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## Lamentation education kit

This Education Kit explores the themes of identity, family, story-telling, life/death, grief, sadness, social history, portraiture, and place.  
The Kit includes cross curricular activities for Visual Art, Mathematics, English and History.

This project is supported by the Queensland  
Government through Arts Queensland.



## exhibition intro

**Lamentation** will challenge you to think about ways of making sculpture. For many artists today, the creative idea is the most important aspect of making an artwork, and they choose whatever materials will help them express that idea best. Artists from all over the world contribute to the field of contemporary art, which is now a meeting place for many different ideas and cultures.

Contemporary sculpture often takes unexpected forms which cause viewers to stop and think about what they are seeing. Some artists use found and recycled objects in their artworks. They create art from existing objects which are re-used to give them new meaning, either by showing them in a different environment or context, or by combining them with recycled objects to make something completely new.

In *Lamentation* the artist interviewed twelve daughters about their mother's story, who had sadly passed away. She used these stories to make artworks using discarded hospital linen.

## about the artist



**Karike Ashworth** is a multi-disciplinary artist living and working in Brisbane, Queensland. She creates contemporary artworks that reflect her interest in common human experiences and social convention.

Karike holds a Bachelor of Visual Arts from the Queensland College of Art (2013), and BFA (Honours) from the Queensland University of Technology (2014).

*Lamentation* developed in response to the sad passing of her mother in 2012.

## themes & influences

The exhibition highlights the following themes:

- The place of personal and intimate spheres, such as the body, motherhood, family, memory, ageing, death and grief.
- The ways artists are redressing the canon of painting.
- Aspects of art by women that directly address social issues and history.

## learning objectives

Students will be encouraged to view the exhibition in terms of:

- What art can tell them about social conventions, history, art and artistry.
- Assess and utilise the properties of a variety of art media and their ability to convey messages and meaning (visual arts).
- Analyse the artworks to determine the artist's intentions.



Karrie Ashworth *Lamentation* (installation view),  
The Hold Artspace (2014).

## observations

As you walk through the exhibition and view the works on display, think about the following elements:

- materials
- scale
- colour
- installation techniques
- repetition and pattern
- the use of found objects
- performance techniques
- different viewpoints and perspectives suggested by the artworks

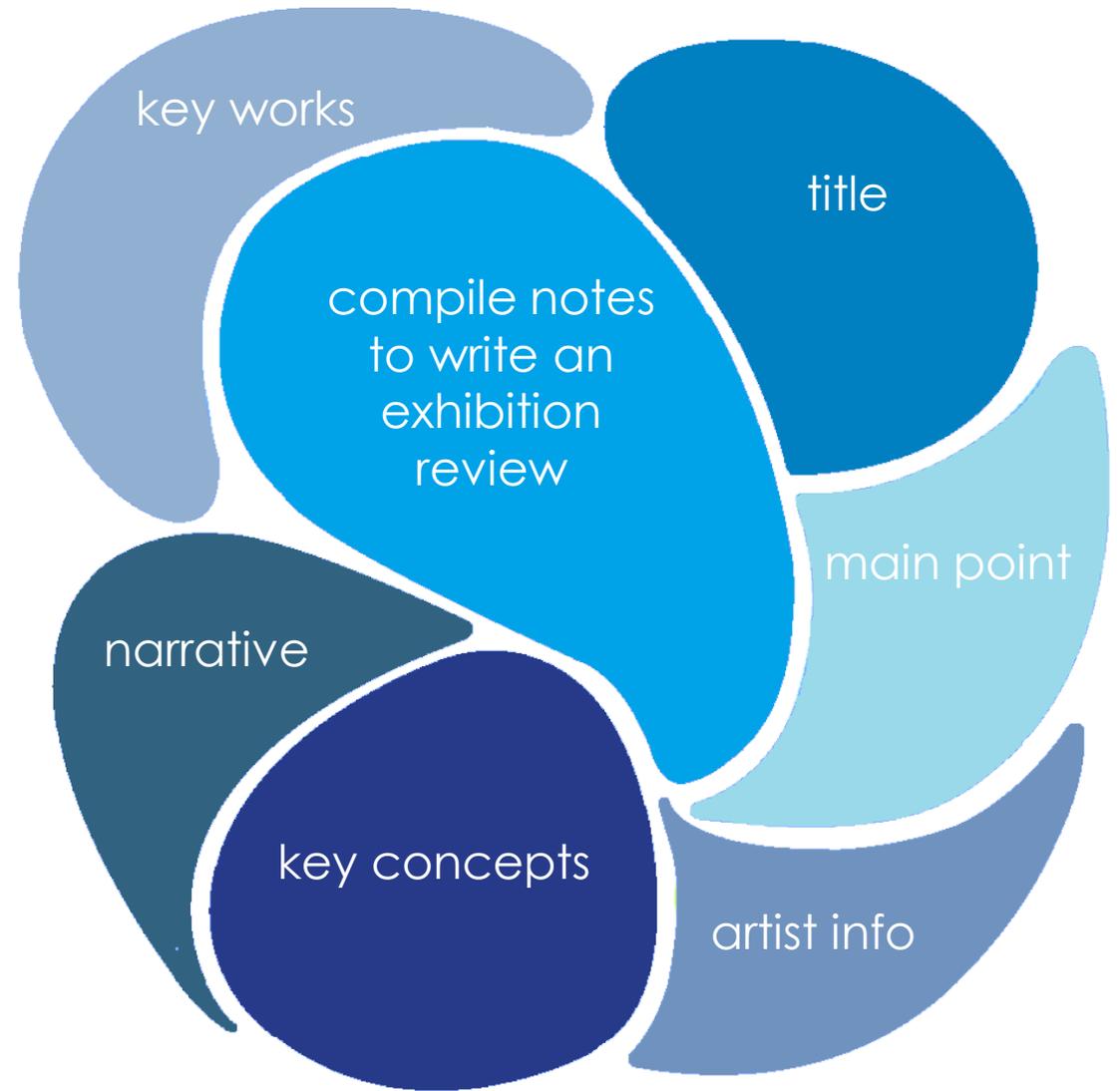
Think carefully about the materials in the exhibition. What space or place is the artist drawing our attention to? Why do you think the artist is doing this?

What found objects or materials can you identify? List them.

Why might artists use repetition or create a series of objects?

The artist has used materials to symbolise something. She is using them metaphorically. What clues can you find that indicate they are being used metaphorically? Which objects has the artist used to create a metaphor?

## review





Karika Ashworth *Epoch* (2014).

## epoch

Look carefully at the individual framed objects hanging on the wall in the work 'Epoch'. Each framed sheet represents the life of a woman, a mother, who has sadly passed away. Her story has been told to the artist by their daughter. There are twelve in the series. Each object has the name and date of birth of the mother sewn into the side. Each of the women depicted were born and lived in Australia.

Notice that each sheet has a series of numbers sewn into the sheet in a grid formation. The numbers recorded on each sheet are different, some have 62 squares, and some have 92 etc. Notice also that the artist has used two different colours of thread: white and blue.

### Questions for discussion:

- What does 'Epoch' mean?
- Why do you think the artist has titled the work 'Epoch'?
- Why do you think the artist has chosen 'twelve' in the series to represent the lives of these women? Why is the number twelve significant in daily life? What does it represent?
- Each of the framed sheets is a portrait of a mother. Would you describe these 'portraits' as traditional portraiture? Why or why not? Discuss.
- Why do you think the artist has chosen a traditional sewing technique as a means of representation? Can you identify the specific sewing technique?
- Each sheet has been stretched onto a frame and hung on the wall. What traditional art technique do they reference? Why do you think the artist is making this reference?
- Artists often use colour to express or communicate something, for example, an emotion or concept. Write down the feelings, emotions or concepts you feel, or may be expressed by the colours blue and white.

## higher order learning

### Discuss the following questions:

- In the works 'Epoch' and 'Comforters', the story of the mother was told to the artist by the daughter and not by the mother. Whose memories are they? What role does truth and personal experience play in the creation or disruption of memory? Discuss.
- What role does personal story or narrative play in art and in society more broadly? Discuss.
- Is art just a therapeutic working through of life experiences? Discuss.
- The Modernist Grid was an important element in Modernist painting and sculpture. Why do you think the artist has chosen to represent the lives of these women as a grid and not as a traditional portrait? What do the grid-squares represent?



Karika Ashworth *Comforters* (2013)

## ACTIVITY: contemporary portraiture

### create a collaged portrait

Identify a person who you have a special bond with. How would you compose a portrait of them? How do they make you feel? Why? What type of medium would you use to convey this bond in your artwork? What colours can you use to help convey the emotion this person makes you feel?

Compose a portrait of this person by drawing the profile of your chosen person onto a large piece of paper (or using resource 1). Paint the background and leave the profile area blank.

Collage their photos or images onto the profile area. Add colour and pattern to express your thoughts and feelings. Use interesting tools to create effects i.e. sponge, rubbings, stencil etc.

### create a grid portrait

Identify someone who you don't have a special bond with (e.g. family member, bus driver, neighbour, older student). Compose a new image that conveys the lack of closeness or connection you feel with this person.

Compose a portrait using a grid (see resource 2) to draw objects that represent the feelings you have towards a certain person. For example, an empty picture frame, a scorpion, a sword-wielding monster etc.

Layer your images and explore positive and negative imagery and the use of silhouette. You may like to collaborate with a partner to create even more layers.

## ACTIVITY: epochal timeline

The act of collaboration is important in the artwork 'Epoch'. The artist has worked with many people, including the daughters of the mothers represented, to realise this work. Artists often collaborate in order to pool their creative energy. It is an integral part of the creative process.

In groups of 5-6, create a timeline (resource 3), and plot the twelve mother's and their daughter's dates of birth onto the timeline (you should have 24 women represented on your timeline). As a group, discuss the following questions. Conclude by presenting your timelines and findings to your class.

1. In which century were all the women born?
2. Research and discuss the significant events which occurred in this century in Australia that may have had an impact on the lives of women.
3. Plot these events onto your timeline. Present your findings as a group to the class, discussing the impact of these events on the lives of women.



The art works in the exhibition, 'Lamentation', reference traditional women's crafts such as sewing and using fabric. Take a close look at the works and describe the following:

**Materials used:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Textures:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Colour choices:** \_\_\_\_\_

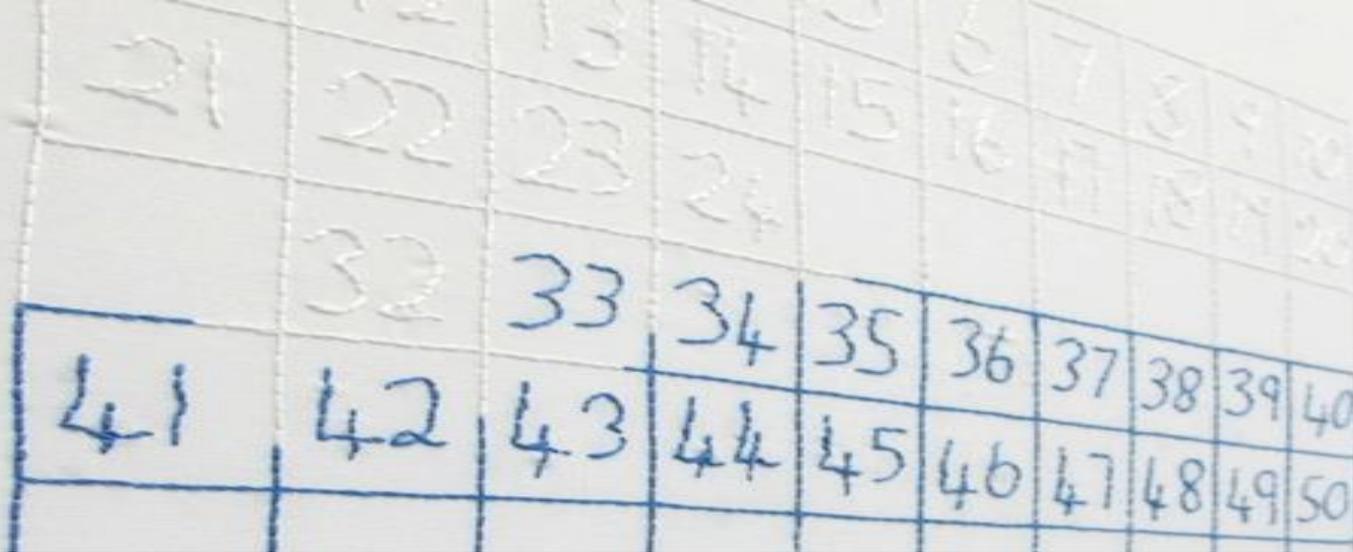
**Technique:** \_\_\_\_\_

How do the artworks make you feel?

Think carefully about the materials the artist has used to make the artworks. Where are they from?  
What do they remind you of?

What do you think the purpose of the exhibition is?  
Circle the words that best match what you think the exhibition is about:

**Grief**  
**Family**  
**Mother-Daughter**  
**Hospital**  
**Sadness**  
**Death**  
**Love**



Karika Ashworth Epoch (2013)

Look carefully at the framed artworks hanging on the wall in the work 'Epoch'. Each framed sheet represents the life of a woman, someone's mother's life. Her story has been told to the artist by their daughter.

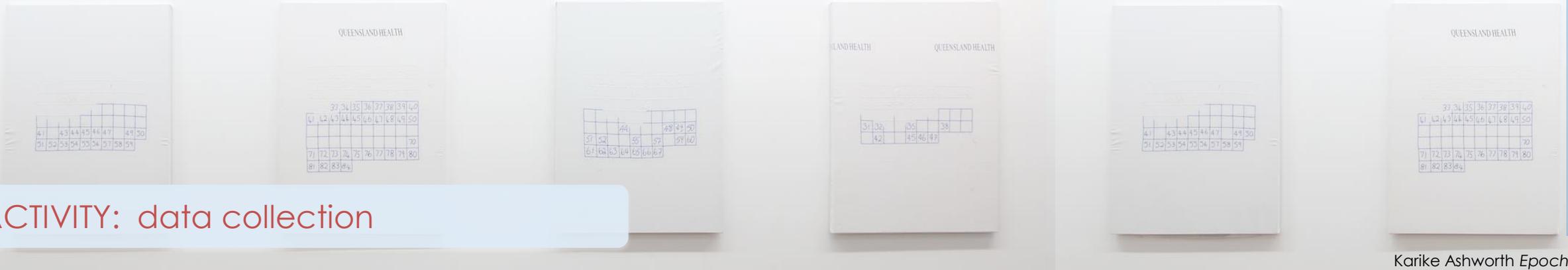
Notice that there are twelve in the series. Each sheet has the name and date of birth of the mother sewn into the side. Each of the women were born in and lived in Australia. Notice that each sheet has a series of numbers sewn into the sheet in a grid formation.

The numbers recorded on each sheet are different, some have 62 squares, and some have 92 etc. Some squares contain numbers and some do not. The squares with numbers represent major events in the life of the mother, for example: they got married, they had a baby etc. The final number in the final square is their age when they died.

Notice also that the artist has used two different colours of thread: white and blue. When the thread changes from white to blue this is the year that the daughter was born (the daughter who is telling the story).

### Questions for discussion:

- What does 'Epoch' mean?
- Why do you think the artist has titled the work 'Epoch'?
- Each of the framed sheets is a portrait of a mother. Would you describe these 'portraits' as traditional portraits? Why or why not? Discuss.
- The story of the mother has been told to the artist by the daughter and not by the mother. Is the story a primary or a secondary source of information? What is the difference between a primary and a secondary source of information?
- Artists often use colour to express or communicate something, for example, an emotion or a feeling. Write down the emotions you feel when you think of the colours blue and white.



Karrike Ashworth Epoch (2013)

## ACTIVITY: data collection

a) Collect the following data (see resource 4) while you are visiting the exhibition:

1. All the dates of birth (and corresponding names) of the mothers. (HINT: this has been sewn into the side of the framed sheet).
2. All the dates of birth of the daughters (HINT: when the thread changes from white to blue, this is the age of the mother when they daughter was born). What data have you already collected that will help you work out the daughter's date of birth?
3. The number of years each mother lived (HINT: the final square that contains a number is the age of the mother when she died).
4. The year all the mother's died (HINT: you will need to calculate this using the data you have already collected).

### EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

1. Which mother had the most significant incidents in their life? (HINT: the squares containing numbers represent major events in the life of the mother).
2. Create a timeline (resource 3) and plot the twelve mother's, and their daughter's dates of birth onto the timeline (HINT: you should have 24 women represented on your timeline).
3. In which century were all the women born?

As a group research all the significant events which occurred in this century in Australia that may have had an impact on the lives of women. Plot these events onto a timeline, using pictures, photocopies or drawings to represent the events.

b) The artist worked with many people to make this art work. She worked closely with the daughters of the mothers to find out their mother's story and then they worked together to sew the story into the sheet. Artist's often work in groups to make artworks. It is an important part of the creative process.

Using the data you collected at the exhibition (date of birth, year of birth/death), in groups of three or four, complete the following activities:

1. Using a column graph (resource 5) to represent your findings, answer the following questions:
  - a) Who was the oldest mother when she died?
  - b) Who was the oldest daughter when her mother died?
  - c) Who was the oldest mother when her daughter was born?
2. Can you identify any trends? For example: are women having children earlier or later now-a-days?

## ACTIVITY: interview & picto-grid

Interview your mother, your father, your brother, your aunt (i.e. someone close to you) and plot their lives on a grid (resource 6). Ensure there is a square for each year of their life. Squares should contain a symbolic picture or photograph if it included a significant event for example: a baby was born, someone got married, someone died, they bought a house etc.

Think also about significant events happening at specific times such as, World Wars, Women's Movement, Worker's Rights, Voting Rights, access to education, advent of TV and advertising, medical advances i.e. caesarean section etc.

Write a one-page biography of the person's life to go along with your 'picto-grid'. The biography should describe the person's life that you interviewed. Present this to the class in an aural presentation (include photos, special mementos etc).



Karrike Ashworth *Lamentation* (installation view),  
The Hold Artspace (2014)

## curriculum links

All descriptors taken from the Australian Curriculum v7.1 Visit website for Achievement Standards and examples of knowledge and skills - <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au>

| Activity                 | Primary                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Secondary                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Portrait: Collage & Grid | <p><u>VISUAL ART</u></p> <p><b>Year 3&amp;4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use materials, techniques and processes to explore visual conventions when making artworks.</li><li>• Present artworks and describe how they have used visual conventions to represent their ideas.</li></ul> <p><b>Year 5&amp;6</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop and apply techniques and processes when making their artworks.</li><li>• Plan the display of artworks to enhance their meaning for an audience.</li></ul> | <p><u>VISUAL ART</u></p> <p><b>Year 7&amp;8</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop ways to enhance their intentions as artists through exploration of how artists use materials, techniques, technologies and processes.</li><li>• Develop planning skills for art-making by exploring techniques and processes used by different artists.</li><li>• Practise techniques and processes to enhance representation of ideas in their art-making.</li></ul> <p><b>Year 9&amp;10</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Manipulate materials, techniques, technologies and processes to develop and represent their own artistic intentions.</li><li>• Develop and refine techniques and processes to represent ideas and subject matter.</li><li>• Plan and design artworks that represent artistic intention</li><li>• Evaluate how representations communicate artistic intentions in artworks they make and view to inform their future art making.</li></ul> |

## curriculum links cont...

All descriptors taken from the Australian Curriculum v7.1 Visit website for Achievement Standards and examples of knowledge and skills - <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au>

| Activity                  | Primary                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Secondary                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Epochal Timeline          | <p><u>HISTORY</u></p> <p>Year 5&amp;6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role that a significant individual or group played in shaping a colony; for example, explorers, farmers, entrepreneurs, artists, writers, humanitarians, religious and political leaders, and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.</li> <li>• Experiences of Australian democracy and citizenship, including the status and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, migrants, women, and children.</li> </ul> | <p><u>HISTORY</u></p> <p>Year 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The major movements for rights and freedom in the world and the achievement of independence by former colonies.</li> <li>• Developments in technology, public health, longevity and standard of living during the twentieth century, and concern for the environment and sustainability.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Graphing: Data Collection | <p><u>MATHEMATICS</u></p> <p>Year 5&amp;6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pose questions and collect categorical or numerical data by observation or survey.</li> <li>• Construct displays, including column graphs, dot plots and tables, appropriate for data type, with and without the use of digital technologies.</li> <li>• Interpret and compare a range of data displays, including side-by-side column graphs for two categorical variables.</li> </ul>                                                     | <p><u>MATHEMATICS</u></p> <p>Year 7&amp;8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and investigate issues involving numerical data collected from primary and secondary sources.</li> <li>• Calculate mean, median, mode and range for sets of data. Interpret these statistics in the context of data.</li> <li>• Explore the variation of means and proportions of random samples drawn from the same population.</li> <li>• Investigate the effect of individual data values , including outliers, on the mean and median.</li> </ul> <p>Year 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate statistical reports in the media and other places by linking claims to displays, statistics and representative data.</li> </ul> |

## curriculum links cont...

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| Activity               | Primary                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Secondary                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| Interview & Picto-Grid | <p><u>ENGLISH</u></p> <p>Year 5&amp;6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive print and multimodal texts, choosing text structures, language features, images and sound appropriate to purpose and audience.</li> <li>Use a range of software including word processing programs with fluency to construct, edit and publish written text, and select, edit and place visual, print and audio elements.</li> <li>Participate in and contribute to discussions, clarifying and interrogating ideas, developing and supporting arguments, sharing and evaluating information, experiences and opinions.</li> </ul> | <p><u>ENGLISH</u></p> <p>Year 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore and explain the ways authors combine different modes and media in creating texts, and the impact of these choices on the viewer/listener.</li> <li>Create imaginative, informative and persuasive texts that raise issues, report events and advance opinions, using deliberate language and textual choices, and including digital elements as appropriate.</li> <li>Analyse how the construction and interpretation of texts, including media texts, can be influenced by cultural perspectives and other texts.</li> </ul> <p>Year 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen to spoken texts constructed for different purposes, for example to entertain and to persuade, and analyse how language features of these texts position listeners to respond in particular ways.</li> <li>Plan, rehearse and deliver presentations, selecting and sequencing appropriate content and multimodal elements for aesthetic and playful purposes.</li> <li>Interpret, analyse and evaluate how different perspectives of issue, event, situation, individuals or groups are constructed to serve specific purposes in texts.</li> <li>Explore and explain the combinations of language and visual choices that authors make to present information, opinions and perspectives in different texts.</li> <li>Interpret, analyse and evaluate how different perspectives of issue, event, situation, individuals or groups are constructed to serve specific purposes in texts.</li> </ul> <p>Year 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse and evaluate how people, cultures, places, events, objects and concepts are represented in texts, including media texts, through language, structural and/or visual choices.</li> <li>Identify and explore the purposes and effects of different text structures and language features of spoken texts, and use this knowledge to create purposeful texts that inform, persuade and engage.</li> <li>Create sustained texts, including texts that combine specific digital or media content, for imaginative, informative, or persuasive purposes that reflect upon challenging and complex issues.</li> <li>Use a range of software, including word processing programs, confidently, flexibly and imaginatively to create, edit and publish texts, considering the identified purpose and the characteristics of the user.</li> </ul> |

## curriculum links cont...

All descriptors taken from the Australian Curriculum v7.1 Visit website for Achievement Standards and examples of knowledge and skills - <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au>

| Activity                       | Primary | Secondary                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| Interview & Picto-Grid conti.. |         | <p>Senior Years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create a range of texts: drawing on a range of technologies in, for example, research, communication and representation of ideas.</li><li>• Create a range of texts: combining visual, spoken and written elements where appropriate.</li><li>• Reflect on their own and others' texts by: investigating the impact and uses of imaginative, interpretive and persuasive texts.</li></ul> |

## curriculum links cont...

All descriptors taken from the Australian Curriculum v7.1 Visit website for Achievement Standards and examples of knowledge and skills - <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au>

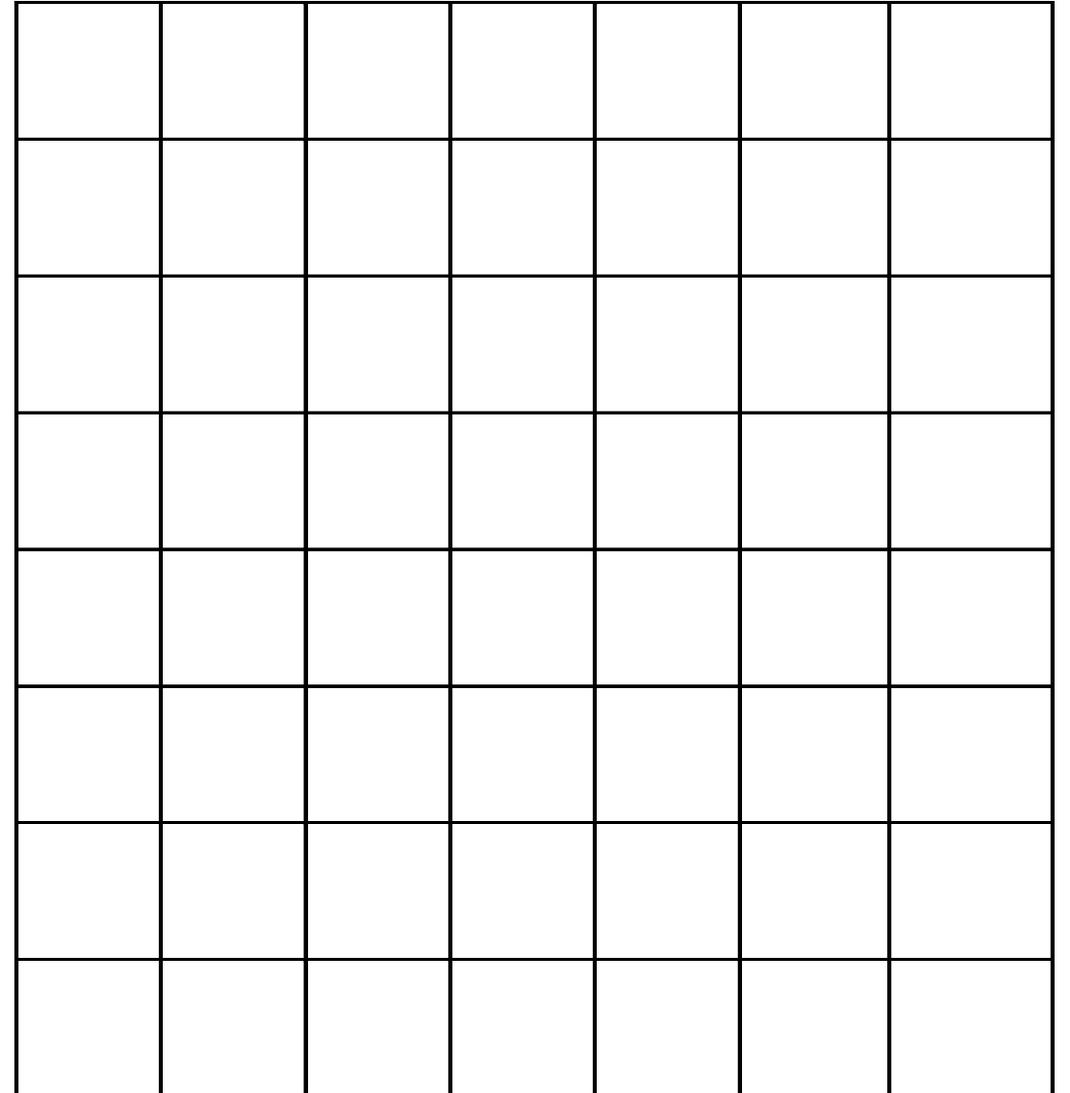
| Activity             | Primary                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Secondary                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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| Appraisal activities | <p>'Look closely...'</p> <p><u>VISUAL ART</u></p> <p>Year 3&amp;4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify intended purposes and meanings of artworks using visual arts terminology to compare artworks, starting with visual artworks in Australia including visual artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.</li> </ul> <p>Year 5&amp;6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain how visual arts conventions communicate meaning by comparing artworks from different social, cultural and historical contexts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artworks.</li> </ul> | <p>'Exhibition review...'</p> <p><u>VISUAL ART</u></p> <p>Year 7&amp;8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse how artists use visual conventions in artworks.</li> <li>Identify and connect specific features and purposes of visual artworks from contemporary and past times to explore viewpoints and enrich their art-making, starting with Australian artworks including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.</li> </ul> <p>Year 9&amp;10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse a range of visual artworks from contemporary and past times to explore differing viewpoints and enrich their visual art-making, starting with Australian artworks, including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and consider international artworks.</li> </ul> <p><u>ENGLISH</u></p> <p>Senior Years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluating the choice of mode and medium in shaping the response of audiences, including digital texts.</li> <li>Examine similarities and differences between imaginative, persuasive and interpretive texts including: evaluating the impact of description and imagery, including figurative language, and still and moving images in digital and multimodal texts.</li> <li>Evaluating the impact of description and imagery, including figurative language, and still and moving images in digital and multimodal texts.</li> </ul> |

## RESOURCE 1: collaged portrait

Draw the profile of a special person in your life or use the below template to compose a portrait.

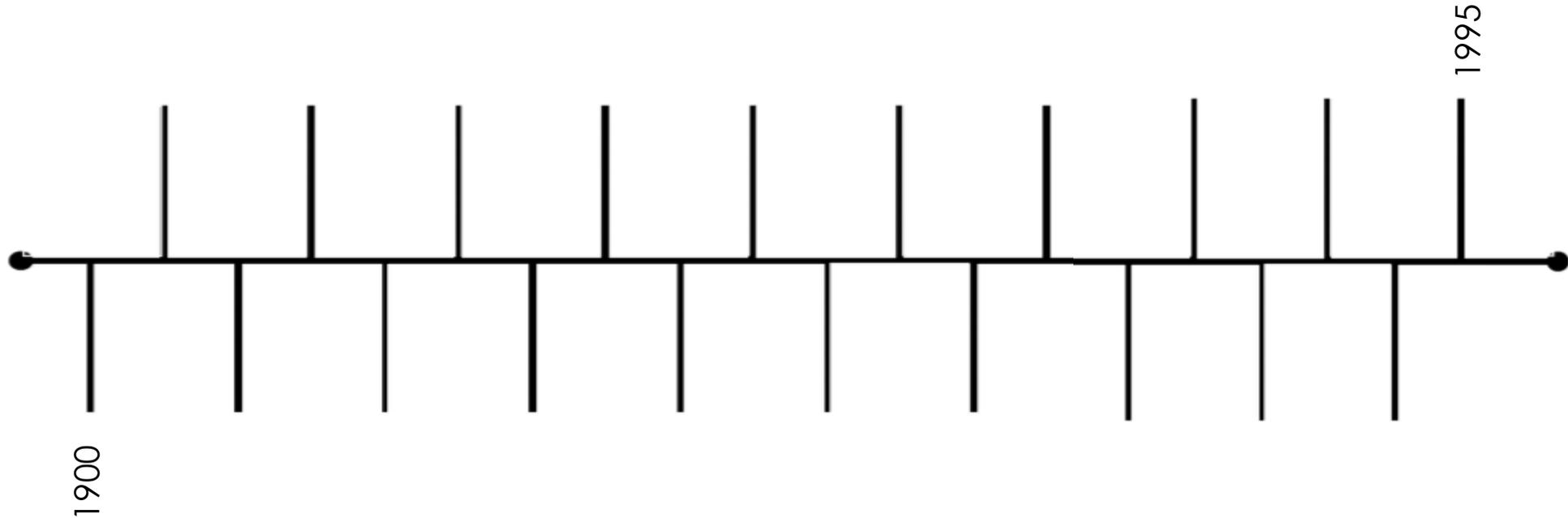


## RESOURCE 2: grid portrait



## RESOURCE 3: epochal timeline

Complete the years on the timeline (increments of 5) between 1900 and 1995.  
Gather the dates of birth for both the mothers and their daughters and plot them on the timeline below.  
You could choose to represent the D.O.B for each mother-daughter with a particular colour or represent birth dates for all mothers in the colour blue and all daughters in red.



## RESOURCE 4: data collection table - student

Look closely at the work titled 'Epoch'. In groups of 5-6 complete the table below then plot the twelve mother's and daughter's dates of birth onto the timeline.

| Mother's Name | Mother's D.O.B | Daughter's D.O.B | Years Mother Lived | Mother's Year of Death | Age of Mother when daughter was born | Number of Years with Significant events |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
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## RESOURCE 4: data collection table - teacher

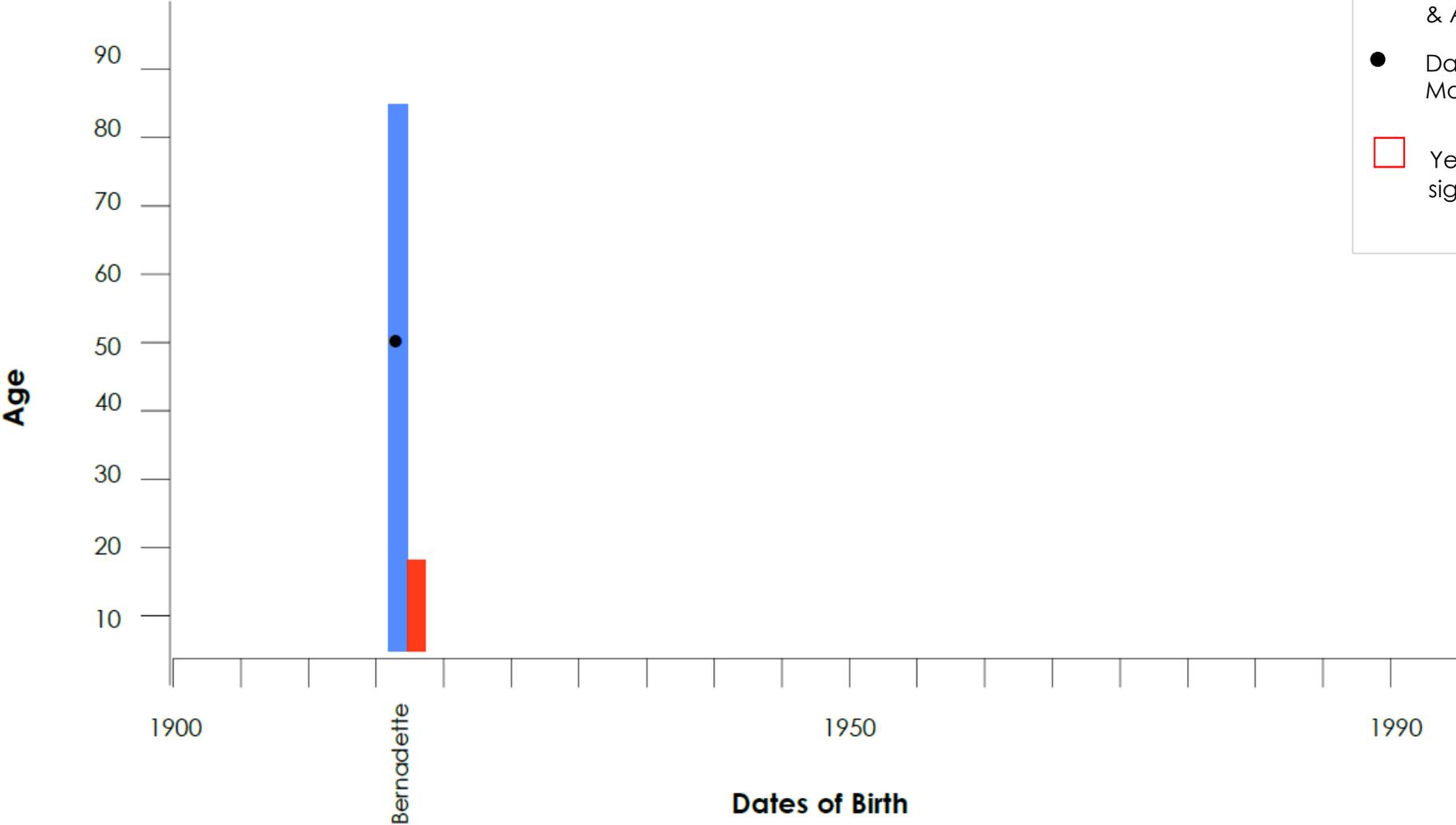
See below data collated from the artwork titled 'Epoch'.

| Mother's Name | Mother's D.O.B | Daughter's D.O.B | Years Mother Lived | Mother's Year of Death | Age of Mother when daughter was born | Number of Years with Significant Events |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Bernadette    | 29/09/1917     | 1950             | 84                 | 2001                   | 33                                   | 19                                      |
| Sarah         | 25/12/1919     | 1951             | 92                 | 2011                   | 32                                   | 25                                      |
| Marie         | 02/05/1921     | 1954             | 74                 | 1995                   | 33                                   | 9                                       |
| Sybil         | 13/06/1926     | 1954             | 84                 | 2010                   | 28                                   | 55                                      |
| Norah         | 04/04/1927     | 1949             | 70                 | 1997                   | 22                                   | 18                                      |
| Tricia        | 26/07/1941     | 1976             | 64                 | 2005                   | 35                                   | 15                                      |
| Betty Mary    | 02/08/1942     | 1978             | 67                 | 2009                   | 36                                   | 28                                      |
| Cavell        | 05/11/1945     | 1976             | 61                 | 2006                   | 31                                   | 27                                      |
| Linda         | 15/01/1948     | 1973             | 59                 | 2007                   | 25                                   | 20                                      |
| June          | 24/07/1948     | 1972             | 41                 | 1989                   | 24                                   | 4                                       |
| Mary          | 15/02/1950     | 1976             | 62                 | 2012                   | 26                                   | 20                                      |
| Kirsten       | 10/05/1958     | 1986             | 47                 | 2005                   | 28                                   | 21                                      |

RESOURCE 5: column graph

**KEY**

- Mother D.O.B & Age
- Daughter D.O.B & Mother's Age
- Years of significant events



## RESOURCE 6: picto-grid

Below is a grid containing 100 squares. The squares represent the life years of the special person you have chosen to profile. Record the significant moments in their life both positive and negative by drawing a picture or symbol i.e. married, had a child, heart attack etc. Think of other significant events occurring in Australia throughout the person's lifetime. Record those as pictures also.

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## RESOURCE 6: interview

Interview your mother, your father, your brother, your aunt (i.e. someone close to you) and plot their lives on a picto-grid. Write a biography to accompany your picto-grid.

### Interview questions

When and where were you born?

What is your earliest memory? When did this occur?

Did you have any pets as a child? What kind? When did you receive your pet?

Do you recall any interesting stories or significant events from your childhood? When did these events happen?

Who was your best friend? When did you meet them? Are you still in touch with them?

When did you discover your favourite sport/ musical instrument? Are there any other discoveries that you recall as influential?

Were you ever taught by an amazing teacher? When did you meet that teacher?

Did you gain any educational qualifications? What were they and when?

Thinking about your career, what jobs did you accept and when? When did you begin your first job?

Who was the biggest influence on your career? When did you meet them?

Were there any incidents in your working life that had a huge impact on you and your loved ones?

When was your first love? When and where did you meet?

Did you marry? If so, when?

Did you have any children? If so, when?

Have you lost any family members i.e. your parents, aunts and uncles? When did they pass on?

Have you travelled? If so, where to and which years?

Are there any other key moments in your life that you feel has shaped and influenced you in some way?

# Teacher Notes

The use of condemned hospital linen, a heavily loaded material, forms the backbone of this body of work, which focuses on the systems, processes and emotions that surround death and dying. Condemned hospital linen refers to any laundry items processed at a hospital that have become unfit for use and are destined for incineration. These works draw a parallel between the condemned linen items and dying hospital patients, flatly implying a shared systematic anonymity and the similarities between the processing and disposal of each.

## 1. Epoch 2013

Medium: condemned hospital sheets, embroidery thread, wooden frames

Dimensions: 12 x objects @ 100cm (H) x 75cm (W) x 4cm (D)



This work consists of twelve canvases stretched with condemned hospital sheets. For this work the artist interviewed twelve women (including herself), each from different age groups and backgrounds, whose mothers had died in or around the hospital system, either due to a long illness or a traumatic, untimely or unresolved death. They then collaborated to represent a portrait of their mother's lives through an embroidered grid on a hospital sheet.

The works become objects; they are calendars and beds, as well as a link to painting and portraiture, and of course the private, feminine sphere of embroidery and needlework. The tender and also violent trace of the hand and the body is clearly evident—and the flaws. The youngest mother in the sample was 41 when she died, and the oldest was 92. The artist has reduced the complex lives of these women to a minimalist grid, why? The transient nature of life—the shortness of it—comes through because there is a strong link to the way we measure and monitor time in the calendar and the years.

(Each square is a year in the life of a mother. Squares containing an embroidered number represent years of trauma experienced by the mother, and from the perspective/memory of the daughter. Squares and numbers embroidered in white thread are the years before the daughter was born, and blue is for the years after they were born. The daughter recounts a different kind of memory when she talks about her mother before she was born).

## 2. Comforters 2013

Medium: condemned female hospital gowns, stuffing, mp3 players/speakers, 12 audio tracks

Dimensions: 12 x objects @ approximately 25cm (H) x 15cm (W) x 15cm (D)



This work consists of twelve plush, suspended forms which are simultaneously inviting and repelling—at once deeply intimate and highly public. It is particularly significant that these twelve bulging forms are sourced specifically from female hospital gowns, as the installation embodies and memorialises the stories of daughters whose mother's have died. The low hum surrounding the installation is the collective murmur of the twelve women's voices, emitted from speakers embedded in each of the forms. Their challenging stories are uncomfortable to listen to, presented rawly and honestly in the installation. Reminding us that comfort can be found amidst even the most painful circumstances, *Comforters* reflects on the perpetually complex nature of the mother-daughter relationship, continuing even in and after death.

An in-depth panel discussion on *Lamentation* can be found at the following link: <https://vimeo.com/106283880>

## Teacher Notes

### 3. Pillows 2013

Medium: condemned hospital pillowcases, pillow inners  
Dimensions: 6x objects @ 15cm (H) x 68cm (W) x 40cm (D)



Condemned hospital pillows, embroidered with the hand-writing of the artist's mother, invitingly hover and sway. The way the journal entries are grafted into the pillow suggests violence but also tenderness. There is a certain kind of intimacy in relation to the body (the cadaver), the mother-daughter bond, and the history of women's work. While she sewed, we imagined she was processing, remembering and reflecting on how her mother might have felt at these particular moments—in these particular private moments—when she was sad, alone and afraid—attempting to connect to the memories in the diary, to her.

### 4. 3 hours, 20 minutes 2012

Medium: 62 condemned hospital sheets, audio CD, iPod media player  
Dimensions: approximately 250cm (H) x 350cm (W) x 350cm (D)



This work is a mass-monolithic-form made from strips of 62 hospital sheets—62 being the age of the artist's mother when she died. Each sheet represents a year in her life, but also all the other lives who have lain in these sheets, and been processed through the hospital system. The sound duration is 3 hours, 20 minutes, symbolising the actual amount of time it took the artist's mother to die. She died in inconceivable pain witnessed by the artist's sister. The ripping of the sheets was an attempt to connect to this event—to the suffering—and to experience it in time; alluding also to the finite amount of time we have on this earth. The viewer is invited to interact with the structure by moving through the strips of sheet. It is a close, sterile environment, difficult to navigate because the strips of sheet are heavy, and the webbing effect of the threads is relentless.

### 5. Lamentation 2014

Medium: HD video (wall mounted LCD flat screen monitor and DVD player)  
Dimensions: n/a



The artist gently and meticulously washes and strokes a strip of hospital sheet for 14 minutes. The cleaning is reminiscent of the usual handling of hospital linen as it is processed through the hospital laundry system, and also the care and concern hospital nursing staff show to tend their patients. The artist laments softly to herself and we have the sense that we may be witnessing a private moment, of reflection perhaps. There is strong connection between the treatment of the sheet-strip and the cleansing and preparation of a body for burial, or a very unwell or dying patient in readiness for their sickbay. A connection to a previous work *3 hours, 20 minutes* is clearly evident; where the strips were treated violently. Possibly, post ripping, each strip was lovingly bathed in preparation for their hanging—an apology or admission of guilt to the strips, or to something or someone else.

# Lamentation

## education kit evaluation survey

Please provide us your feedback on this education resource for 'Lamentation'. We appreciate your time and input.

**Are you a teacher, tutor or lecturer?**  Yes  No

**If so, what is your subject area/sector?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your name (optional) and institution:** \_\_\_\_\_

**How did you hear about this Education Kit?**

- My local art gallery
- Word of mouth
- Flyer
- Online
- Other (please state) \_\_\_\_\_

**How did you access this kit?**

- Email
- My local art gallery's website
- In a teacher pack from my local art gallery
- Other (please state) \_\_\_\_\_

**How did you use this resource?**

- Personal study
- Before gallery visit
- During gallery visit
- Post-visit
- As Distance Education support
- Other (please state) \_\_\_\_\_

**How useful did you find this education kit to support your exhibition visit or your classroom learning?**

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**What was the most useful or relevant section/s of the kit?**

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**Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?**

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Please email to [karikeashworth@gmail.com](mailto:karikeashworth@gmail.com) or send by post to Karike Ashworth, 5 East Street, Kedron Qld 4031



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