

## Aboriginal Art

Aboriginal people live in Australia. They have been living in Australia for over 40,000 years. This makes them one of the oldest cultures in the world.

Aboriginal people who live in the Central Desert region get all their food from the land they live in. They eat seeds, fruit, vegetables, reptiles and insects.

Aboriginals move around a lot. People that move around and do not settle in one place are called nomads.

Australian Aboriginals spoke different languages, but had the same religious beliefs that focused on the natural environment around them.

Traditionally, they have a map of their landscape that is passed on to each new generation verbally through their Dreamtime stories.

Dreamtime stories tell of when the world was created and their art shows these stories through secret symbols.

Aboriginals do not have a written language like we do, so their art stands for a written language. They have layers of hidden meanings.

Their paintings are used for teaching and there are different ones for children or adults.

Aboriginal artists are not allowed to paint a story that does not belong to them.

Aboriginal art comes in three regional styles:

1- geometrical style found in central Australia; circles, arcs and dots

2-simple figurative style found in Queensland

3-complex figurative style found in Arnhem land and Kimberley which includes X-ray art.

Some Aboriginal paintings on rock surfaces are probably the earliest discovered in the world. Some are negative prints made by spraying pigment over ones hand to leave the shape of it. Some are animals or plants. Some of the paintings of fish, show what it looks like on the outside but also what it looks like on the inside - now called x-ray art.

Painting was also done on baskets, shields and boomerangs. They even painted designs on themselves for special occasions.

Painting these designs was a way of life and very important in their communities and brought them all together.

What stories can you tell from your art using Colour, Pattern and Symbols?

What is a symbol? A symbol is a picture or object that represents something else. For example if you were in a restaurant and you saw a door with a small picture of a lady or man on it, what do you think it means?

A picture tells 1000 words. What does yours say?