Yugambeh Nation

Name: _____

Date: _____

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More Than One Aboriginal Space

Councils often say they will “talk to the local Aboriginal people”. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are not one single group, so the real question is: **who should be asked, about what?** There is more than one Aboriginal space in every town. Keeping them separate is not about shutting anyone out. It makes sure the right people are asked about the right things.

1. The Traditional Owner space

What it covers: matters of Country. Land and waters, cultural heritage, sacred sites, names for places, native title, Welcome to Country, and caring for Country.

Who to consult: the Traditional Owners of that Country. On the Gold Coast, in Logan and the Scenic Rim, and on the Tweed, that is the Yugambeh Nation.

2. The whole community space

What it covers: services and wellbeing. Health, housing, education support, jobs, youth programs and aged care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Who to consult: the whole local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. That includes Traditional Owners, Historical Peoples, Stolen Generations families, and people from other Nations who live here.

Sort the decisions

Tick who the council should consult about each one.

Council decision	Traditional Owners	Whole community	Both
1. Choosing a name for a new park	☐	☐	☐
2. Planning a youth mental health program for Aboriginal teenagers	☐	☐	☐
3. Deciding what to do about a scarred tree found on a building site	☐	☐	☐
4. Starting a housing support program for Aboriginal families	☐	☐	☐
5. Running an Aboriginal homework club at the library	☐	☐	☐
6. Arranging a Welcome to Country at a council event	☐	☐	☐
7. Writing a management plan for a bushland reserve	☐	☐	☐
8. Organising a NAIDOC Week family day	☐	☐	☐
9. Setting up an aged care service for Aboriginal Elders	☐	☐	☐
10. Building a new Aboriginal health clinic beside a creek where there are cultural sites	☐	☐	☐

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Ideas from Yugambeh Nation Readings: “Homogenisation of First Nations is Discrimination” and “Unravelling Australia’s Indigenous Tapestry”, yugam.be/stories

MORE THAN ONE ABORIGINAL SPACE

Explain your thinking

Explain your thinking

1. Why should a council ask the Traditional Owners about naming a park, but ask the whole community about a youth health program?

2. Some people think keeping a Traditional Owner space is “selfish”. Explain why having more than one Aboriginal space is fair to everyone.

3. What could go wrong if a council only asked one local Aboriginal organisation about a sacred site, without asking the Traditional Owners?

4. What could go wrong if a council only asked the Traditional Owners about a housing program that is meant for every local Aboriginal family?

5. Choose one decision you ticked “Both”. Explain which parts belong to each space.

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MORE THAN ONE ABORIGINAL SPACE

Write to your council

Write to your council

Write a letter asking your council to consult the whole local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community about a service that affects everyone. Plan it first.

The service you are writing about (for example health, housing or education support)

Why the whole local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community should be consulted

Who that community includes

One sentence recognising the Traditional Owners' role in matters of Country

What you are asking the council to do

Your letter

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

Yours sincerely,

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FOR TEACHERS

Teacher notes

Suggested answers

These are suggestions to guide discussion. Real decisions can involve more than one space, so ask students to explain their thinking.

Decision	Suggested	Why
1. Choosing a name for a new park	**Traditional Owners**	Names for places belong to the Country and language of its Traditional Owners.
2. Planning a youth mental health program for Aboriginal teenagers	**Whole community**	A health service for all local Aboriginal young people, wherever their families are from.
3. Deciding what to do about a scarred tree found on a building site	**Traditional Owners**	Cultural heritage on Country is a Traditional Owner matter.
4. Starting a housing support program for Aboriginal families	**Whole community**	Housing is a service for every local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family.
5. Running an Aboriginal homework club at the library	**Whole community**	Education support is for all local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
6. Arranging a Welcome to Country at a council event	**Traditional Owners**	Only the Traditional Owners of a place can welcome people to their Country.
7. Writing a management plan for a bushland reserve	**Traditional Owners**	Caring for Country and its lands and waters is a Traditional Owner matter.
8. Organising a NAIDOC Week family day	**Both**	A celebration for the whole community, opened with a Welcome to Country from Traditional Owners.
9. Setting up an aged care service for Aboriginal Elders	**Whole community**	Aged care is a service for all local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders.
10. Building a new Aboriginal health clinic beside a creek where there are cultural sites	**Both**	The health service is for the whole community; the cultural sites on that land are for Traditional Owners.

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