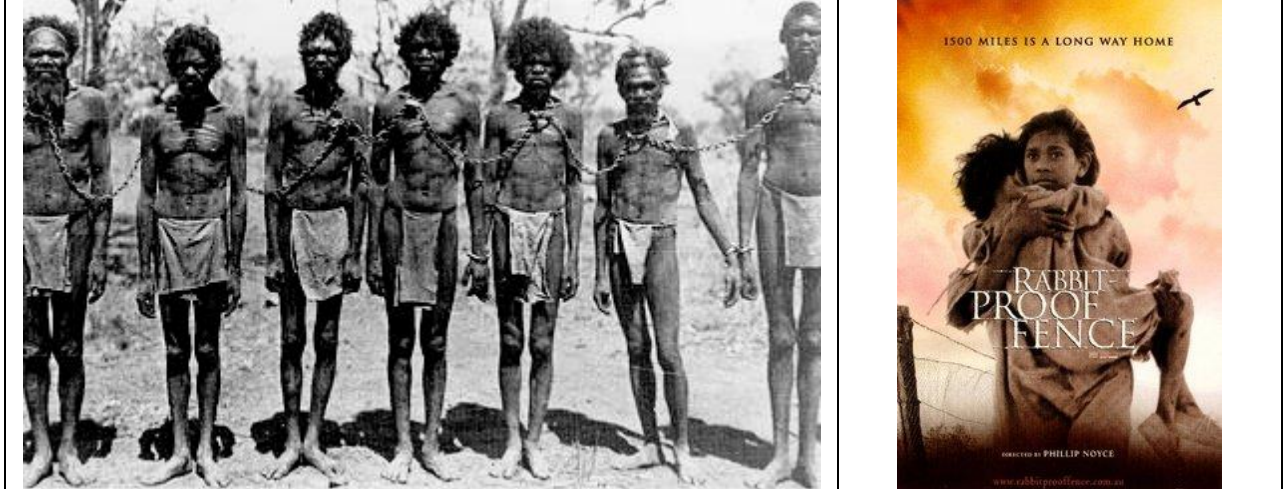


### *Rabbit-Proof Fence* questions



*Rabbit-Proof Fence* is based on a true story of three mixed-race Aboriginal girls who ran away from the Moore River Native Settlement in western Australia to return to their Aboriginal families after having been placed there in 1931. The film follows the Aboriginal girls as they walk for nine weeks along 1,500 miles of the Australian rabbit-proof fence to return to their community at Jigalong. After watching a section of the film *Rabbit-Proof Fence* in class, please answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper in complete sentences.

- 1) Why were Molly, her little sister Daisy, and her cousin Gracie taken away from their family?
- 2) What was meant by the term “half-caste”? Why this used a positive or negative term?
- 3) What was the purpose of taking the three girls to the Moore River Native Settlement?
- 4) The 'protector' of Western Australian Aborigines in the film, Mr. Neville, signs an order to relocate the three girls to his re-education camp. Neville's reasoning is portrayed as being that the Aboriginal peoples of Australia are a danger to themselves, and that the "half-castes" must be bred out of existence. He plans to place them in a camp where they, along with all half-castes of that age range, will grow up. They will then presumably become laborers and servants to white families. What role does race play in this?
- 5) Mr. Neville argues that the half-castes should be “advanced to white status and absorbed into the white population.” By saying this, what does he imply about Aborigines and people who are not white?

- 6) Mr. Neville also refers to half-castes basically becoming white through a process of marrying and having children with white people, which will eventually result in the fact that the Aboriginal will simply be “bred out.” Is this morally right in your opinion?
- 7) At one point, Mr. Neville refers to breeding out Aboriginal blood from these half-castes. This is referred to as **eugenics**. Define eugenics and explain what you think about it.
- 8) Read the following three quotes from the film and explain what Mr. Neville means and how he thinks he is helping the children. Do you think he is helping them or harming them?
  - a. *Mr. Neville*: “People fail to understand that the problem of the half-caste is not simply going to go away. If it is not dealt with now, it will fester for years to come. These children are that problem.”
  - b. *Mr. Neville*: “We face an uphill battle with these people, especially the bush natives, who have to be protected against themselves. If they would only understand what we are trying to do for them.”
  - c. *Mr. Neville*: “...they cannot be left as they are, and in spite of himself, the native must be helped.”
- 9) Why is this generation of children like Molly, Daisy, and Gracie referred to as the Stolen Generation?
- 10) In your opinion, what should the Australian government do now to try to correct the wrongs of the past?

Explain how Mr. Neville thought he could “breed out” Aboriginal blood and color from half-castes.

Nelville: “...they cannot be left as they are, and in spite of himself, the native must be helped.”  
What did he mean by “*in spite of himself, the native must be helped*”?

Aboriginal Australians were formally recognized as citizens of Australia in 1967, it was not until 2008 that the Australian government officially apologized for the policies that created the *Stolen Generations*.