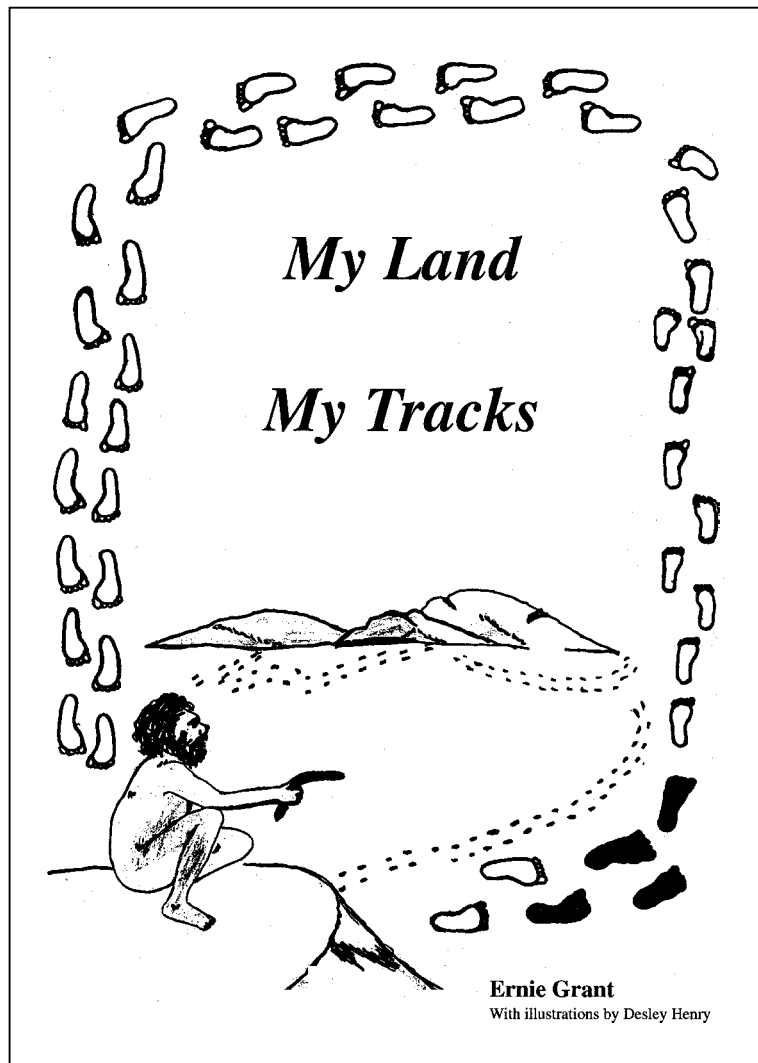


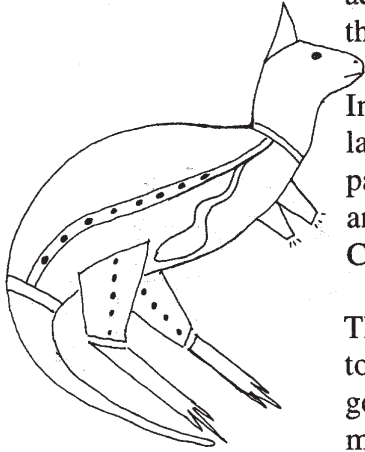
APPENDIX

My Land My Tracks: A framework for the holistic approach to indigenous studies was developed by Ernie Grant, Dijirabal/Djirrabal Elder and statewide cultural Research Officer, and published by the Innisfail and District Education Centre. The approach to indigenous studies that it provides has been incorporated into the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies syllabus, most notably in section 5, Course organisation. The holistic approach to learning that both the syllabus and the *My Land My Tracks* framework advocates is especially useful to teachers and students when developing units of work, and individual learning experiences.

The framework is reproduced in its entirety with the kind permission of Ernie Grant and the Innisfail and District Education Centre.



Indigenous communities have a holistic view of their world, which incorporates the vital link between Land, Language and Culture. This view is significantly different from what is considered the norm in western society. Many academics, over the years, have recognised and noted its success in passing on information accurately for centuries. Solving the complex problems of to-day's society requires consideration of all the information and all the strategies and perhaps it is time for schools and other institutions to step back from the traditional academic approach and consider the advantages of another traditional approach – the holistic one.



Indigenous culture reflects an oral as opposed to written tradition; it relies largely on observation; it is closely aligned to nature and the environment – with particular emphasis on cycles and patterns and the effect each has on the other; and of course it is based on an undeniable link between Land, Language and Culture.

There is a significant difference between the western and indigenous approaches to the acquisition and application of knowledge (Figure 1). Western thinking generally adopts a holistic approach to the wider issues, while its approach in more localised issues is compartmentalised. The end result of this is that most information in schools and institutions – whether it be oral or written – is organised and presented in a way that reflects this.

Figure 1	Western	Indigenous
Wider	Holistic	Compartmentalised
Local	Compartmentalised	Holistic

On the other hand, largely because of the people's dependence on the spoken word and observation for sharing knowledge about their own world, the indigenous approach is quite the opposite. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people look at the whole picture and identify relationships and links within it, whereas their western counterparts often focus on the detail of the individual parts without considering their possible interaction with others (Figure 2). This apparent conflict can be confusing and frustrating for all those involved in sharing the knowledge.

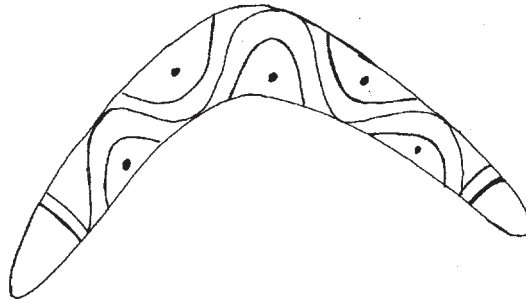
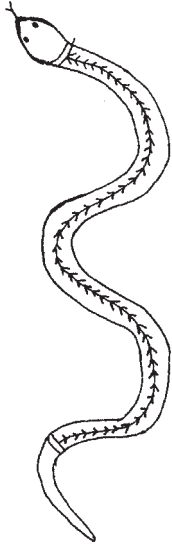


Figure 2	Western	Indigenous
Wider	Aborigines - seen as basically one cultural group	Aborigines - distinct groups associated with specific Land, Language Culture.
Local	Bush food - emphasis on each item	Bush food - seen in relation to place, seasons, other foods, birds & animals



The importance of the link between Land, Language and Culture in indigenous societies is such that removal of just one element can destroy the whole. When tracing the history of Australia through the four periods of Pre Contact*, Contact*, Post Contact* and Contemporary*, the three elements provide an appropriate framework but in turn, this framework provides ample evidence of the effect of fragmenting the conceptual whole (Figure 3).

It is interesting to note that to-day's society is making a genuine effort to restore these elements, which suggests that it recognises the significance of this conceptual link.

- * Pre Contact - up to 1770
- * Contact - 1770 to settlement in various parts of Australia
- * Post Contact - settlement to 1970 (approximately)
- * Contemporary

Figure 3

The Historical Picture

Pre Contact	Contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hunting and Gathering - Story places - Relationships - Kinship system • Language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different tribes, different languages - 240 languages, 700 dialects • Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food - Housing - Law (Aboriginal) - Education - Health - Art 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invasion - Conflict - Restricted food source - Changed landscape - Reserves • Language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confusion - Some language loss • Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disruption - Fragmentation
Post Contact	Contemporary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dispossession - Removal - Missions - The Act • Language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use prohibited - Extensive loss • Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assimilation - Breakdown - Extensive loss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land rights - Native title • Language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness - Reclaiming - Revival - Recognition • Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reconciliation - Employment - Housing - Law (Western) - Education - Health - Art

To create the total picture, the three elements of Land, Language and Culture can be contextualised in terms of Time, Place and Relationships (Figure 4) and together these six components provide a flexible framework for organising and presenting information on a range of topics (Figure 5).

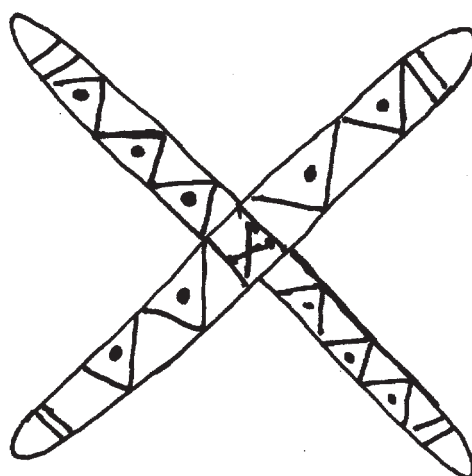


Figure 4

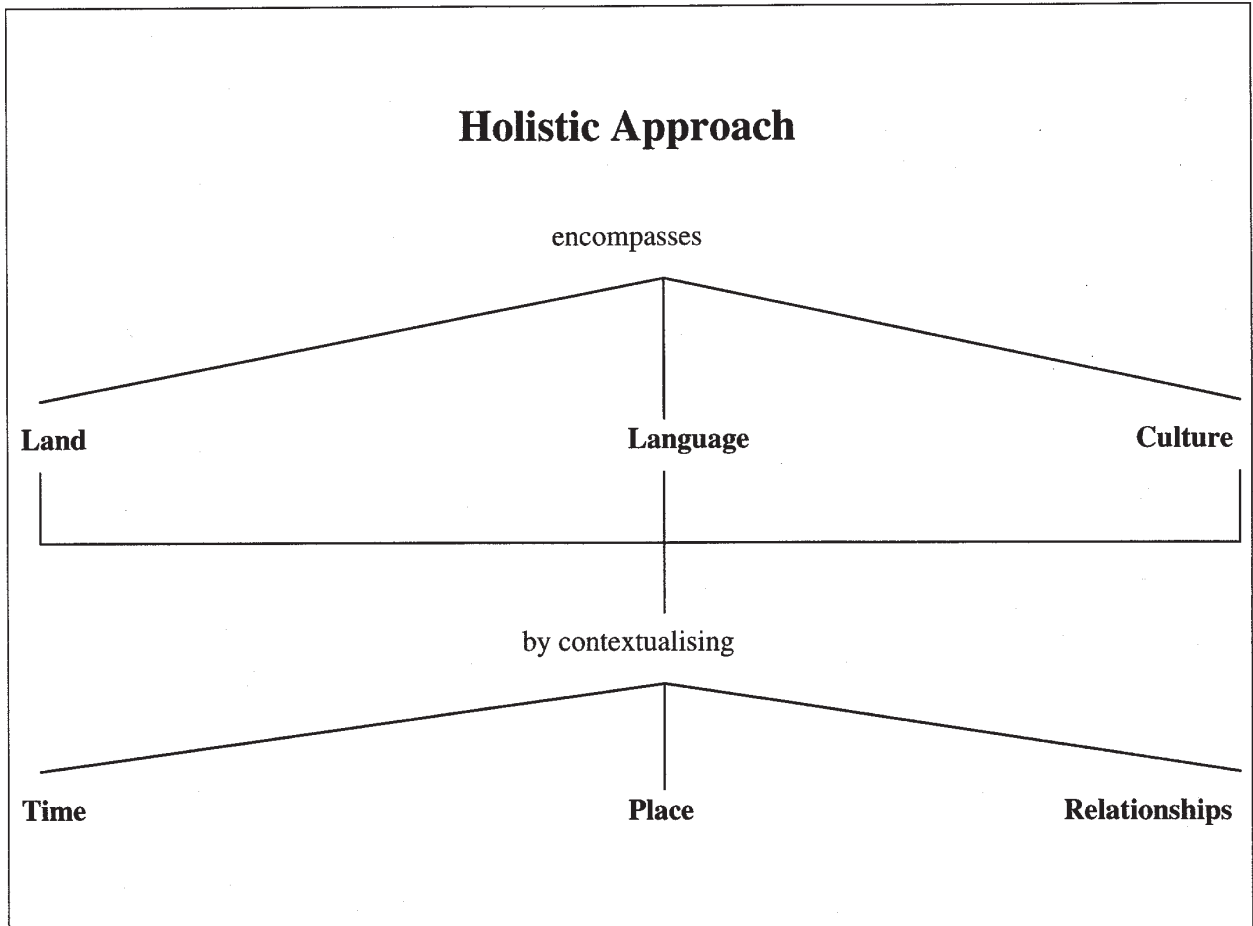
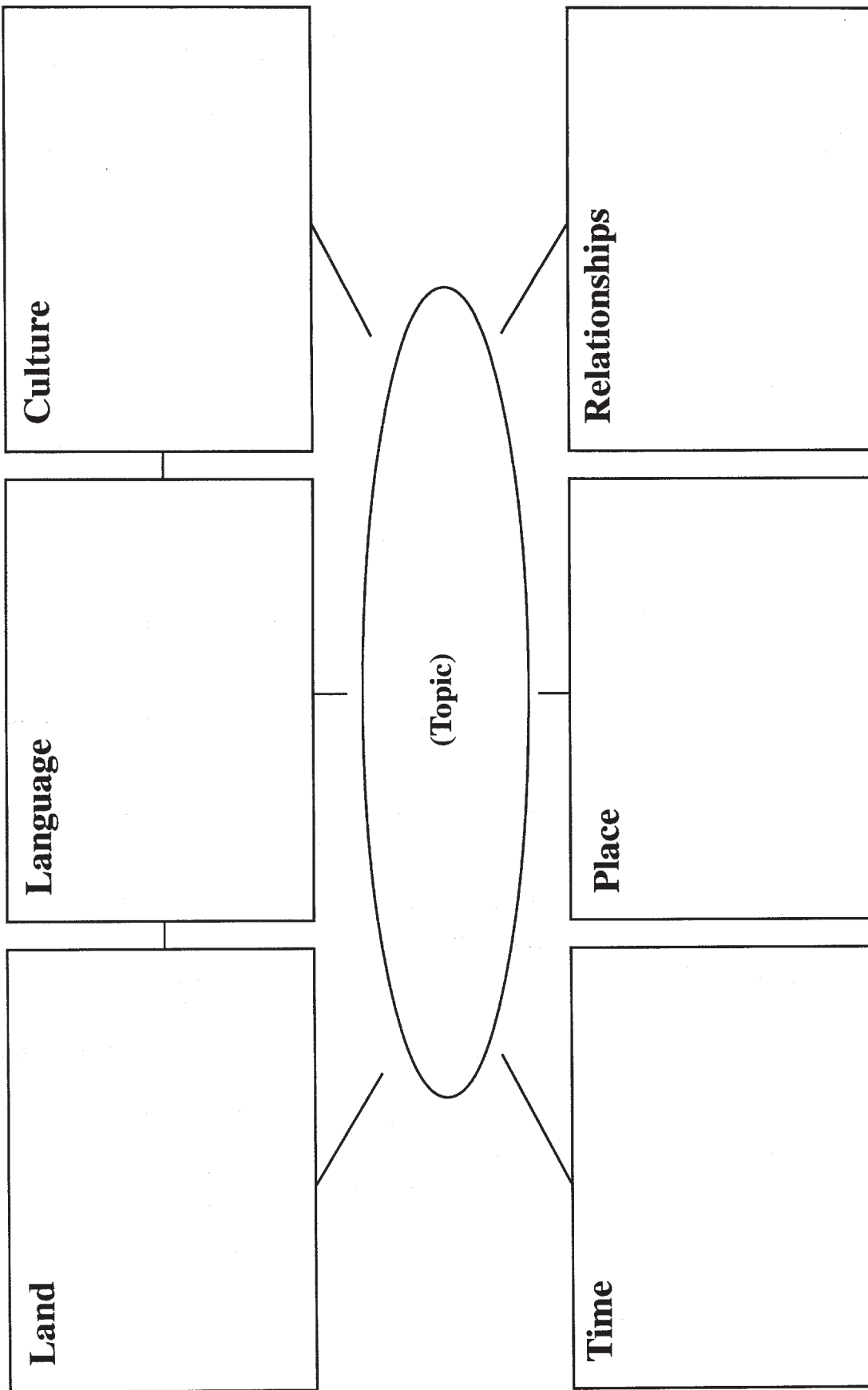


Figure 5



The outline can be used in a range of contexts for a range of purposes. For example, it can provide

- (a) a format for a basic study of the local area (Figure 6), with variations in the extent and complexity of the information to suit a particular situation.
- (b) form the basis of an historical study of an area, with the four periods – Pre Contact, Contact, Post Contact and Contemporary – being used as a focus to show the changes holistically (Figures 7a, 7b, 7c, 7d)
- (c) be used to research and/or discuss topics such as Native Title, Assimilation, the Stolen Generation etc.
- (d) a framework for planning indigenous language programs.

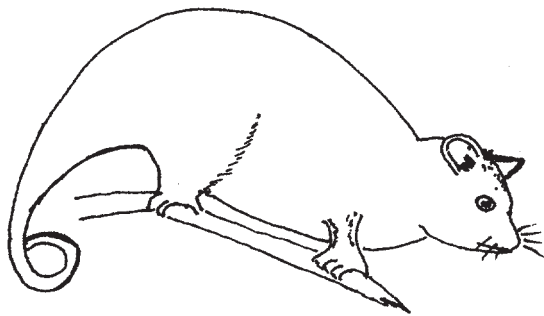


Figure 6

Topic Outline

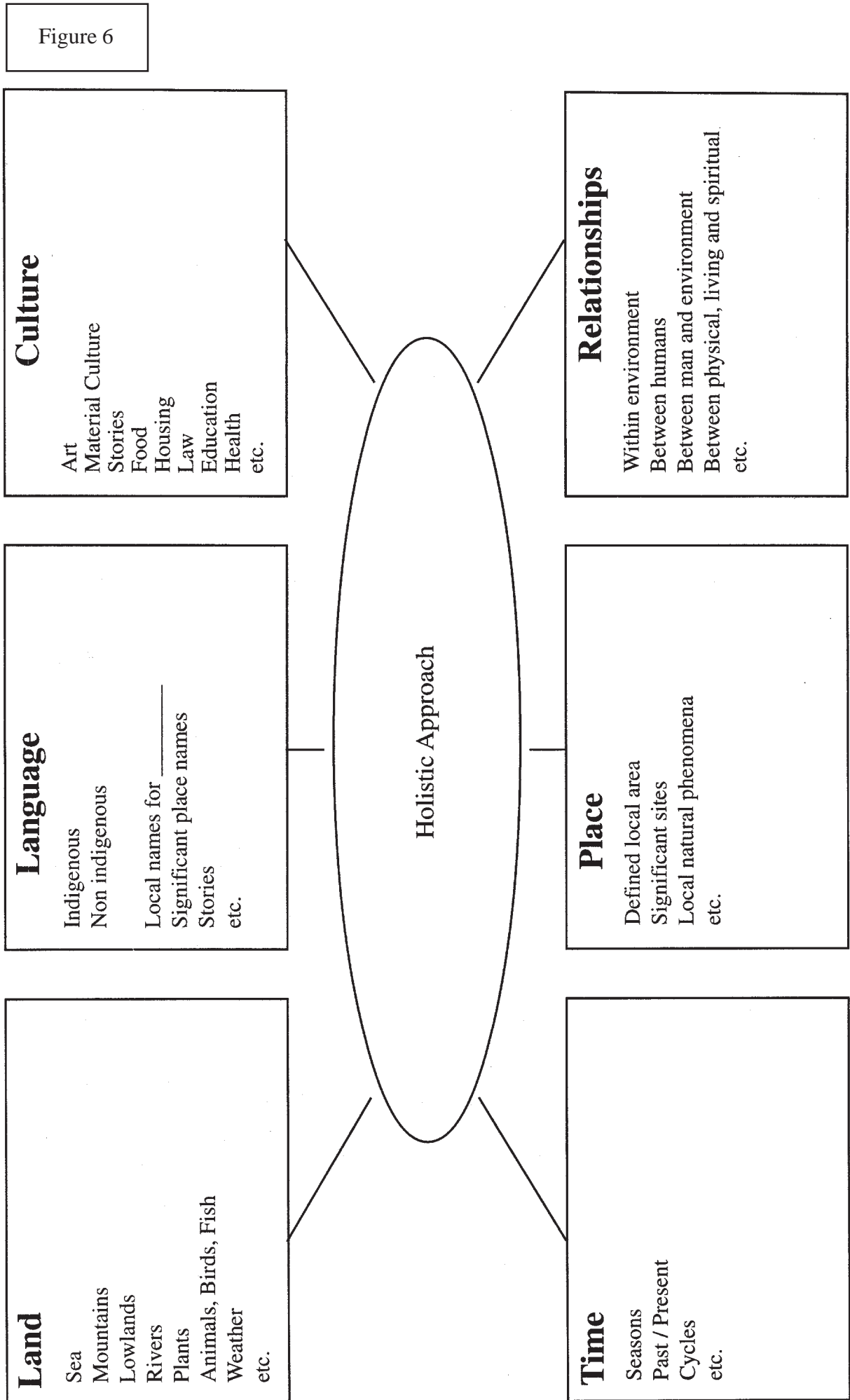


Figure 7a

Topic Outline

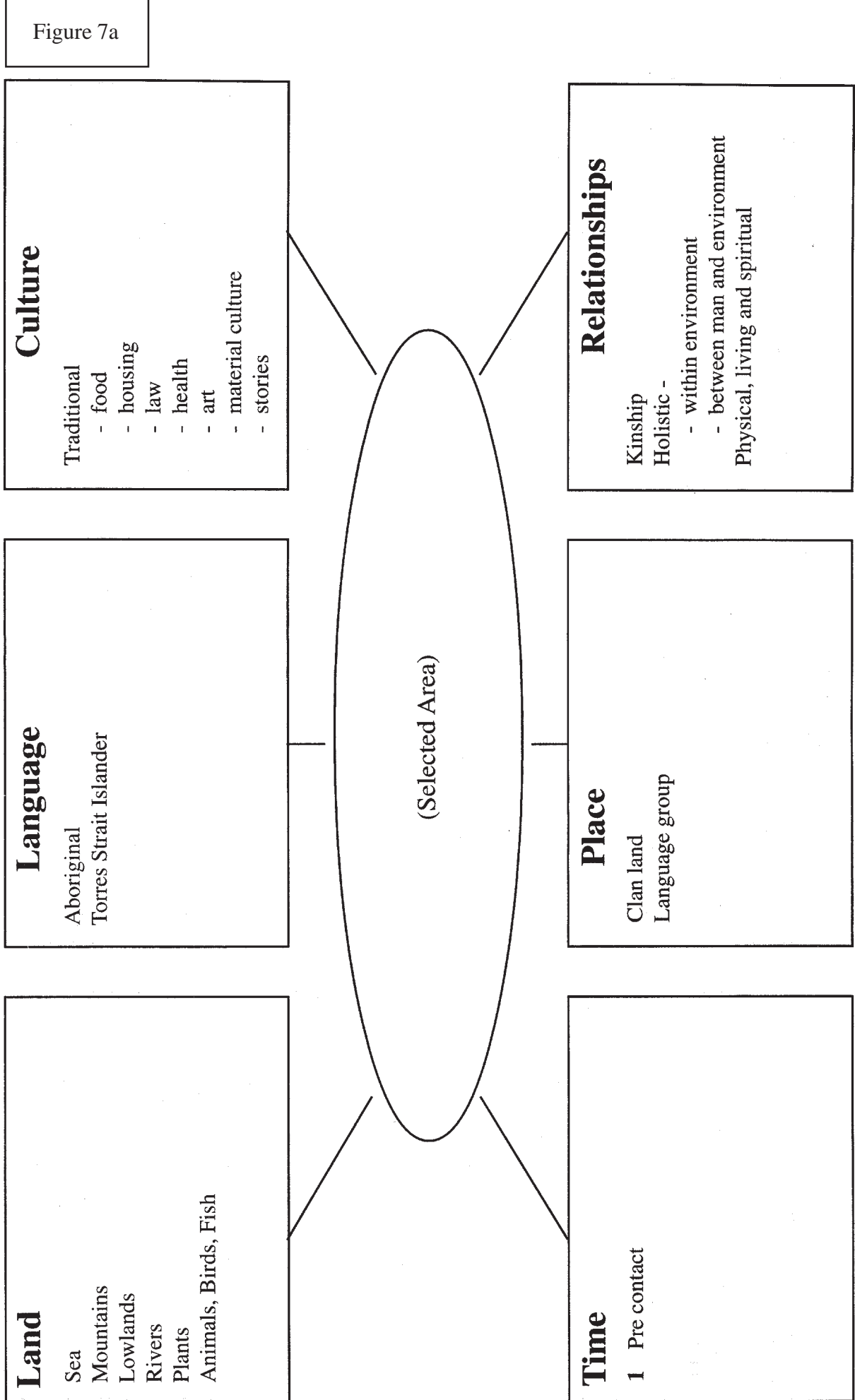


Figure 7b

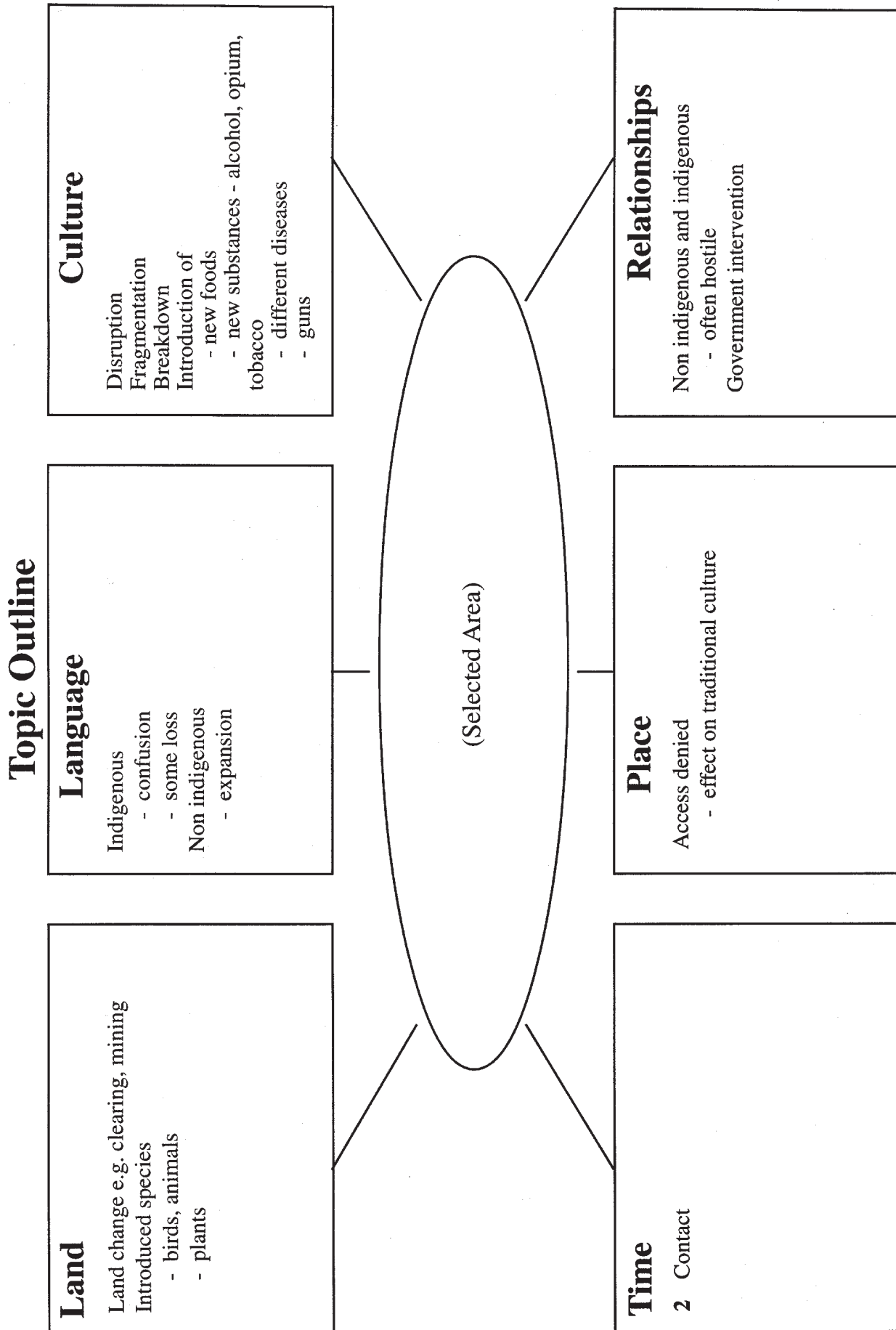


Figure 7c

Topic Outline

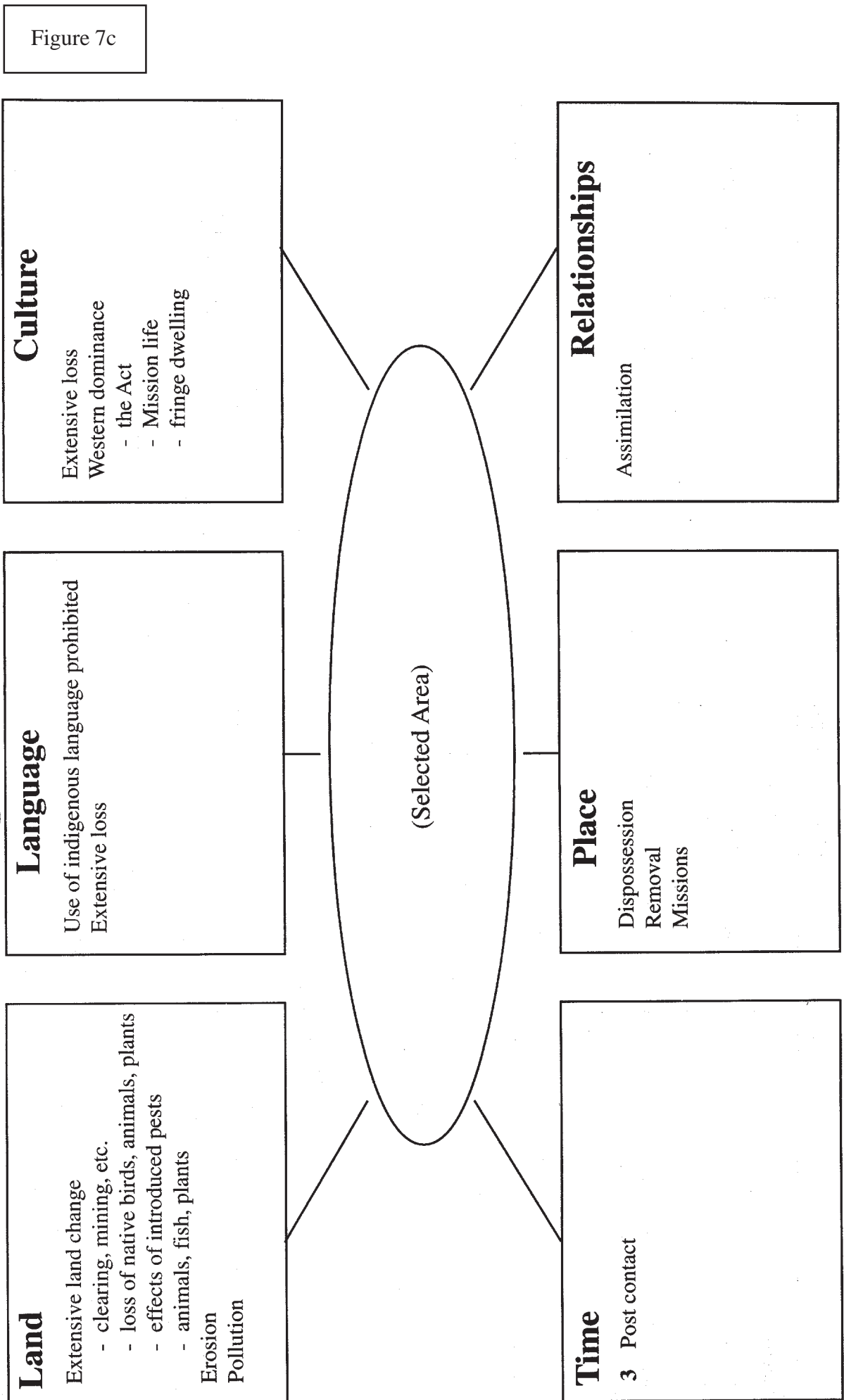
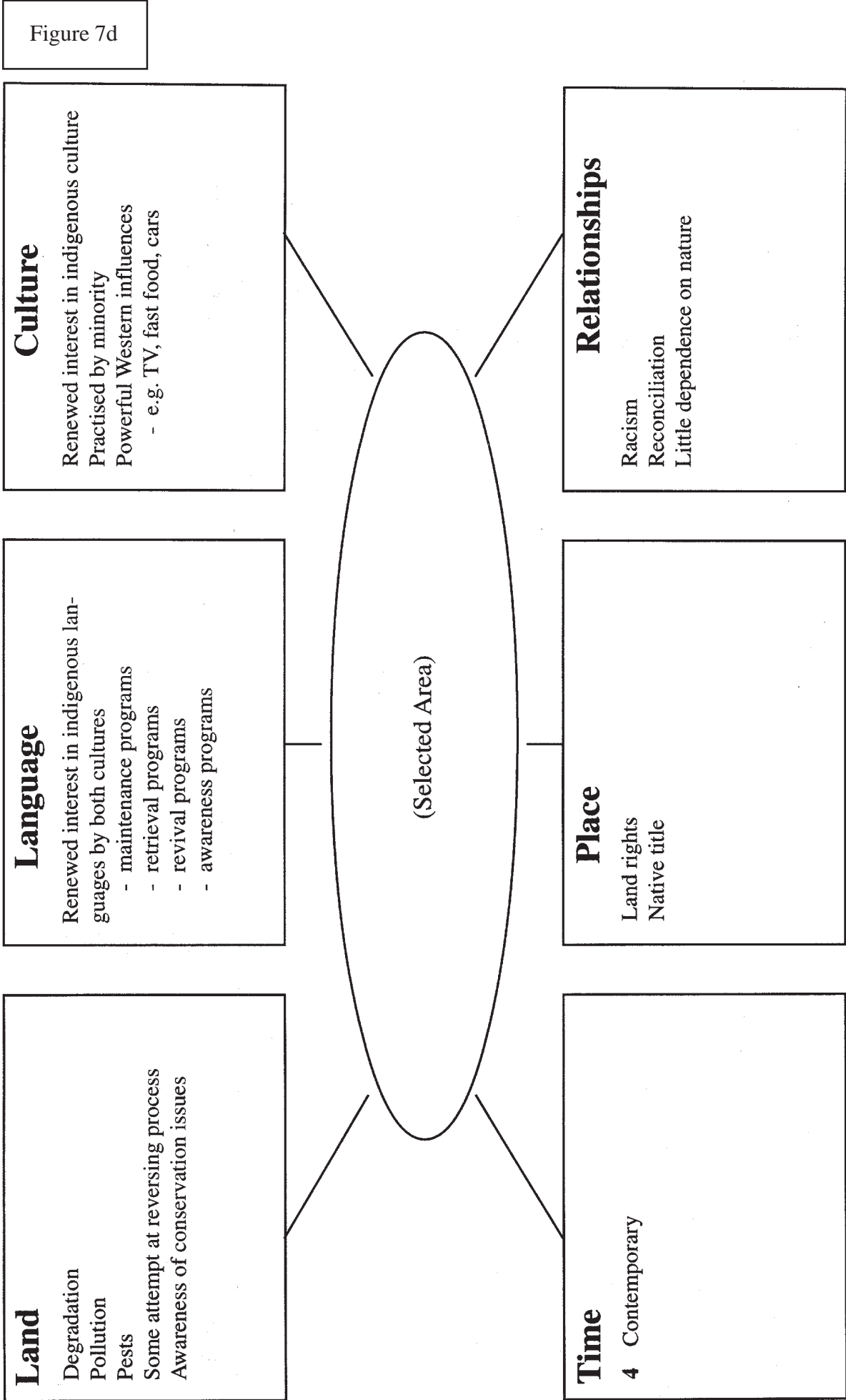


Figure 7d

Topic Outline



It is possible to organise the information on a specific area differently (e.g. Figures 8a, 8b, 8c, 8d, 8e). However, it is important that such an approach – which in effect constitutes compartmentalising – should include a process for considering the information holistically, with particular emphasis on the link between Land, Language and Culture (e.g. Figure 8f which shows how this information can be collated).

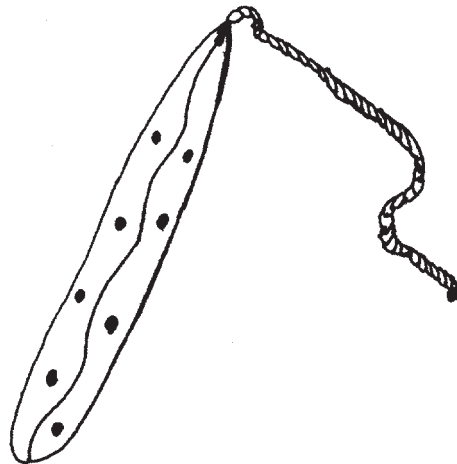


Figure 8a

Land

Pre Contact

Sea
Mountains
Lowlands
Rivers
Plants
Animals, Birds, Fish

Contact

Land change e.g. clearing, mining
Introduced species
- birds, animals
- plants

Sea
Mountains
Lowlands
Rivers
Plants
Animals, Birds, Fish

Extensive land change
- clearing, mining, etc.
- loss of native birds, animals, plants
- effects of introduced pests
(animals, fish, plants)

Erosion
Pollution

Degradation
Pollution
Pests
Some attempt at reversing process
Awareness of conservation issues

Post Contact

Contemporary

Figure 8b

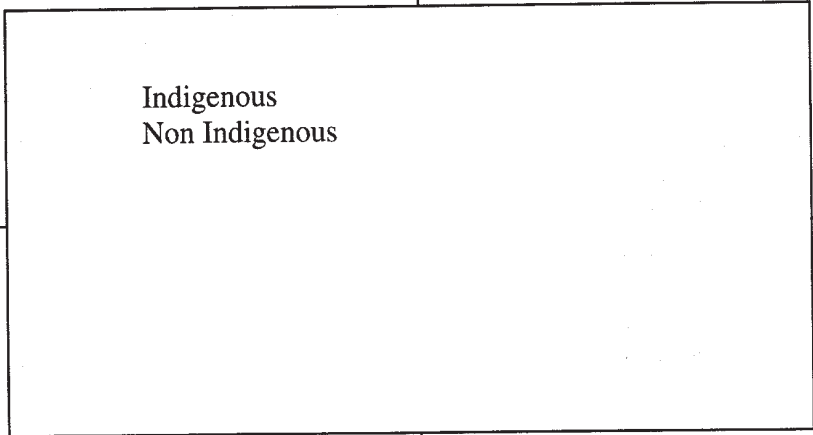
Language

Pre Contact

Aboriginal
Torres Strait Islander

Contact

- Indigenous
- confusion
 - some loss
- Non Indigenous
- expansion



Indigenous
Non Indigenous

Use of indigenous language prohibited
Extensive loss

Renewed interest in indigenous languages
by both cultures

- maintenance programs
- retrieval programs
- revival programs
- awareness programs

Post Contact

Contemporary

Figure 8c

Culture

Pre Contact

Traditional

- food
- housing
- law
- health
- art
- material culture
- stories

Contact

Disruption

Fragmentation

Breakdown

Introduction of

- new foods
- new substances e.g. alcohol, opium, tobacco
- different diseases
- guns

Food
Housing
Law
Education
Health
Art
Material Culture
Stories

Extensive loss

Western dominance

- the Act
- Mission life
- fringe dwelling

Renewed interest in indigenous culture

Practised by minority

Powerful Western influences

- e.g. TV, fast food, cars

Post Contact

Contemporary

Figure 8d

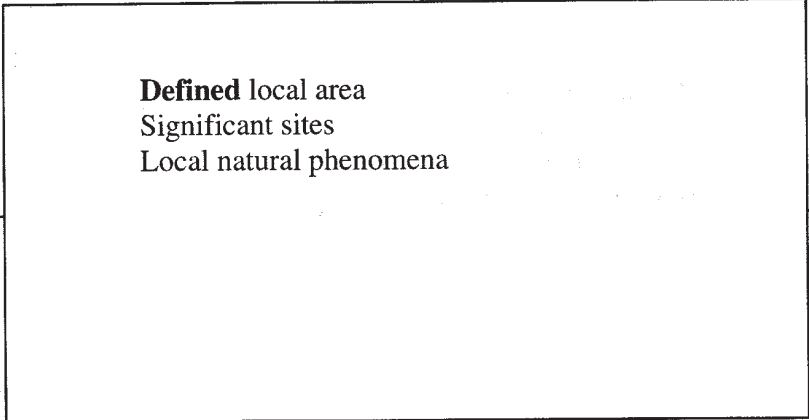
Place

Pre Contact

Clan land
Language group

Contact

Access denied
- effect on traditional culture



Dispossession
Removal
Missions

Land rights
Native title

Post Contact

Contemporary

Figure 8e

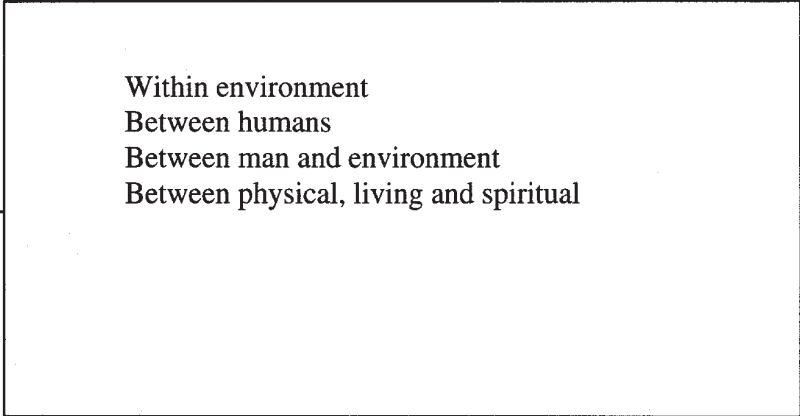
Relationships

Pre Contact

Kinship
Holistic -
- within environment
- between man and environment
Physical, living and spiritual

Contact

Non indigenous and indigenous
- often hostile
Government intervention



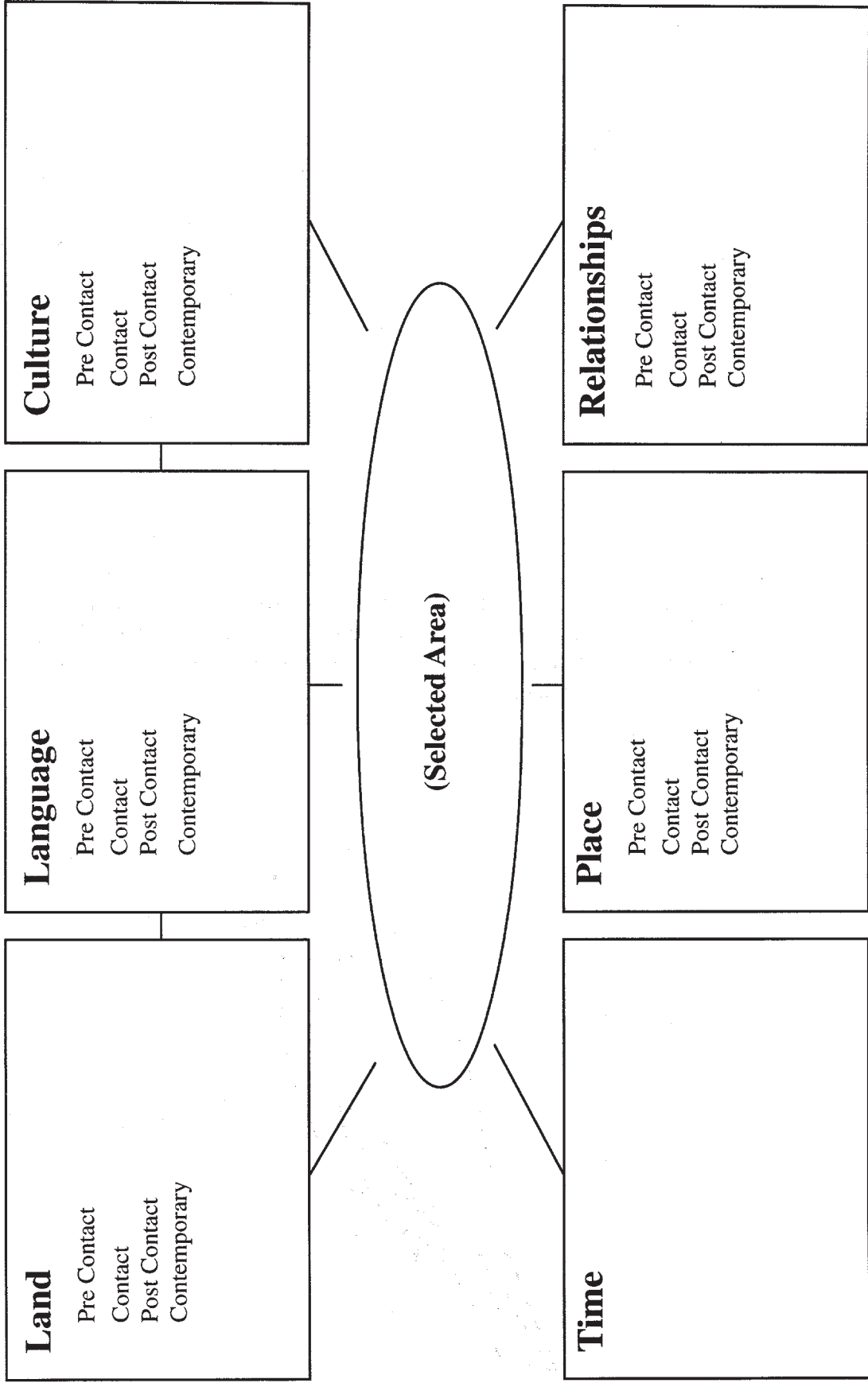
Assimilation

Racism
Reconciliation
Little dependence on nature

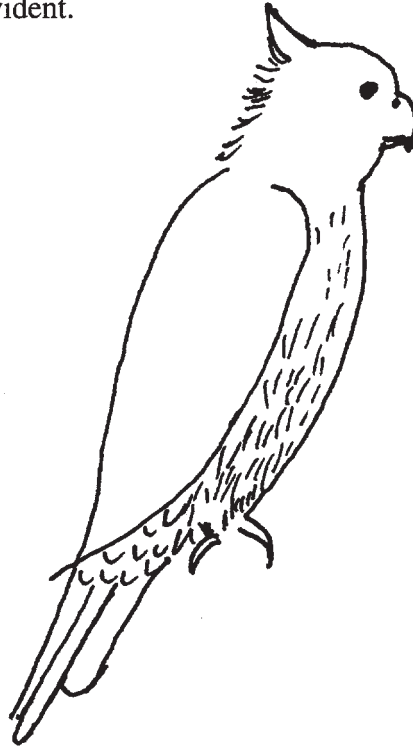
Post Contact

Contemporary

Figure 8f

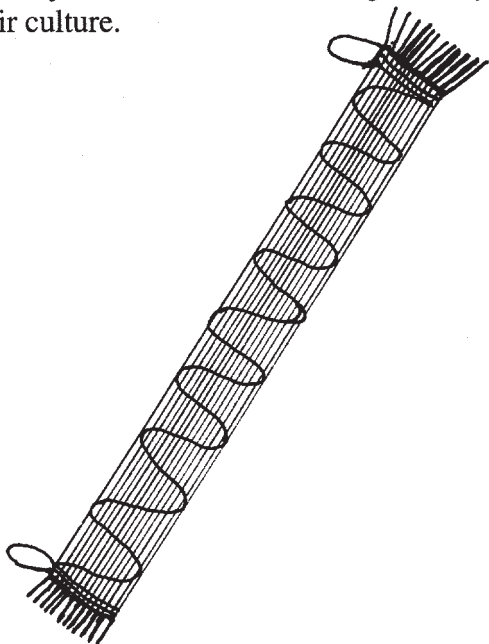


For those concerned with the provision of resources, the same components can be used to analyse any particular collection. The example (Figure 9) represents the beginning of a resource check for an extensive local area study, with gaps in information already evident.



This approach is designed to promote cross cultural understanding by providing a framework for organising information in a meaningful way.

Although it is just one method of filing or retrieving information, it has the capacity to assist those who are genuinely interested in indigenous people and their culture.



Local Area Study

Resource Checklist

- 1 Pre Contact
- 2 Contact
- 3 Post Contact
- 4 Contemporary

Figure 9

Resources	Land				Language				Culture				Place				Relationships			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Confessions of a Beachcomber	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓			✓				✓		✓	
Dyirbal Language of North Queensland					✓			✓												
Poster	✓				✓							✓							✓	
Carpet Snake Story	✓				✓				✓								✓			