

# Be *Fierce* for *Fair*

MARY  
MACKILLOP  
*today*

## Class Activities Year 3 - 6

The activities below have been developed in line with the Australian Curriculum and focus on Mary MacKillop and the work of Mary MacKillop Today in Timor-Leste. You may wish to use all or some of these activities to deepen students' understanding of Mary MacKillop's Feast Day.

### Who is Saint Mary MacKillop?



**Teacher's Tip:** You can either read this text out loud to your class or listen to the podcast linked below

Mary Helen MacKillop was born in 1842 in Victoria to Scottish immigrant parents and grew up with seven brothers and sisters. At the age of twenty-four, she dedicated her life to God and took on the name "Mary of the Cross."

Mary was an ordinary woman with an extraordinary dream and a big heart. Her dream was to give the poorest families and most neglected children access to education and safe shelter by opening schools. With what little resources they had, Mary and Father Tenison Woods turned an old stable into a school in Penola, South Australia.

In 1866, Mary and Father Tenison worked together to set up the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart (the Josephites). This was the first religious order to be founded by an Australian.

Mary believed in the power of education to lift communities out of poverty.

When she saw injustice, she was fierce to act, so children wouldn't miss out on fair access to education. Mary taught everyone — regardless of gender, race, faith, or wealth — while serving with love and compassion. She and the Sisters of St Joseph went wherever the need was greatest. They gave up everything to live and teach amongst the people they served.

**Podcast: ABC's Fierce Girls: Mary MacKillop - the girl who became a saint (aimed for children aged 7-11 years old, 12 minutes)**

<https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/fierce-girls/mary-mackillop-the-girl-who-became-a-saint/11658006>

### Next step – Student Worksheet



**Teacher's Tip:** Print out the student worksheet and have students write a paragraph for each question.





# Student Worksheet

**1. What did Mary do that was important?**

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**2. Why does having access to good education matter?**

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**3. How did Mary seek justice for others?**

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**4. How can we all aspire to be more like Mary MacKillop in our daily lives?**

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# What is the Mobile Learning Centre in Timor-Leste?

Timor-Leste is a beautiful country and one of Australia's closest neighbours. But sadly, nearly half of the people who live there are in poverty and many children who live far away from the city can't go to school.

The Sisters of St Joseph have been working in the communities in Timor-Leste for over 30 years and Mary MacKillop Today continues that work now.

The Mobile Learning Centre is a colourful bus with a special library inside. When the bus visits schools in faraway places in Timor-Leste, the kids come running over with big smiles on their faces to see the exciting books and fun learning games. The children can understand these books and games because it's all written in their own language.



Teachers love the Mobile Learning Centre too because it helps show them how to make their classroom into a fun place to learn where everyone can join in with books, puppets, arts and crafts, and musical instruments.



**Play the videos of Timor-Leste and use the questions below to generate discussions with the class.**

**Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-l6StZtpRA>

1. What activities were the children doing at school that are like the activities you do at school?
2. What language were the children learning? Do you learn a language other than English?
3. What songs were the children singing? Do you think learning through music is important and why?
4. After watching the video, what do you think about your education?
5. How does the program help teachers?
6. Do you think Mary MacKillop would like the Mobile Learning Centre and why?
7. How can you help kids in Timor-Leste as a class?

**Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S5YVpzt7auY>

1. How old is Maia? What grade do you think Maia would be if she lived in Australia?
2. Who does Maia live with (including pets)? Who lives in your home (including pets)?
3. What does Maia do before school? Do you have any chores before or after school?
4. How far do the kids have to walk to school? How long does it take for you to get to school?
5. What does Maia like to do at school? What are your favourite activities at school?
6. How does watching Maia make you feel about your school?





# Stories from Mary MacKillop Today's work in Timor-Leste



Read out the stories of Rafaela and Elda to the class. Print out the student worksheet (two pages) and have students write a paragraph for each question.

## Rafaela's story

Nine-year-old Rafaela went from feeling bored in school and falling behind to discovering the excitement of reading and writing through our Mobile Learning Centre.

“Before, it was so boring to come to class. I did not want to learn. I wanted my parents to teach me to read but we didn’t have any story books in my home. Now, my school has so many new books to read. They’re colourful with drawings and big words. I read and tell stories every day and write them in class. I dance, sing and read to other students. I’m learning to read at home too and listen to stories read by my mum and dad. It’s so fun!”



## Elda's story

Meet the amazing Elda, a Primary School teacher for Years 1 and 2. Elda was finding it hard to teach her class and keep her young students interested in learning because she didn’t have many teaching tools to use for her lessons, like books or activities.

But now, thanks to Mary MacKillop Today’s Teacher Training program, Elda’s school is filled with colourful and easy to use storybooks, drawing materials, education games and animated music to help the children enjoy learning.

The program helped Elda find new ways to teach children important things like reading, writing, and maths. Elda is now a confident teacher and her students are excited about learning.





# Student Worksheet

## Rafaela's story

**1. How was school for Rafaela before the Mobile Learning Centre?**

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**2. How was school for Rafaela after the Mobile Learning Centre?**

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**3. Write a fundraising proposal. Who would it include? What kind of fundraiser do you think would work best for your class, grade or school?**

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# Student Worksheet

## Elda's story

**1. How was teaching for Elda before the Teacher Training program?**

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**2. How did the training help Elda in the classroom?**

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**3. How does this help the children in Elda's class?**

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**4. How does your school help teachers with their strategies and resources?**

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## Curriculum Links

The learning activities are broadly linked to the Australian Curriculum in the following areas:

### Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia

- Collaboration and engagement with the peoples of Asia support effective regional and global citizenship.
- Australians play a significant role in social, cultural, political and economic developments in the Asia region.

## General capabilities key ideas

### Sustainability

World views are formed by experiences at personal, local, national and global levels, and are linked to individual and community actions for sustainability.

### Intercultural Understanding

Intercultural understanding stimulates students' interest in the lives of others. It cultivates values and dispositions such as curiosity, care, empathy, reciprocity, respect and responsibility, open-mindedness and critical awareness, and supports new and positive intercultural behaviours.

### Personal and Social Capability

Students gain an understanding of the role of advocacy in contemporary society and build their capacity to critique societal constructs and forms of discrimination, such as gender inequality. In developing and acting with personal and social capability, students:

- appreciate diverse perspectives.
- contribute to civil society.
- understand relationships.

### Ethical Understanding

In developing and acting with ethical understanding, students:

- explore rights and responsibilities.
- consider points of view.

## Year 3-6 Australian Curriculum Content Descriptions

### HASS

Year 3: Reflect on learning to propose actions in response to an issue or challenge and consider possible effects of proposed actions (ACHASSI060).

Year 4: Reflect on learning to propose actions in response to an issue or challenge and consider possible effects of proposed actions (ACHASSI081).

### Civics and citizenship

Year 5: Develop appropriate questions to guide an inquiry about people, events, developments, places, systems and challenges (ACHASSI094).

Reflect on learning to propose personal and/or collective action in response to an issue or challenge, and predict the probable effects (ACHASSI104).

Year 6: The obligations citizens may consider they have beyond their own national borders as active and informed global citizens (ACHASSK148).

Develop appropriate questions to guide an inquiry about people, events, developments, places, systems and challenges (ACHASSI122).

Work in groups to generate responses to issues and challenges (ACHASSI130).

Reflect on learning to propose personal and/or collective action in response to an issue or challenge, and predict the probable effects (ACHASSI132).

Use criteria to make decisions and judgements and consider advantages and disadvantages of preferring one decision over others (ACHASSI131).

### Geography

Year 3: The location of Australia's neighbouring countries and the diverse characteristics of their places (ACHASSK067).

The similarities and differences between places in terms of their type of settlement, demographic characteristics and the lives of the people who live there, and people's perceptions of these places (ACHASSK069).

Year 6: The geographical diversity of the Asia region and the location of its major countries in relation to Australia (ACHASSK138).

Differences in the economic, demographic and social characteristics of countries across the world (ACHASSK139).

### Health and Physical Education

Years 3-4: Describe how respect, empathy and valuing diversity can positively influence relationships (ACPPS037).

Describe strategies to make the classroom and playground healthy, safe and active spaces (ACPPS040).

Investigate the role of preventive health in promoting and maintaining health, safety and wellbeing for individuals and their communities (ACPPS058).

Years 5 – 6: Examine how identities are influenced by people and places (ACPPS051).

Examine the influence of emotional responses on behaviour and relationships (ACPPS056).

### English

Year 3: Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to evaluate texts by drawing on a growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features (ACELY1680).

Year 4: Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning to expand content knowledge, integrating and linking ideas and analysing and evaluating texts (ACELY1692).

Living things depend on each other and the environment to survive (ACSSU073)

Year 5: Identify and explain characteristic text structures and language features used in imaginative, informative and persuasive texts to meet the purpose of the text (ACELY1701).

Year 6: Use comprehension strategies to interpret and analyse information and ideas, comparing content from a variety of textual sources including media and digital texts (ACELY1713)

