title? *Hint: it may be a part of a tree!*

3. Let's speak Gija!

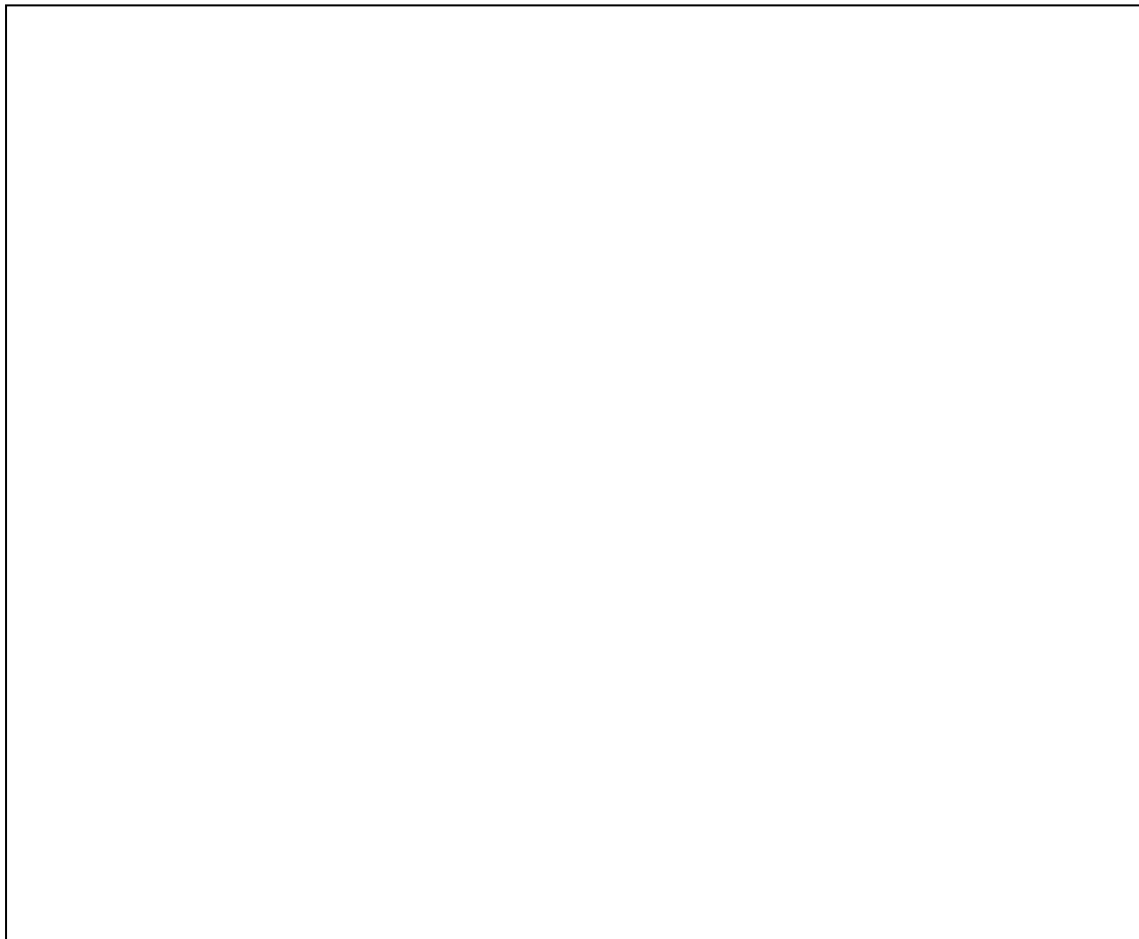
The language of the **Gija** people is very complex to those of us that are not familiar with it; **Gija** people use sounds that are not commonly found in the English language.

Before white people came to **Gija** country, the language was not written down. All the stories and important information was recorded in different ways, through practices like dance, song and visual arts. Paddy Bedford used his artworks to record his language, his stories, and his country.

Gija words may *look* hard to speak, but once you know how, you will be able to speak Mr Bedford's **Gija**!

Garnanganyjel is the **Gija** word for "emu". A number of works by Mr Bedford are named after the emu.

To start thinking about the *Garnanganyjel*, draw it below.



Let's speak Gija! *continued...*

Garnanganyjel looks like a difficult word to say. It uses sounds that non-Aboriginal people are not used to. Anyone can learn how to pronounce words like *Garnanganyjel*, so let's give it a try.

First, we need to break the word up:

Gar – nan – gany – jel

Next, we need to learn the tricks to speaking **Gija**. An easier way is to start from the last syllable and work backwards:

- 1) **Jel** – This is similar to the English word “gel”.
- 2) **Gany** – This is similar to the “ng” at the end of “song”. Then add “ang” at the end. Try saying “song” a couple of times to get used to the “ng” sound. Next add “ang” to make the word “song-ang”. Now drop the “so” and say “ng-ang”.
- 3) **Nan** – This is pronounced like the English word “nun”.
- 4) **Gar** – Use either “G” or “K” to say this part. It sounds like the English word “car”.

Now let's put it together in the correct order. All together, the word for “emu” in Gija language is **Gar-nun-gany-gel**. If you clap your hands together, you should be able to say it in four claps, or syllables.

How did you go? Can you now say *Garnanganyjel*?

How fast can you say this word?

Try and teach this word to your family. Don't forget to tell them what language it is from!

Find the artwork *Garnanganyjel – Emu Dreaming* (2000). Now practise saying the title of the artwork using your newly learnt **Gija** language skills.

Can you see the *garnanganyjel* in the painting? What is it doing? _____

Now go back to page 1 and practice saying Mr Bedford's greeting.

4. The Dreaming

As well as his country, Paddy Bedford also thought about his **Dreaming** to create his artworks. The **Dreaming** is like religion - it combines culture, beliefs and way of life and gives meaning to everything in the world. The **Dreaming** also guides Aboriginal people and is linked to stories, language, art and actions.

Many **Dreaming** stories are used as inspiration for Mr Bedford's artwork. Can you list 5 artworks that relate to the artist's **Dreaming**? Also include the year they were made. *Hint: The titles of the artworks will help you find the answers!*

Title: _____	Year: _____
Title: _____	Year: _____
Title: _____	Year: _____
Title: _____	Year: _____
Title: _____	Year: _____

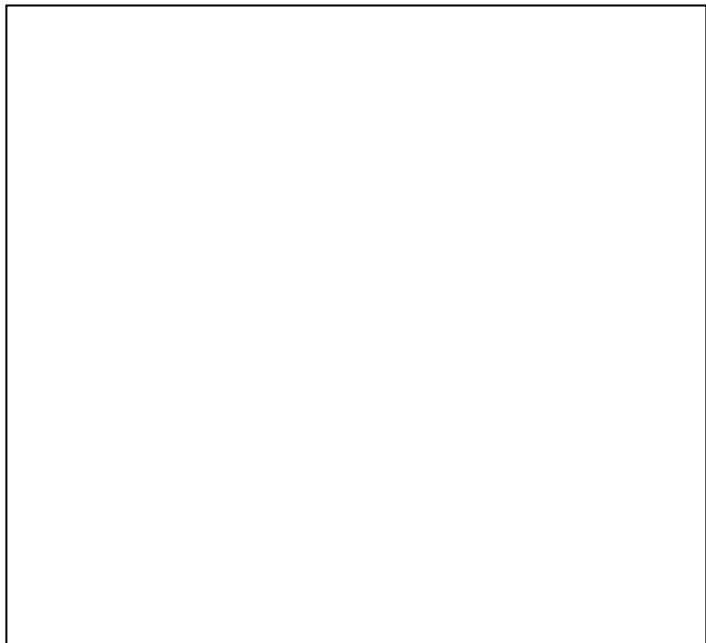
From this list above, pick one of your favourites and draw it in the space below. Also answer the following questions about this particular work.

Title: _____

Year: _____

Materials: _____

What is it about this work that you like?



What aspects of the **Dreaming** do *you think* are represented in this artwork?

5. Gija history told through art

Gija country has many stories to tell, and sadly, not all of them are happy ones. Mr Bedford used his art to express parts of this sad history.

One story tells of two women hiding in a bush, sadly watching terrible things happen to their people. They watch on as a big fire rages.

The artwork *Two women looking at the Bedford Downs massacre burning place* (2002) helps tell this story.

Find this artwork within the exhibition. Can you see the story within the artwork?

These kinds of stories are very sensitive and should be treated specially. **Gija** people remember these events and the people involved, and it is an important story to be remembered through song, dance and visual art.

The story is told again in the artwork *Lerndijwaneman – Lightning Creek* (2000). Can you see the events again within this artwork?

Why do you think it is important that sad stories are told in artworks like these?

★ Art is a very good way of dealing with your feelings. Sometimes it can help you sort through problems. Think of this next time you feel sad. Creating a drawing or a painting might help you feel better.

6. Materials

The artist Paddy Bedford chose a range of materials to work with.

List 5 different materials that you find interesting.

1

2

3

4

5

Why do these materials stand out to you?

The choice of these particular materials is important to artists - they help convey the story being told.

The labels on each artwork are also important for visitors to the exhibition. Copy the label of an artwork that is interesting to you below.

Circle the parts of the label that help tell the story of the artwork itself.

Can you think of any other information that might be useful on a label like the ones in this exhibition? _____

★ **Make a piece of art using materials that are out of the ordinary like fabric, old clothing, cereal boxes or even plastic (remember to get your parent's permission first!) Does your choice of materials help convey your story? Does it add something different to your story?**

Create a label for your artwork to help tell your story to your visitors.

7. Paddy Bedford's Artistic Style

Mr Bedford's painting changed over his long career. Some paintings are very bright and colourful, other paintings use very earthy colours. Some paintings feature many symbols while others feature lots of space. Some have brushstrokes which are easy to see.

Can you locate three artworks that show some different styles of the artist? List them and year that they were made:

Title: _____ Year: _____

Title: _____ Year: _____

Title: _____ Year: _____

What style do you like the best? Describe the style below, and mention the year(s) in which the artist used this style?

Paddy Bedford made a series of many bright and colourful works named **Untitled**. Can you find them in the exhibition? In the first column, list some of the colours used in these works:

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Some of these colours can be found in nature in the East Kimberley. Next to your answers above, write where you might see this colour in nature. E.g. Orange = Sun. *Hint: The artist does not live on the coast, so think of colours that appear in the desert or bush!*

Some of Mr Bedford's work also uses colours like brown, black and dark orange.

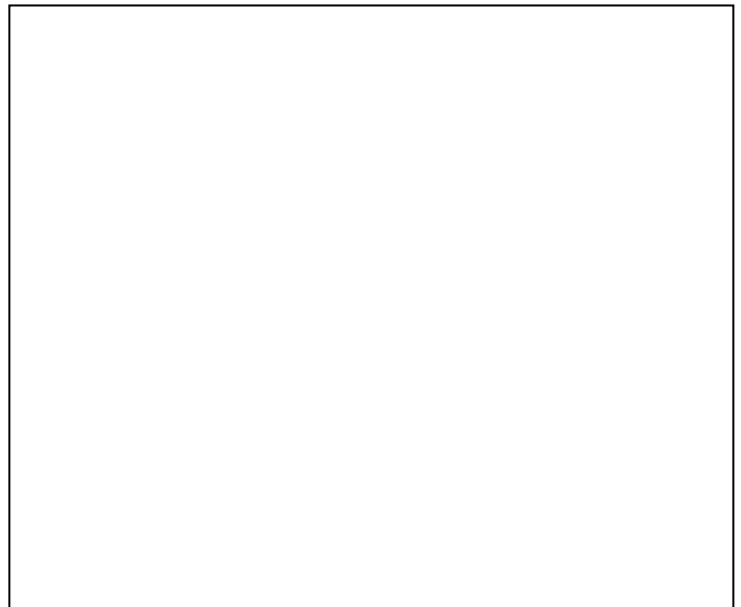
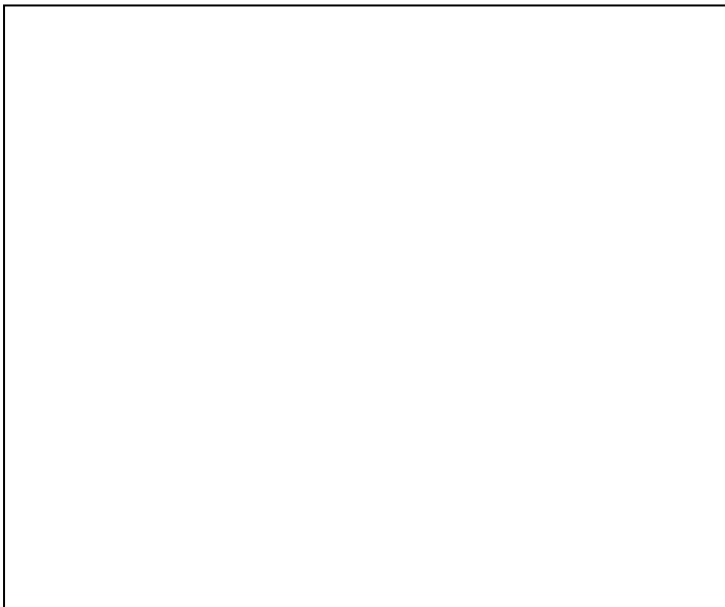
What material has been used to create these art works? __ _ H _ E

Do you know what this kind of material is made from? (If you don't know, try and have a guess! Sand? Berries? Leaves from a tree?) _____

Paddy Bedford's Artistic Style

continued...

Choose a range of Paddy Bedford's paintings to draw in the boxes below. Select paintings with a wide range of style and which have Gija language titles. Write the title below the box. Compare different compositions, lines, brushstrokes, colour and use of negative and positive space (an object and the shape around it).



Glossary

Country	A specific place or area of land that Aboriginal people identify with.
Composition	The particular way an artwork such as a drawing or painting has been positioned on a page or surface, and how the elements relate to each other.
Drawing	To represent a picture or likeness of an object or thing on a surface, usually by making a line.
Dreaming	Stories or events from the past and present connecting an Aboriginal person to their country .
East Kimberley	A specific part of country located in northern Western Australia.
Garnanganyjel	The title of a Paddy Bedford artwork and the Gija language word for 'emu'.
Gijam-boorroo deg-girrim linga-linga-girrim	Gija for 'looking and thinking about Gija things'.
Gija	A language specific to an area of land south of Kununurra and north of Halls Creek in the East Kimberley.
Gouache	A painting method using watercolour-based pigment mixed with gum, usually onto paper.
Label	A piece of card or paper with information on an artwork, used by galleries and museums.
Land	Ground; a part of the surface of the earth marked by boundaries.
Lerndijwaneman	The title of a Paddy Bedford artwork. The Gija language name for the place Lightning Creek.
Materials	The substances or things an artwork is made of, such as paint or metal.
Media	Refers to materials, also refers to modes of art practice (eg: film-making, photography).
Ochre	A colourful natural pigment found in parts of the land. Used by many Aboriginal artists in paintings or to decorate the body for ceremony.
Painting	A picture or design using paint.
Symbol	A visual picture or image that represents something else.
Wawooleny	The title of a Paddy Bedford artwork and the Gija language name for a frill-necked lizard.

Go back through this sheet and look at some of the Gija words. Try saying them using this list of sounds to help you:

b ~ p	similar to English, as in <i>beep, pip, bib</i>
th	not found in English—put your tongue behind your teeth and try to make a ‘d’ or ‘t’ sound
d ~ t	similar to English, as in <i>dot</i>
rd ~ rt	not found in English—turn the tip of your tongue towards the roof of your mouth and try to make a ‘d’ or ‘t’ sound
j	similar to the ‘ch’ in <i>church</i> and the ‘j’ and ‘dge’ in <i>judge</i>
g ~ k	similar to English, as in <i>giggle</i> or <i>kick</i>
l	similar to English, as in <i>lolly</i>
ly	similar to the ‘lli’ in <i>million</i>
rl	not found in English—turn the tip of your tongue towards the roof of your mouth and try to make an ‘l’ sound
m	similar to English, as in <i>mum</i>
n	similar to English, as in <i>nun</i>
nh	not found in English—put your tongue behind your teeth and try to make an ‘n’ sound
rn	not found in English—turn the tip of your tongue towards the roof of your mouth and try to make an ‘n’ sound
ng	similar to the ‘ng’ at the end of <i>sing</i> or in the middle of <i>singer</i> . Not like the ‘ng’ in <i>linger</i>
ny	similar to the ‘ny’ in the name <i>Sonya</i> or the ‘ni’ in <i>onion</i>
r	similar to the English sound in <i>run</i> or the sound in <i>car</i> when pronounced with an American accent
rr	this sounds like the rolled ‘r’ sound in Scottish English. Sometimes it sound a bit like the ‘tt’ in <i>butter</i>
y	similar to English, as in <i>yes</i> . When found following ‘l’ or ‘n’ it is the ‘ly’ or ‘ny’ sound and is not pronounced separately.
w	similar to English, as in <i>west</i>

We hope you enjoyed this worksheet

Gijam-boorroo deg-girrim, linga-linga-girrim - Looking and thinking about Gija things.

We also hope you enjoyed the exhibition *Paddy Bedford*.

Don't forget to return your clipboard and pencil!

In association with the exhibition

Paddy Bedford

MCA Galleries Level 1 and Mezzanine

6 December 2006 – 15 April 2007

Worksheet produced by the MCA Education Department.

Written by Jilda Simpson.

Contributions by Justine McLisky, Keith Munro and Petra Pattinson.

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Exhibition organised by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

Curated by MCA Curator, Russell Storer, with the assistance of Curator, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Programs, Keith Munro.

The Museum of Contemporary Art acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, traditional owners of the land and waters the MCA is located upon and where this exhibition was first presented. The MCA acknowledges the artist's Gija people, whose strength and resilience is seen through Paddy Bedford's artistic practice. We also acknowledge the traditional owners of the land and waters of those venues hosting the Paddy Bedford exhibition on its national tour.

The MCA acknowledges the recent passing in Kununurra of the artist and senior Gija Elder Mr Paddy Bedford. The Museum has consulted closely with the artist's family and with Jirrawun Arts, of which Mr Bedford was a founding member. We acknowledge and respect the wishes of the family who have provided permission for us, on the occasion of the MCA exhibition, tour and publication of Mr Bedford's work, to share publicly sensitive aspects that would normally be culturally inappropriate during sorry business. This includes the display of the artist's work, film and audio recordings, images of the artist and the use of his name.

Major sponsor 

This exhibition is supported by the Contemporary Touring Initiative through Visions of Australia, an Australian Government Program and the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments.



An MCA National Touring exhibition:

Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth: 12 May–22 July 2007

Bendigo Art Gallery, Bendigo: 11 August–16 September 2007

University Art Museum, University of Queensland, Brisbane: 16 November 2007–1 March 2008



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