

Explain the centrality  
of the dreaming and  
its importance for  
aboriginal spiritua...

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Explain the centrality of the Dreaming and its importance for Aboriginal spirituality. The Aboriginal Dreaming refers to the religious and spiritual beliefs of the aboriginal people of Australia. The dreaming is what they base their traditional lives around, the dreaming determines their values and beliefs and their relationships with the animals, plants and environment around them. The Dreaming tells the stories that explain their views and beliefs on how the world came to be and its history and the totems which represent each historical factor of the dreaming.

The dreaming stories explain how the Spirit Ancestors made the trees, rocks, waterholes, and rivers, mountains and stars as well as the animals and plants, and which spirits represent each of these things along with the other living features in the land. Views on life and death: The aboriginal people believe that there is no heaven or hell after death they believe that they came from the land and once they die they return to the land.

Their belief system is based on past, present and future. The past makes it possible to live in the present, and without the past or present there is no future. There are two types of dreaming: 'the' dreaming and 'my' dreaming, the dreaming is the history but my dreaming is the connection to a life form or totem eg. Crocodile or eagle which connects 'my' dreaming to 'the' dreaming because of those totems being symbols in ancient rituals.

Dreaming stories:

The Dreaming stories are of great importance to the aboriginal people in terms of the dreaming because they are the history books verbally, they tell the stories in detail of how the earth came to be from the ancestors and

spirits who created the land who created them. The dreaming stories tell what each spirit was able to create and how it happened for example the rainbow serpent or how the moon got in the sky. These stories have been passed on for millions of generations.

These stories were either told by the elders or were found in the aboriginal art of cave painting, these cave paintings had the same effect as the spoken, these traditional art forms also tell a story of how something came to be from the spirits and the ancestors. Rituals and ceremonies: The aboriginal people believe that in performing rituals such as corrobories tells stories of the spirits forming into what they represent such as the emu or kangaroo. These sacred dances are performed on the coming of age ceremonies and many other significant occasions.

The sites where these ceremonies are performed are sacred and can only be accessed by certain groups, women and elders and only for the purpose of initiation. Aboriginal art: The traditional aboriginal art depicts places, events and dreaming ancestors, also incorporating actual events, whereas the temporary was only for initiation ceremonies and funerals. The aboriginal art opens up ways of communicating the close relationship between the ancestral beings and the laws, views, values, ceremonies and obligations of the people.

They enable understanding and knowledge within a community and also partially the outside world. Connections with the land: The land is the centre of aboriginal spirituality, it is the core of their religion. The land is the people and the people are the land. The land is where they believe the ancestors

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are. To aboriginals their “ god” is not one singular god up in the sky but many ancestors that are part of the earth and formed and are part of everything natural that is seen today.

They believe that the ancestors came through the earth and formed mountains and ridges, rivers and lakes, the sky and the dirt, they are everything and the land is their form of communication with the people, they live in a symbiotic relationship. The land dwells from them and they dwell from the land, they work together to keep the other alive and strong. In conclusion, the centrality of the aboriginal dreaming and its importance to the people is based on the land, the rituals and ceremonies, the understanding that they have a strong relationship with the ancestors and the basis of past, present and future.

These are all important because they are the basis of life for the aboriginal people and without this they would not live the traditional lifestyle with all the same customs, they would have no dreaming and no core beliefs that give them the power to respect their land. Resources: Class notes. Previous knowledge. Living religion- third edition. Jannet Movissey, Peter mudge, Adam Taylor, Greg Bailey, Paul Rule. Pearson education Australia; 2005. Pgs. 11-19.