

STORIES & STRUCTURES

New Connections

Visual Arts activities

Here are some starting points for visual art explorations and activities that could be done either in class or at the exhibition. All images and texts are available at: micro.org.au/storiesandstructures.

Most activities can be adapted to different stages of the curriculum.

Exploring the exhibition images

- Locate and list the titles of artworks where traditional earth pigment colours are used. What is the same and what is different in the microscopic structures of two of the pigments used?
- In the exhibition find an artwork where a carving tool is used to create lines. Name the artist and the title of the work. How does it connect to the structures in the micrograph?
- Locate and list the titles of two artworks where secondary colours are used. What reasons may have influenced the artists' colour choices?
- Identify the shapes and patterns in the micrographs and explore how these are repeated at different scales in natural structures. Identify and describe artworks and the associated micrographs in the exhibition where these parallels are apparent.
- After viewing the exhibition locate the example of microscopic imagery that you consider to be the most similar to its Aboriginal art partner. Why did you make your choice?
- Aboriginal Cultures can use art as a language to document their history. Select three examples from this exhibition where this is the case. Briefly explain why this process of using art as a language is important.
- Identify artworks that have drawn conceptual connections between the micrographs and social or political issues. What are the issues they are addressing and how are the micrographs related to these ideas?
- Locate and select two artists and their artworks from very different parts of the country. Make a simple sketch of each example. Use that as the basis to describe the similarities and differences using some of the terms listed below.
 - Line
 - Shape
 - Size
 - Direction
 - Colour
 - Tone
 - Texture
 - Subject Matter
 - Repetition

Creating your own artworks

- Choose one microscopic image. Observe and use the patterns and structures to inspire a work that connects the subject of the micrograph to something important in your life.
- Find a microscopic image relating to skin. From looking at the image and reading the description, write down words that describe ideas about skin that spring into your mind. How would you express those ideas in an artwork?

- Look at your own skin under the microscope. Draw the patterns that you see. Use these patterns as the basis of an artwork that illustrates what skin means to you.
- Explore the structure of different sands, soils or plants under the microscope. Do drawings or take photographs of the structures that you see. Using the images, make a collage or mural relating to the part of the country where they were collected.
- Choose one microscopic image. Observe the patterns, tilt your head and select an area. Use parts of the microscopic image to inspire a simple landscape.
- Choose and download a micrograph from the exhibition website, manipulate, enhance and/or colour it digitally to tell a story connected to its subject matter.
- Choose one or more pattern elements from a micrograph and develop it into a repeating design to adorn a household item or set of items.

Microscopy as art

- Carefully observe and follow the patterns and structures of one microscopic image. Imagine that the microscopic image is a large mural painted on a wheat silo in the Australian countryside. Write a paragraph about this gigantic outdoor artwork. Consider the strongest visible elements. You may decide to utilise the following: line, balance, shape, tone, size, direction, unity, proportion, texture and repetition.
- Describe one micrograph that you think looks least like what you would expect to find in nature. What is it about the image that makes you think that? What did you expect nature to look like at the microscopic scale?