Australia to apologize to Aborigines

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3rd February, 2008
THE ARTICLE

The Australian government has said it will take the long overdue step of apologizing to the "stolen generation" of Aborigines. The “stolen generation” means the 10,000 Aboriginal children who were forcibly removed from their parents and adopted by white families. Babies, toddlers and youngsters were often snatched from their mother’s arms or secretly kidnapped. The idea was to “breed out” the Aboriginal colour, which was based on the belief that Aborigines were a doomed race. This policy of integrating mixed-race children into white society started in 1910 and only ended in 1969. Forty years after it ended, newly-elected Prime Minister Kevin Rudd will make the formal apology in a parliament address on February 13. Indigenous affairs minister Jenny Macklin said it would be a “bridge to the future”.

Aborigines were delighted with the historic news. Christine King from the Stolen Generations Alliance said February 13 would be an extremely significant and emotional day. She said: "Older people thought they would never live to see it, so it's very important." The wording of the apology has been agreed with indigenous leaders and is being kept under wraps. It is not known whether Mr Rudd will say the word "sorry", a subject of much controversy. All previous governments refused to make an apology for destroying the lives of so many Aborigine children and families. They believed it was impossible to say sorry for actions of the past. Australia’s opposition party leader, Brendan Nelson, echoed the policy of previous governments by saying rising petrol and food prices were more important than the apology.
WARM-UPS

1. AUSTRALIA: Walk around the class and talk to other students about Australia. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your original partner(s) and share what you found out.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

   government / apologizing / generations / toddlers / kidnapping / mixed race / historic news / emotional days / indigenous leaders / sorry / opposition parties

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. APOLOGIES: Talk with your partner(s) about the differences in apologizing to these people. Rank them in order of the most difficult person to apologize to. Share your ideas with others.

   a. _____ your best friend
   b. _____ a younger brother or sister
   c. _____ the school / office bully
   d. _____ your neighbour
   e. _____ the cashier at the checkout counter in the local supermarket
   f. _____ me
   g. _____ your partner
   h. _____ a parent

4. NATIONAL APOLOGY: Make two lists of all the things your country needs to apologize for - the first list contains apologies to your country’s citizens, the second contains apologies to other countries. Talk with your partner(s) about the lists. Change partners and share your findings.

5. ABORIGINE: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word ‘Aborigine’. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

6. QUICK ROLE PLAY: Student A strongly believes that all indigenous populations should receive apologies from colonizers; Student B strongly believes that today’s governments shouldn’t have to apologize for the wrongs of previous generations. Change partners again and talk about your roles and conversations.
BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article’s headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

   a. Australia’s government will apologize to its indigenous population.  T / F
   b. Australia stole 10,000 Aborigine children to give to white families.  T / F
   c. The Australian government thought Aborigines would live forever.  T / F
   d. The Aussie Prime Minister will make the apology on a TV show.  T / F
   e. Aborigines were very happy at the landmark decision to apologize.  T / F
   f. Older Aborigines knew they would live to hear the apology.  T / F
   g. The wording of the speech has been published in national papers.  T / F
   h. Australia’s opposition leader cares more about food and gas prices.  T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

   1. overdue — a. taken
   2. toddlers — b. overjoyed
   3. snatched — c. disagreement
   4. doomed — d. speech
   5. address — e. secret
   6. delighted — f. important
   7. significant — g. infants
   8. under wraps — h. late
   9. controversy — i. mirrored
   10. echoed — j. ill-fated

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

   1. take the long overdue step — a. their mother’s arms
   2. removed from their parents and adopted — b. actions of the past
   3. youngsters were often snatched from — c. of apologizing
   4. based on the belief that Aborigines — d. to the future
   5. it would be a bridge — e. wraps
   6. Aborigines were delighted with — f. were a doomed race
   7. an extremely significant — g. the historic news
   8. being kept under — h. by white families
   9. it was impossible to say sorry for — i. of previous governments
   10. echoed the policy — j. and emotional day

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

The Australian government has said it will take the _______ overdue step of apologizing to the "stolen generation" of Aborigines. The "stolen generation" means the 10,000 Aboriginal children who were _______ removed from their parents and adopted by white families. Babies, _______ and youngsters were often snatched from their mother’s arms or secretly kidnapped. The idea was to “breed out” the Aboriginal _______, which was based on the belief that Aborigines were a doomed _______. This policy of integrating mixed-race children into white society started in 1910 and only _______ in 1969. Forty years after it ended, newly-elected Prime Minister Kevin Rudd will make the _______ apology in a parliament address on February 13. Indigenous affairs minister Jenny Macklin said it would be a “_______ to the future”.

Aborigines were delighted with the _______ news. Christine King from the Stolen Generations Alliance said February 13 would be an _______ significant and emotional day. She said: "Older people thought they would never _______ to see it, so it’s very important." The _______ of the apology has been agreed with indigenous leaders and is being kept under _______. It is not known whether Mr Rudd will say the word "sorry", a subject of much controversy. All previous governments _______ to make an apology for destroying the lives of so many Aborigine children and families. They believed it was impossible to say sorry for _______ of the past. Australia’s opposition party leader, Brendan Nelson, echoed the policy of _______ governments by saying rising petrol and food prices were more important than the apology.
LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.

The Australian government has said ________________ overdue step of apologizing to the "stolen generation" of Aborigines. The "stolen generation" means the 10,000 Aboriginal children ________________ from their parents and adopted by white families. Babies, toddlers and youngsters ________________ their mother’s arms or secretly kidnapped. The idea was to “breed out” the Aboriginal colour, which was ________________ Aborigines were a doomed race. This policy of integrating mixed-race children into white society started in 1910 ________________. Forty years after it ended, newly-elected Prime Minister Kevin Rudd will make the formal apology in a parliament address on February 13. Indigenous affairs minister Jenny Macklin said it would ________________.

Aborigines were ________________ news. Christine King from the Stolen Generations Alliance said February 13 would be an extremely ________________ day. She said: "Older people thought they would never live to see it, so it's very important." The ________________ has been agreed with indigenous leaders and is being kept under wraps. It is not known whether Mr Rudd will say the word "sorry", ________________ controversy. All previous governments refused to make an apology for destroying the lives of so many Aborigine children and families. They believed it was impossible ________________ of the past. Australia’s opposition party leader, Brendan Nelson, echoed the policy of previous governments ________________ and food prices were more important than the apology.
AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'say' and 'sorry'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>say</th>
<th>sorry</th>
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</table>

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>long</th>
<th>delighted</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>means</td>
<td>live</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mother’s</td>
<td>wraps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>belief</td>
<td>destroying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bridge</td>
<td>food</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STUDENT APOLOGY SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about apologies in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.
When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>STUDENT 1</th>
<th>STUDENT 2</th>
<th>STUDENT 3</th>
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<tr>
<td>Q.1.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q.2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Q.3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q.4.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Q.5.</td>
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- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.
DISCUSSION

STUDENT A’s QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

a) What did you think when you read the headline?
b) What springs to mind when you hear the word ‘apology’?
c) What are your feelings about the Stolen Generation?
d) Do you think all indigenous populations should receive apologies from their governments?
e) What do you think indigenous people think about the colonizing races that now govern them?
f) What do you think the world thought of Australia’s policy of taking Aborigine children and giving then to white families?
g) Do you think Australia’s policy is ethnic cleansing?
h) What do you think the adults who were stolen from their families decades think of the Australian government’s apology plans?
i) Will the apology really be a “bridge to the future”?

--------------------------------------------------------------------

STUDENT B’s QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

a) Did you like reading this article?
b) Why do you think it took so long to make an apology to Aborigines?
c) Are the indigenous people in your country treated fairly or are they disadvantaged?
d) Do you think the Aborigines should also receive financial compensation?
e) Have you ever done anything that was tit-for-tat?
f) Do you agree with Australia’s opposition leader that petrol prices are more important than the apology to Aborigines?
g) What questions would you like to ask one of the Stolen Generation?
h) What do you think his/her answers would be?
i) Did you like this discussion?
The Australian government has said it will take the first overdue step of apologizing to the "stolen generation" of Aborigines. The "stolen generation" means the 10,000 Aboriginal children who were forcibly removed from their parents and adopted by white families. Babies, toddlers and youngsters were often snatched from their mother's arms or secretly kidnapped. The idea was to "breed in" the Aboriginal colour, which was based on the belief that Aborigines were a doomed race. This policy of integrating mixed-race children into white society started in 1910 and only ended in 1969. Forty years after the policy ended, newly-elected Prime Minister Kevin Rudd will make the formal apology in a parliament on February 13. Indigenous affairs minister Jenny Macklin said it would be a "bridge to the future".

Aborigines were delighted with the historical news. Christine King from the Stolen Generations Alliance said February 13 would be an extremely significant and emotional day. She said: "Older people thought they would never live to see it, so it's very important." The wording of the apology has been agreed with indigenous leaders and is being kept under wraps. It is not known whether Mr Rudd will say the word "sorry", a subject of much controversy. All previous governments refused to be sorry for destroying the lives of so many Aborigine children and families. They believed it was impossible to say sorry for actions of the past. Australia's opposition party leader, Brendan Nelson, echoed the policy of previous governments by saying petrol and food prices were more important than the apology.

1. (a) shallow (b) short (c) deep (d) long
2. (a) forcibly (b) forced (c) forceful (d) forceps
3. (a) in (b) out (c) by (d) all
4. (a) up (b) out (c) on (d) down
5. (a) they (b) he (c) it (d) policy
6. (a) envelope (b) address (c) label (d) stamp
7. (a) historically (b) historian (c) history (d) historic
8. (a) live (b) life (c) lively (d) lived
9. (a) keep (b) kept (c) keeping (d) keeps
10. (a) be (b) say (c) do (d) make
11. (a) echoing (b) echo (c) echoed (d) echoes
12. (a) rising (b) risen (c) raising (d) rose
Australia to apologize to Aborigines

3rd February, 2008

WRITING:
Write about Aborigines for 10 minutes. Correct your partner’s paper.
1. **VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google’s search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. **INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find out about the apology. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. **INDIGENOUS PEOPLES:** Make a poster about different indigenous peoples from around the world. Include the problems and disadvantages they face. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. **STOLEN:** Write a magazine article about one of the Stolen Generation. Include imaginary interviews with him/her and an Australian official who was involved in the “stealing.”

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down new words and expressions.

5. **LETTER:** Write a letter to Australia’s Prime Minister Kevin Rudd. Ask him three questions about the Stolen Generation. Give him three suggestions on what he should do to make a stronger bridge to the future. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.
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ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. T  b. T  c. F  d. F  e. T  f. F  g. F  h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

1. overdue  a. late
2. toddlers  b. infants
3. snatched  c. taken
4. doomed  d. ill-fated
5. address  e. speech
6. delighted  f. overjoyed
7. significant  g. important
8. under wraps  h. secret
9. controversy  i. disagreement
10. echoed  j. mirrored

PHRASE MATCH:

1. take the long overdue step  a. of apologizing
2. removed from their parents and adopted  b. by white families
3. youngsters were often snatched from  c. their mother’s arms
4. based on the belief that Aborigines  d. were a doomed race
5. it would be a bridge  e. to the future
6. Aborigines were delighted with  f. the historic news
7. an extremely significant  g. and emotional day
8. being kept under  h. wraps
9. it was impossible to say sorry for  i. actions of the past
10. echoed the policy  j. of previous governments

GAP FILL:

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LANGUAGE WORK

1 - d  2 - a  3 - b  4 - c  5 - c  6 - b  7 - d  8 - a  9 - b  10 - d  11 - c  12 - a