Who were "the stolen generations"?

You are going to read a text about two cultures in Australia. Before you read the text, look at the statements in the table. Write in column A, **before you read**, whether you think they are true, untrue or partially true.

Once you have read the text, you will be asked to answer the questions again, using the **After you read** column, and then to justify your answers with information from the text. Whenever possible, use exact quotes.

Before you read True, untrue or partially true	**Information in the text**	**After you read** True, untrue or partially true	**Justification**
	The Australian government has always had very positive policies towards Aboriginals.		
	All cultures in Australia have always been equally valued.		
	Many Australians thought Aboriginal mothers were bad parents.		
	In the 20th century Aboriginal children wanted to live in a modern society.		
	Children are always better off in a dominant majority culture.		
	Governments are able to take children away from their parents.		
	Siblings should always be able to live together.		
	Many Australians do not know their real parents.		

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Forced removal

The forced removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families was official Australian government policy from 1909 to 1969. However the practice took place both before and after this period.

The children who were taken from their families became known as the Stolen Generations. There are Aboriginal people as young as their late 30s and 40s who are members of the Stolen Generations.

At that time there was a lack of understanding and respect for Aboriginal people. Indigenous people were seen as an inferior race. The white majority believed that Aboriginal people lived poor and useless lives.

The dominant racist views in the society meant that many white people believed that Aboriginals were bad parents and that Aboriginal women did not look after their children. Such children were taken from parents so they could be brought up 'White' and taught to reject their Aboriginal culture and heritage.

Children were quite legally placed with institutions and, from the 1950s, were placed with white families. In general the education they received was very poor. Aboriginal children were expected to become labourers or servants. Aboriginal girls were sent to homes to be trained in domestic service.

No one knows how many were taken, as most records have been lost or destroyed. Many parents whose children were taken never saw them again, and siblings who were taken were deliberately separated from each other. Today many Aboriginal people still do not know who their relatives are or have been unable to find them.

Adapted from: http://reconciliaction.org.au/nsw/education-kit/stolen-generations/

Still curious?

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