

Australia buys copyright to Aboriginal flag

27th January, 2022



Australia's government has bought the rights to the Aboriginal flag. This means anyone can now use or fly the flag for free. The flag was owned by its designer Harold Thomas

and a clothing company. This meant that anyone who used the flag had to get copyright permission from them. The \$20-million deal to take ownership of the flag's copyright means the public can use it freely. Nova Peris, a former Aboriginal politician, led the Free the Flag campaign. She was overjoyed that the government bought the Aboriginal flag. She said: "The flag represents 50,000 years of history and it's a way of unifying...this country." She added: "It's a magical day for all Australians."

Indigenous artist Harold Thomas created the flag in 1971. He wanted all of Australia's indigenous people to have their own flag. His flag was originally used as a protest for indigenous rights. However, it soon became widely used and became an official national flag of Australia in 1995. It now flies on government buildings. A government spokesperson said: "Over the last 50 years, we made Harold Thomas' artwork our own. We marched under the Aboriginal flag, stood behind it, and flew it high as a point of pride." He added: "In reaching this agreement to solve the copyright issues, all Australians can freely display and use the flag to celebrate indigenous culture."

Sources: bluemountaingazette.com / bbc.com / theage.com

Note: Wikipedia says many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples dislike the term "Indigenous Australians" because they feel it is too general and removes their identity. They prefer the terms "First Nations", "First Peoples" and "First Australians".
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indigenous_Australians#Variations

Writing

There is no need for countries to have a flag. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

government / rights / flag / designer / copyright / permission / politician / magical / indigenous / artist / protest / Australia / marched / pride / agreement / issues

True / False

- 1) People have to pay a small charge to use the Aboriginal flag. T / F
- 2) It cost Australia \$20 million to buy the copyright to the flag. T / F
- 3) A Free the Flag campaigner was very, very happy. T / F
- 4) The campaigner said the flag was very magical. T / F
- 5) The Aboriginal flag is over 100 years old. T / F
- 6) The Aboriginal flag became a national flag in Australia in 1971. T / F
- 7) The Aboriginal flag does not fly from government buildings. T / F
- 8) Australia said the flag can be used to celebrate indigenous culture. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. bought | a. at first |
| 2. free | b. ex- |
| 3. permission | c. made |
| 4. former | d. no charge |
| 5. unifying | e. representative |
| 6. created | f. purchased |
| 7. originally | g. uniting |
| 8. spokesperson | h. honour |
| 9. pride | i. consent |
| 10. celebrate | j. self-respect |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you know about copyright?
- c) What do you think of copyright?
- d) Should everyone have a flag of their country in their house?
- e) How proud should people be of their national flag?
- f) Have you ever marched behind a flag?
- g) What do you know about the history of your country's flag?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the Free the Flag leaders?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Australia's government has bought the | a. overjoyed |
| 2. The flag was owned | b. pride |
| 3. had to get copyright permission | c. day for all Australians |
| 4. She was | d. by its designer |
| 5. It's a magical | e. people |
| 6. indigenous | f. buildings |
| 7. His flag was originally used | g. rights to the Aboriginal flag |
| 8. It now flies on government | h. issues |
| 9. as a point of | i. from them |
| 10. solve the copyright | j. as a protest |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of flags?
- What do you think of your country's flag?
- What flags have a really good design?
- Is it right that a flag is copyrighted?
- Why are national flags important?
- What do you know about Australia's indigenous peoples?
- What do you think when you see your country's flag?
- Should there be a world flag?

Spelling

- The flag was owned by its ersegdni
- get copyright risesnpiom
- a former Aboriginal ipliacnto
- led the Free the Flag nampicga
- a way of iinnuygf this country
- It's a mglaiac day for all Australians
- His flag was ylargolin used as a protest
- an ficaolif national flag of Australia
- We hecandr under the Aboriginal flag
- flew it high as a point of idpre
- solve the copyright eiuuss
- use the flag to eeertcabl indigenous culture

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. d	3. i	4. b	5. g
6. c	7. a	8. e	9. j	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Food

You think food is the most important aspect of culture. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): literature, fashion or dance.

Role B – Literature

You think literature is the most important aspect of culture. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): food, fashion or dance.

Role C – Fashion

You think fashion is the most important aspect of culture. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): literature, food or dance.

Role D – Dance

You think dance is the most important aspect of culture. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): literature, fashion or food.

Speaking – Culture

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important aspects of culture at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| • Language | • Dance |
| • Food | • Festivals |
| • Literature | • Religion |
| • Music | • Clothes |

Answers – True False

1 F	2 T	3 T	4 F	5 F	6 F	7 F	8 T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.