



Harmony Day Poster Competition: Teacher's Lesson Guide

Years 7 & 8

2026 Theme: *Harmony – Stronger Together*



Dear Teacher,

Thank you for facilitating this critical inquiry into the theme of social cohesion. This year's theme, "**Harmony – Stronger Together**," provides a rich platform for your students to analyse the complex dynamics of community, diversity, and collective action.

Students at this stage are developing the capacity to understand persuasive techniques and the power of visual media. This poster competition challenges them to move beyond illustration and become designers, creating a piece of visual communication that conveys a powerful social message to a specific audience.

This guide provides a complete, **60-minute design workshop** for Years 7 & 8. It is aligned with the Australian Curriculum and is designed to challenge students to think critically, justify their design choices, and create an artwork with clear intent and purpose.

We are eager to see the insightful and persuasive visual statements your students produce.

1. Connecting to the Australian Curriculum

This theme-based lesson supports key learning outcomes for Years 7 & 8, focusing on Visual Arts, HASS, and the development of critical thinking and social capabilities.

Learning Area	Curriculum Code	Content Descriptor (in plain English)
The Arts (Visual Arts)	AC9AVA8D01	Students will plan, develop and create artworks that communicate their ideas, perspectives and/or meaning.
HASS (Civics & Citizenship)	AC9HS8K01	Students will analyse different perspectives on Australia's national identity and the factors that contribute to a cohesive and multicultural society .
General Capabilities	<i>Critical & Creative Thinking</i>	Students will analyse and synthesise information and ideas to develop a targeted visual communication strategy with a clear call to action.
General Capabilities	<i>Intercultural Understanding</i>	Students will reflect on how recognising and utilising diversity within a community can be a source of strength and resilience.

2. The 60-Minute "Stronger Together" Poster Design Workshop

Lesson Objective: Students will be able to devise and justify a poster concept that uses design principles (composition, typography, symbolism) to communicate a persuasive message about social cohesion to a defined target audience.

Materials Needed:

- Whiteboard or smartboard and markers
- A scenario prompt for the "Spark" activity (see below)
- The provided "**Poster Concept Proposal**" Worksheet for each student
- Pencils and art materials for sketching

Step 1: The Spark – The Island Dilemma (15 mins)

- Divide students into small groups. Present this scenario: "Your group is stranded on a deserted island. You've salvaged a list of 15 items. As a group, you must negotiate and agree on the **5 most critical items for your long-term survival**. You have 5 minutes."
- After the time is up, have a few groups share their final 5 items and their reasoning. Note the differences between the lists.
- Lead a discussion: "What was the biggest challenge in this task? How did you resolve disagreements? Was the final decision stronger because it came from the whole group? Why?"
- Introduce the theme: "This dilemma is a **microcosm of society**. We have limited resources and diverse opinions, but for a community to thrive, we must communicate, negotiate, and work together. Our collective intelligence and cooperation make us stronger than any individual."
- On the whiteboard, brainstorm issues a modern community might face that require a "stronger together" approach (e.g., Climate change, Social inequality, Welcoming new migrants, Mental health support).

Step 2: The Anatomy of Persuasion (15 mins)

Explain that a poster is a piece of persuasive media. Introduce key design principles:

1. **Target Audience & Message:** "Who are you trying to convince? Your peers? Adults? Your message and visual style must be tailored to them. What do you want them to *think*, *feel*, or *do* after seeing your poster?" This final part is your **Call to Action**.
2. **Symbolism vs. Literal Imagery:** "Instead of drawing people holding hands, how can you *symbolise* unity? A complex knot that doesn't break? A diverse ecosystem? A bridge built from different materials?"
3. **Visual Hierarchy & Composition:** "What is the first thing your audience should see? Use size, colour, and placement to guide their eye. The use of empty space (white space) is a powerful tool."

4. **Typography as a Voice:** "The font you choose has a personality. Is your message bold and demanding? Elegant and thoughtful? Playful and inclusive? Your text style must match your tone."
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Step 3: Let's Create! (20 mins)

- Hand out the "**Poster Concept Proposal**" Worksheet.
 - Explain that this is their design proposal. They are acting as graphic designers who must plan and justify their creative choices before starting production.
 - **Important Teacher Note:** Emphasise that this proposal is the most critical part of the design process. A well-planned poster will be far more effective. The final competition entry will be created afterwards on a fresh, blank sheet of A4 or A3 paper.
 - Circulate, challenging students to deepen their symbolic thinking and clearly articulate the connection between their message, audience, and design choices
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Step 4: The Poster Pitch (5 mins)

- Ask a few volunteers to present a 90-second "pitch" for their poster concept to the class.
 - They must justify their choice of symbol, colour palette, and typography by explaining how it will effectively communicate their core message to their chosen target audience.
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3. Teacher's Tip Sheet: 5 Principles for Effective Design

Help your students think like designers with these key principles:

- **Concept is King:** Your poster must be built on a strong, clear idea. What is the single, focused message you are trying to communicate?
 - **Think Symbolically:** The most powerful posters use clever visual metaphors that make the audience think. How can you represent "Stronger Together" in a way that is not literal or cliché?
 - **Guide the Eye:** Control where your audience looks. Create a clear focal point and use composition, scale, and colour to establish a visual hierarchy for your elements.
 - **Typography Matters:** The font you choose is not an afterthought; it is a critical design element that gives your message a voice. Ensure it matches your poster's tone and is clearly legible.
 - **Have a Call to Action:** What is the desired outcome? Even if it's implicit, your poster should motivate the viewer to think differently, feel empathy, or consider taking action.
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4. From Classroom Creation to Competition Submission

The most important outcome of this lesson is the rich conversation and the pride students feel in creating their artwork. Here is our recommended process for celebrating their work and participating in the national competition.

Step 1: Create a School "Stronger Together" Gallery

We strongly encourage you to celebrate the work of **every student**. Creating a "**Stronger Together Wall**" in your classroom, library, or school hall is a fantastic way to:

- Give every child the recognition they deserve.
- Showcase your school's commitment to the values of Harmony Day.
- Visually reinforce the powerful message that your school community is stronger together.

Step 2: Select Your School's Finalists

The Moving Forward Together competition receives thousands of entries from across the country. To ensure every poster gets the attention it deserves, we ask schools to participate in the first round of judging.

Please select the posters that you feel best represent your school's creativity and understanding of the theme. As a guideline, we recommend submitting your top 3 entries per Year (e.g., 3 from Year 1, 3 from Year 2, etc.).

This makes being selected for submission a special achievement for the students.

Step 3: Submit Your Finalists Online

Once you have selected your school's finalists, please proceed to the submission guide below.

5. Competition Submission Guide

2026 Competition Theme: Harmony – Stronger Together

Key Rules:

- Artwork must be the student's own original work and connect to the theme.
- Posters should be A4 or A3 in size.
- Any art materials can be used (crayons, paint, markers, collage).

How to Submit:

1. Take a clear, bright photograph or scan of the completed poster.
2. Visit our website at www.movingforwardtogether.org.au/harmony-day-competitions
3. Fill out the online entry form with the student's details and upload the image file.

Submission Deadline: 15 April 2026

Thank you for helping us show that we are all stronger together.

6. Engaging Parents & Carers: Bring Harmony Home!

Connecting with families is a powerful way to extend the Harmony Day message beyond the classroom. To help you do this, we have created a simple, one-page handout for you to send home with your students.

This guide, titled "**Bring Harmony Home**," briefly explains the "**Stronger Together**" theme and gives parents and carers simple ideas on how to support their child's creative process. It also clarifies that the school will be managing the final competition submissions.

This resource is designed to be a simple, print-and-go A4 handout.
(Annexed to this document)



Harmony Day Poster Competition: Parent Guide: "Bring Harmony Home!"

2026 Theme: *Harmony – Stronger Together*
Years 7 & 8



Hello Parents and Carers!

Today in class, your child participated in a design workshop exploring this year's Harmony Day theme:

"Harmony – Stronger Together."

They engaged in a critical thinking challenge about how communities must negotiate and collaborate to solve complex problems, learning that our collective strength is essential for building a resilient society.

They have used a "Poster Concept Proposal" to plan and justify their ideas for a persuasive poster. Now, they have the opportunity to create a final piece for the **Moving Forward Together Harmony Day Competition!**

How You Can Support Your Child's Creativity

The goal is to encourage a thoughtful conversation about social issues and the role of visual communication.

- **Ask About Their Strategy:** Ask them to explain their design proposal: "Who is your target audience? What message are you trying to send them, and what visual metaphor did you choose to represent it?"
- **Be a Media Analyst:** Look at posters or advertisements together in your community or online. Discuss the techniques they use. "Who do you think this ad is for? What is it trying to make you feel or do? How does it use colour and text?"
- **Provide the Canvas:** Your child will need a blank A4 or A3 piece of paper and their preferred art supplies to create their final poster.
- **Encourage Intentionality:** Let their unique perspective lead. The most impactful posters come from a place of genuine conviction and are built on well-reasoned design choices.

About the Competition

The Moving Forward Together competition is a wonderful way to celebrate the creativity of students across Australia.

Your child's teacher will have all the information about the school's process for selecting and submitting posters to the official competition.

Thank you for helping us build a stronger community, together.

Visit Website for Details: www.movingforwardtogether.org.au/harmony-day-competitions

The Moving Forward Together Team



Poster Concept Proposal

2026 Theme: *Stronger Together*



A designer always plans their strategy. Use this proposal to justify your creative choices.

1. The Mission

- **My Target Audience is:** *(Be specific: e.g., my peers, parents, local leaders)*

- **The Core Message I want to send them is:**

- **After seeing my poster, I want my audience to think/feel/do:** *(This is your Call to Action)*

2. The Visual Strategy

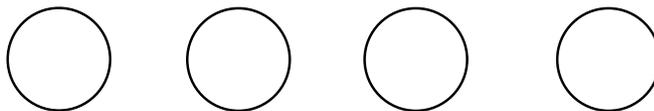
- **My central Visual Metaphor / Symbol will be:**

- **I chose this symbol because it represents my core message by:**

- **The overall Tone/Mood of my poster will be:** *(e.g., Urgent, Hopeful, Reflective, Inspiring)*

3. My Colour Palette & Mood

Colours create feelings. Colour in the circles with the 3-4 main colours you will use for your poster.



I chose these colours because they will make my poster feel:

(e.g., happy, calm, strong, peaceful, exciting)

4. Composition Sketch

Sketch your layout on a blank A4 sheet of paper. Consider the placement of your main symbol, your slogan, and the use of empty space to create a strong composition.

Designer's Name: _____