Graffiti Prevention Education Program

The facts on graffiti: Years 7–8

Teaching and learning activities

Objective
The learning activities in this unit introduce students to the profile of graffiti offenders and why they offend. Through their research, students develop their own ideas and opinions about graffiti, and survey a cross-section of the community to document what many people consider as acceptable social behaviours and attitudes to graffiti.

The activities provide students with information to develop their:

• awareness of who is a graffiti offender
• understanding of why offenders continue to offend even though they are aware of their unlawful behaviour
• understanding of the opinions about graffiti of a cross-section of the community.

Activity description
Students investigate the psyche of graffiti offenders and attempt to document why these offenders vandalise the environment. They collect qualitative and qualitative data, including surveying the opinions about graffiti of a cross-section of their community. Students analyse how community members (including their peers) feel about the protection of significant spaces in their community and use their findings to develop recommendations to assist in reducing graffiti.

Guiding questions
1. How will the study allow students to reflect on their own values, beliefs and opinions on the topic?
2. Are there places where connections can be made to larger social or environmental issues?
3. Are there opportunities for students to enact a solution or action plan about the issue?

This teaching strategy has been designed from the 5Es inquiry framework. The following resources provide more information about the framework.

- Enhancing education: The 5Es [enhancinged.wgbh.org/research/eeeee.html](http://enhancinged.wgbh.org/research/eeeee.html)
- Introduction to inquiry based learning by Neil Stephenson [teachinquiry.com/index/Introduction.html](http://teachinquiry.com/index/Introduction.html)

Background information

Graffiti

What is graffiti?

Graffiti is the unauthorised act of marking other people’s property without their permission. It is illegal, ugly and expensive to remove. Graffiti affects us all. It can lower property values, make people feel unsafe, reduce business patronage and encourage other types of crime.

Graffiti is a crime

Graffiti is illegal in Australia. It is a persistent problem that attracts a variety of penalties. In Queensland, graffiti is a crime under the *Queensland Criminal Code Act 1899* s. 469 Wilful damage, which states:

Any person who wilfully and unlawfully destroys or damages any property is guilty of an offence…

If the property in question is in a public place, or is visible from a public place, and the destruction or damage is caused by (a) spraying, writing, drawing, marking or otherwise applying paint or another marking substance; or (b) scratching or etching; the offender commits a crime and is liable to imprisonment for 7 years…

The court may… order the offender to perform community service… including for example, removing graffiti from property; and … may order the offender to pay compensation to any person.

Consequences

Graffiti offences are treated seriously by police, all levels of government and the justice system. Juvenile offenders (aged 12–17 years) may be sentenced to a term in a detention centre, given a graffiti removal order or given a period of probation (Note: a person aged 17 or over is tried as an adult). Regardless of the penalty imposed by a court, a graffiti offender may be ordered to remove the graffiti and/or pay compensation to the owner of the property that was vandalised.

Where does graffiti occur?

Most graffiti occurs on exposed walls and fences and is usually in the form of messages in letters or images written in spray paint, permanent marker or etched into a surface with a sharp instrument. Graffiti vandals have no respect for private or community property and no regard for the negative impacts of their actions. Their aim is usually to impress their peers and strengthen their reputations by putting their graffiti tags in as many places as possible.

Graffiti removal

Graffiti that is left intact attracts more graffiti. The longer it remains, the greater the gratification for perpetrators. It also suggests that the community does not care or is unable to deal with the problem. Keeping neighbourhoods graffiti free reinforces pride in the city and helps to maintain feelings of safety and wellbeing for everyone in the community.

cityofgoldcoast.com.au/graffiti
The best way to reduce graffiti is to remove it as quickly as possible. Local governments, businesses, organisations and volunteers commit money and resources to graffiti removal and participate in various graffiti prevention strategies.

City of Gold Coast graffiti prevention program

The City of Gold Coast (the City) spends approximately $1.3 million every year on graffiti removal and manages a range of graffiti prevention strategies. The Graffiti Removal Team respond to an average of 10,000 graffiti removal requests each year, removing graffiti from public assets and some private property. They also provide free graffiti removal kits and support volunteer graffiti removal programs.

The City's graffiti prevention program includes:

- education within schools about graffiti and its consequences
- identifying graffiti hotspots and installing closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras to catch graffiti offenders
- encouraging property owners to design and create spaces that are less attractive to graffiti vandals
- working with retailers of paint products
- facilitating public art graffiti prevention projects
- supporting community service graffiti removal programs
- working with police and other agencies on crime prevention programs.

You can report graffiti for removal by using the City of Gold Coast mobile app, calling the Graffiti Hotline on 07 5581 7998 or emailing: graffiti@goldcoast.qld.gov.au.

Reporting graffiti offenders to Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or Policelink on 131 444 is also encouraged.
Teaching and learning strategy

Engage

1. Video
   As a class, view some of the videos listed below:
   - 7News: War on graffiti (5 mins) [youtube.com/watch?v=BNdJeYJC13Q]
   - Today Tonight: Brisbane graffiti vandals (10 mins) [youtube.com/watch?v=l6PLvW5o7Xo]
   - Australian graffiti documentary (70 mins) [youtube.com/watch?v=UovsPn4Dvg0]
   - ABC News: Graffiti or art? Justin Bieber sprays Gold Coast hotel (2 mins) [youtube.com/watch?v=L2l66QK3_X8]

2. Statements activity
   Have students stand and gather in the centre of the classroom.
   - Nominate each corner of the classroom as a point of opinion, e.g. one corner is the ‘agree’ corner, another corner is the ‘disagree’ corner, another is the ‘maybe’ corner, and the fourth corner is the ‘don’t know’ corner.
   - Read statements about graffiti and have students move to the corner of the room that best represents their opinion on the issue.
   - Count the number of students in each corner at the end of their response to the statement/question.
   - At the end of the activity, order the responses according to the strength of the consensus.

Sample statements/questions:
   a) Graffiti is art.
   b) The difference between art and graffiti is permission.
   c) Graffiti is a crime.
   d) Only teenage males do graffiti.
   e) Graffiti is an acceptable art form in society.
   f) Graffiti is un-Australian.
   g) Police should spend their time catching ‘criminals’ rather than graffiti taggers.
   h) Graffiti is produced because youths are bored and unemployed.
   i) Graffiti is acceptable when it has a political message.
   j) Graffiti can have a detrimental effect on other people.
   k) Schools are the prime locations for graffiti tagging because students are the main offenders.
I) Most graffiti offenders are under 18 years of age.

m) Graffiti can be dangerous.

3. Collate the results on these statements and compare them with results taken when the same activity is repeated at the end of the unit. The difference will show how student opinion changes with more information. These questions also test the students’ prior knowledge about graffiti before beginning this unit.

4. Discuss the results with the class and ask specific students why they hold these opinions.

**Explain**

5. **Graffiti factsheet**
   Provide each student with the *Graffiti factsheet* included below. Have students read the facts and highlight significant facts.
   
   - Divide the class into smaller groups of four (two pairs).
   - Establish a ‘think, pair, share’ learning situation where the students read the information and ‘think’ about implications of graffiti on the environment/community.
   - Each pair is to come up with three things that they can do to combat graffiti.
   - They ‘pair’ their recommendations and reasons as a case for or against graffiti, and ‘share’ their joint opinion with the other pair.

**Explore**

6. **Questionnaire**
   As a group of four, the students develop a questionnaire that they will use to survey the opinions of other members of their community. *Student activity worksheet 1: The facts on graffiti* can be used to support this process.
   
   - The questionnaire should be developed through an online application such as SurveyMonkey ([www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)) or Checkbox ([www.checkbox.com](http://www.checkbox.com)) and distributed to selected school students, teachers and parents. Alternatively, the questionnaire can be physically prepared and the group can acquire opinions and responses via a face-to-face approach.
   - The survey questions should be 80% short answer (multiple choice or true/false), where data can be collected and quantified, and 20% qualitative responses, where participants can anecdotally respond from their personal experience.
   - Once completed, the group collates the results and prepares a report based on the survey. This report can stand-alone or contribute to a larger report from the data gathered from the whole class.
   - Have each group present their report to the class and discuss any similarities and differences between findings of different groups.
Elaborate

7. **Poster**
   Ask students to work with their partner to develop a poster presentation of a ‘tagger’ character.

8. **Story**
   The students should develop a narrative about the character and include a tag name, information about age, community, etc. The narrative can be produced as either a digital photo story or a short graphic novel. The narrative should also include details on why, when, how and where they tag; how they feel about what they do; and who they do it with. The narrative should also explore the consequences of tagging and create a scenario of how the police catch the tagger, and what happens to them.

Evaluate

9. **Statements activity**
   Repeat the statements activity from the beginning of the module, where students move to the corner of the room that matches their response to statements about graffiti. Measure any change of opinion, and discuss with students why they have changed their opinion during the course of the module.

10. **Game**
    Play ‘freeze frame’ with the class, where each student takes on a character involved in graffiti activities, for example, graffiti offender, police, property owner, mother of offender, City officer, environment designer, artist. These different characters will hold multiple perspectives on the ethics of graffiti and its effect on their community. The rules of the game are simple:
    - all students should stay in character and speak as that character
    - only the student who is tapped on the shoulder can talk
    - all students should speak the truth and respect what others have to say

Students should draw on their research, involvement in the survey and report, and character narratives to provide a genuine response for their freeze-frame character.
## Graffiti Prevention Education Program

### Australian Curriculum links

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<th>Strand</th>
<th>Content descriptions</th>
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<td>Civics and citizenship</td>
<td>Citizenship, diversity and identity</td>
<td>Year 7: How values, including freedom, respect, inclusion, civility, responsibility,</td>
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<td>compassion, equality and a 'fair go', can promote cohesion within Australian society</td>
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<td>Year 8: How national identity can shape a sense of belonging in Australia’s multicultural society (ACHCK067)</td>
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**Cross-curriculum link:** *Geography* — Knowledge and skills

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<th>Cross-curriculum priorities</th>
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<td>Futures</td>
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<td>The sustainability of ecological, social and economic systems is achieved through informed individual and community action that values local and global equity and fairness across generations into the future.</td>
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<td>Composing texts through speaking, writing and creating</td>
<td>Compose spoken, written, visual and multimodal learning area texts</td>
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<td>Grammar knowledge</td>
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<td>Information Communication Technology (ICT) capability</td>
<td>Investigating with ICTs</td>
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<td>Locate, generate and access data and information</td>
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<td>Select and evaluate data and information</td>
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<td>Creating with ICTs</td>
<td>Generate ideas, plans and processes</td>
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<td>Generate solutions to challenges and learning area tasks</td>
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<td>Critical and creative thinking</td>
<td>Inquiring — identifying, exploring and organising information and ideas</td>
<td>Pose questions</td>
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<td>Identify and clarify information and ideas</td>
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<td>Generating ideas, possibilities and actions</td>
<td>Imagine possibilities and connect ideas</td>
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<td>Reflecting on thinking and processes</td>
<td>Transfer knowledge into new contexts</td>
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<td>Ethical understanding</td>
<td>Exploring values, rights and responsibilities</td>
<td>Examine values</td>
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<td>Explore rights and responsibilities</td>
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<td>Consider points of view</td>
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Source: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), downloaded from the Australian Curriculum website in March 2014. CC-BY-SA

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Resources

- Graffiti Prevention Education Program PowerPoint — Secondary
- Glogster edu.glogster.com
- Prezi prezi.com

City of Gold Coast graffiti prevention resources

- Graffiti prevention information cityofgoldcoast.com.au/graffiti
- Video clip Graffiti — Let’s stay on top of it cityofgoldcoast.com.au/graffiti

Community resources

- City of Gold Coast: Community safety cityofgoldcoast.com.au/communitysafety
- Gold Coast Community Guide goldcoastcity.com.au/communityguide
- Gold Coast Neighbourhood Watch contacts cityofgoldcoast.com.au/communityconcerns
- Volunteering Australia volunteeringaustralia.org
- Graffiti hurts: Graffiti prevention: Best practices for communities graffitihurts.org
- Neighbourhood Watch, Broadbeach nhwbroadbeach20.org.au/joomla/

Additional resources

- ABC Gold Coast: Graffiti attracts graffiti abc.net.au/local/photos/2011/10/27/3349879.htm
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- Australian Institute of Criminology: Key issues in graffiti
  [aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/rip/1-10/06.html](aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/rip/1-10/06.html)

**Video clips**

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(URLs active as of January 2014)
Graffiti Prevention Education Program

Graffiti factsheet

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A City of Gold Coast mobile app
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E graffiti@goldcoast.qld.gov.au

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# Student activity worksheet 1: The facts on graffiti

## Sample survey questions

**Name of respondent (optional):** ____________________________

**Age demographic:** 0–6 years, 7–12 years, 13–18 years, 19–24 years, 25–40, years, 41–60 years, 60+ years

**Residential postcode:** ____________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
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<tr>
<td>Is all graffiti is illegal?</td>
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1. How much does your local city spend to clean up graffiti annually?
   - a. $20 million
   - b. $1.3 million
   - c. $50,000
   - d. nothing

2. What strategies do local cities employ in the community to prevent graffiti?
   - a. Public art projects
   - b. Partnerships with community agencies
   - c. Education programs
   - d. All of the above

3. How can you report graffiti to be cleaned up?
   - a. Graffiti hotline
   - b. Phone the police
   - c. Online reporting
   - d. All of the above

4. Have you ever been affected by graffiti? If so, how?

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An Australian Government Initiative