

REMEMBERED BY HEART

Anthology (various authors)

Foreword by Sally Morgan

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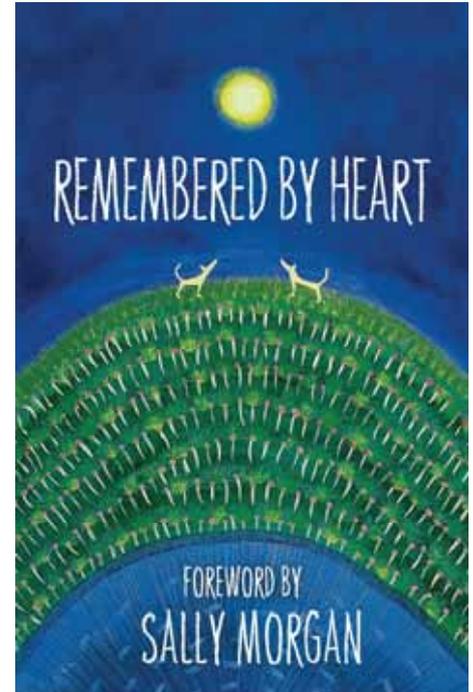
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Themes: Stolen Generations, racism, colonisation

Year level: Y6 to 12

Cross-curriculum priority: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures



ABOUT THE BOOK

You can't change the past, but you can live a different future.

—Bronwyn Bancroft

This moving collection of youthful memories touches on a broad sweep of history and includes people from many different Aboriginal countries.

These stories are powerful: sharing pain, humour, grief, hope and pride.

Pride in family, community and survival. Pride in being Aboriginal.

—Sally Morgan

From life in the desert to growing up on a mission, enduring devastating policies in the 1930s to bravely seizing new opportunities in the 1960s, these fifteen true stories of adolescence are as diverse as they are moving. They offer the reader insight into a range of Aboriginal Australian experiences.

STUDY NOTES

Texts in contexts

Discuss the history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia with particular focus on colonisation and the Stolen Generations.

1. Construct a timeline of Australian history.
2. What was the White Australia Policy?
3. What power did the Chief Protector of Aborigines have? Who was A.O. Neville?
4. What does the term 'Stolen Generations' describe?
5. Upon British settlement of Australia, many Aboriginal place names were replaced with English names. Find examples where this has happened in your local area. What effects could the renaming of places have on Aboriginal culture and on communities' sense of identity?
6. Examine a map of Aboriginal languages across Australia.
 - a. How many of these languages are still currently spoken in Australia?
 - b. Why are many languages disappearing?
 - c. How many Indigenous languages are currently taught in Australian schools?

Language and textual analysis, engaging and responding, reflecting

Comprehension questions and discussion prompts

'Tracks' by Stephen Kinnane

7. *I returned to my grandmother's country, Miriwoong country.* (p. 15) Locate this region on a map of Australia.
8. Define the term 'empire' (p. 16).
9. *My grandmother was broken down into authentic parts, half white, half black, but never wholly human.* (p. 17) What do you think the author means by 'never wholly human'?

10. Create a class definition for the outdated term 'half-caste' (p. 17). Why did the government of the time create a system that divides people according to their 'whiteness'? Why is the term widely considered offensive today?
11. *They did not see the hole they were tearing. They did not see they were taking someone's daughter, someone's granddaughter, someone's sister, and someone's future mother. They studied my grandmother but they did not see her and they did not see the chain of events they were setting in place. They did not think she would remember what had happened to her, or that others would share in this story.* (p. 17)
How is the legacy of the Stolen Generations still impacting on Indigenous Australians and on the wider Australian community today?
12. Define the term 'trauma' (p. 20). What kinds of trauma might families of the Stolen Generations encounter?
13. Locate the Swan Native and Half-Caste Mission on a map of Australia and examine historical photos. Of the many people who worked at the Swan Native and Half-Caste Mission, whom does the narrator's grandmother remember fondly? Why so?
14. How does the author portray the role of the Church? Find two examples to support your claim.
15. What is a 'paper trail'? (p. 27). Create a flow chart of the 'paper trail' Stephen Kinnane used to track down the Jones family.
16. Why doesn't Baby Jones like the term 'Stolen Generations'? (p. 28)
17. *It is the fate of all our histories to be scrutinised by later generations.* (p. 28) Do you agree? What might future generations scrutinise about Australian society in 2014?
18. *This is not to say that Baby Jones' version of her life at Swan Mission is invalid ... you cannot confuse one telling of a story as the only telling.* (p. 32) Why do you think the author chose to point this out? What is the significance of this statement?

'Life in Moore River' by Alice Nannup

19. How does Alice describe the food at the Moore River mission? How does she compare it to the food at home?
20. What year level did school proceed to at Moore River? What was the future awaiting the children when they left it? Do you think children sent there were really removed to better their education – why/why not? Find examples in the text to support your claim.
21. *On the windows of the girls' dormitory they had wire mesh to stop you from getting out, and a trellis around the veranda ... they always locked the girls' door.* (p. 39) How would such restrictions on freedom make the children feel?
22. What sort of punishments existed for those who broke the rules at the settlement? (p. 47–8)
23. *Although there were awful things that went on at the settlement, and once you were there you were there until it suited them, good things used to happen too.* (p. 48). Find examples in the text.

'Growing Up Around Needilup' by Hazel Brown

24. *... just the name, it sickens you. They've changed the name, but none of us ever forgot that it was Carrolup. To us it was a concentration camp. And that was somewhere we had fear of, and didn't ever want to be sent.* (p. 52)
 - a. Describe the effects Carrolup had on Hazel and the people she talks about.
 - b. Why do you think the name of the settlement was changed?
25. What was included in the 'government rations' provided to Indigenous people in Gnowangerup? (p. 53–4)
26. *Aboriginal people were not allowed in Gnowangerup town after six o'clock. We weren't allowed to go to the pictures and the women all had to have their babies in the camp.* (p. 59)
 - a. What other discriminatory rules applied to Aboriginal people living in Gnowangerup?
 - b. Were such rules common in other parts of the country for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?
27. Why was Brother Wright eventually forced to leave Gnowangerup?
28. What changes did Mr and Mrs Street make when they arrived? Do you think these were positive or negative changes for the Aboriginal community? Why?

'In Those Days' by Alice Bilari Smith

29. What is the effect of the use of non-standard Australian English on your reading experience?
30. *Any old clothes get a patch and patch it up ... Not like this time, wasting everything, just going in the dump.* (p. 66) List examples of waste that you can find in your school, your home and your own life; next to each item in your list, suggest ways to reduce waste.

'My Story' by May O'Brien

31. Why do you think May O'Brien has *only happy memories of my time at Mount Margaret Mission?* (p. 78)
32. *As schooling was not compulsory for Aboriginal children, the Education Department had established no schools for us. The Mission chose to provide schools to give us the opportunity to learn as the white children did ... it opened up a new world for me.* (p. 76)
- Why do you think schooling was not compulsory for Aboriginal children?
 - In what ways can education empower an individual and 'open up a new world'?
 - What are the benefits of education?

'My Life in the Desert' by Jukuna Mona Chuguna

33. Locate the Great Sandy Desert and Fitzroy Crossing on a map of Australia.
34. *When I was a child I learnt to kill small lizards to eat. I killed the thorny devil, dragon lizards, and small marsupials. I cooked them myself and ate them. Sometimes my grandmother or older sister would kill a blue-tongue lizard for me.* (p. 80)
- What is 'bush tucker'?
 - Find other examples in the text of the food Jukuna and her family hunted and gathered.
 - The Walmajarri language distinguishes *jila* (permanent waterholes) and *jumu* (seasonal soaks). What knowledge of the land and learned skills were necessary for living off the bush? Find examples in the text.
35. *My grandmother used to tell me about the people with the pink skin, called kartiya. I was curious and kept asking her about them. I imagined kartiya were like trees or dogs or something [...] She'd answer, 'No, they are like people. They have two eyes, a mouth and a nose. And two hands.'* (p. 84)
- What is the significance of saying they are 'like people'? What does this illustrate about the grandmother's view of kartiya?
 - How do you think mutual misconceptions about one another's culture might have impacted relationships between Aboriginal people and British settlers?

'My Mother' by Joan Winch

36. *The Aborigines Department was trying to breed out our colour so we wouldn't exist anymore. That's what White Australia was all about.* (p. 87) What was the scientific myth underpinning this policy? What did this myth preach about the genetics relating to skin colour?
37. *The Native Welfare controlled every aspect of your life in those days.* (p. 88) List the aspects of life controlled by Native Welfare.
38. The author describes how she witnessed the spirit of her mother.
- Research Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander beliefs and spirituality.
 - Compare this with Christianity.
 - Were funerals conducted when someone died in traditional Aboriginal cultures? How were they conducted?

'Growing Up With Family' by Lola Young

39. *My grandparents reckoned I was the chosen one for them, to learn all these things, because I was the first grandchild. I went through all that, like you go to high school, you know. I never been to school, but they teaching me proper. They got to give you mark for it just like you going to high school. They give me top mark because I know everything about the bush and everything. That's only my knowledge, to learn all them things. I have that special skill.* (p. 93)
- Create a Venn diagram showing the similarities and differences between Lola's education and your own.
40. *We never used to speak Yinawangka and now Yinawangka is nearly gone.* (p. 94) How many Indigenous Australian languages are still currently spoken in Australia? Why are some disappearing? What are language recovery/revival projects?

'Hiding' by David Simmons

41. ... *I was probably the only Aboriginal kid at school. I can remember my mother taking me to school and asking the teacher, if the Native Welfare were to come, would they hide me?* (p. 105).
 - a. How do you think David felt attending school with this threat of removal ever present?
 - b. How would you feel if you were taken away from your family?
42. *McDonald House is part of the Aboriginal history.* (p. 109) Research the history of McDonald House, or a similar organisation in your area, and write a report on its contribution to Indigenous education.
43. Read the description of traditional Aboriginal customs, objects and stories mentioned on page 108. Research the significance of each.

'Opportunity' by Eric Hayward

44. Define the term 'assimilation'.
45. Eric writes about a government scheme introduced so that Noongar kids could attend school in Perth: *How it worked was that officers of the Native Welfare Department identified boys and girls capable of taking up the opportunity ... Those who were doing well at school and were willing to leave their families were selected first.* (p. 111). Would you be willing to leave your family to go away to school? What would be some of the challenges of this decision?
46. ... *she knew, as I did from an early age, that Noongars most often got the rough end of the stick in dealings and opportunities in our town and an education was the way this might be changed.* (p. 114) How could education help change this situation?
47. *I knew I was very lucky to get the chance of a high school education. For us Noongar kids, this sort of privilege had an impact on our lives, changing our hopes and aspirations in ways which were just not possible for many others from our communities.* (p. 120) What do you think some of these ways may be?

'Mission Days' by Rene Powell

48. *Sometimes I think that the government and the missionaries were trying to play God to a people they didn't understand. We were a people who lived with nature and loved and cared for the land. Our idea of God was very different.* (p. 132). Discuss.
49. ... *I was sent even farther away from my family and country in the hope that I would forget them. I lost a grandmother's and parents' love and guidance, family life, extended family, language. Everything.* (p. 133) Consider your own upbringing – discuss the importance of each of these things in shaping one's identity.

'A Black Grandmother' by Sally Morgan

50. *'It's a terrible thing to be Aboriginal. Nobody wants to know you, not just Susan. You can be Indian, Dutch, Italian, anything, but not Aboriginal!'* (p. 140)
 - a. How/why do you think Sally's sister came to develop this attitude?
 - b. Find two examples of racism she has encountered.

'Boorn – Taproot' by Tjalaminu Mia

51. *The kind of institutionalisation that I and my brothers and sisters experienced as children doesn't prepare you for life, it just prepares you for more institutionalisation. A lot of the kids from homes ended up as prison inmates ... they'd been deprived of basic human rights as a child, and as they grew older they were harassed by various government officials, especially the police.* (p. 155)
 - a. What is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)? Read the 30 human rights listed in the declaration.
 - b. Which of these rights were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children of the Stolen Generations denied?

'Of Aboriginal Descent' by Kim Scott

52. What were some of the challenges the narrator grapples with as he forms his Aboriginal identity? Support your answer with quotations from the text.

'Crossing the Line' by Bronwyn Bancroft

53. *It didn't matter that one person had black skin. What mattered was they were in love. A love you can read of in fairy tales – defying boundaries, defying doubters, defying the White Australia Policy.* (pp. 161–2) Research when the law preventing marriage between Indigenous Australians and non-Indigenous Australians was repealed.
54. *You can't change the past, but you can live a different future.* (p. 167) What do you think the author means here?

Creating texts

Suggested essay questions

The following questions can be adapted for in-class assessment or used for a take-home research essay.

55. Compare and contrast how the theme of innocence is portrayed in two stories from *Remembered by Heart*.
56. Discuss the representation of one or more of the following in *Remembered by Heart*: gender, race, class, family, childhood.
57. How is Australian culture/identity portrayed in *Remembered by Heart*?
58. Critically discuss the representation of trauma in *Remembered by Heart*.

Oral presentation topics

59. Create a three-minute presentation discussing the representation of one of the following themes in the text: family, friendship, manipulation, innocence, trauma.
60. Create a three-minute presentation discussing the representation of one of the following in the text: gender, race, class.
61. Create a three-minute presentation outlining how the denial of basic human rights during the Stolen Generations is depicted in *Remembered by Heart*.

Debate

62. Create an argument for/against the validity of the following claim: *You can't be bit and bit. What are you, Noongar or wadjela.* (p. 159)

Film study suggestions

- *Rabbit-proof fence* (2002)
- *Ten Canoes* (2006)
- *Yolngu Boy* (2001)
- *Beneath Clouds* (2002)

General skills to revise in creating texts (through study of *Remembered by Heart*)

- Model appropriate planning and drafting strategies, including underlining and highlighting key words in an essay question, and analysing the 'directive words' that instruct you how to answer the question (e.g. evaluate, compare and contrast, critically discuss etc.).
- Provide an essay-planning template. Revise how to structure an effective proposition.
- Use the text as stimulus for teaching a number of points of spelling and grammar to improve students' ability to effectively proofread their own work.

General skills to revise in interpreting, analysing, evaluating texts (through study of *Remembered by Heart*)

- Set small reading activities to encourage students to practise a variety of reading strategies. For example: skimming through a page to find a relevant quote.
- Set comprehension tasks requiring the students to justify their response with appropriate evidence from the text or their wider reading and viewing.
- Set compare-and-contrast activities to encourage students to make connections between the text and their wider reading and viewing.