



# HOLDEN & ME

## Tales from a Working Life

Lesson 2: Responding to Oral Histories  
Primary School



# In this lesson, we will...

Learn about what oral histories are and why historians use them.

Learn about Holden and listen to the oral histories of people who worked there.

Think about how we can connect to their stories.





# At the end of this lesson, I will be able to...



Explain what an oral history is and why historians use them.



Listen to an oral history and understand what the person is talking about.



Make connections between the story and myself.



# Important Words

Community

Oral history

Diverse

Past

Historian

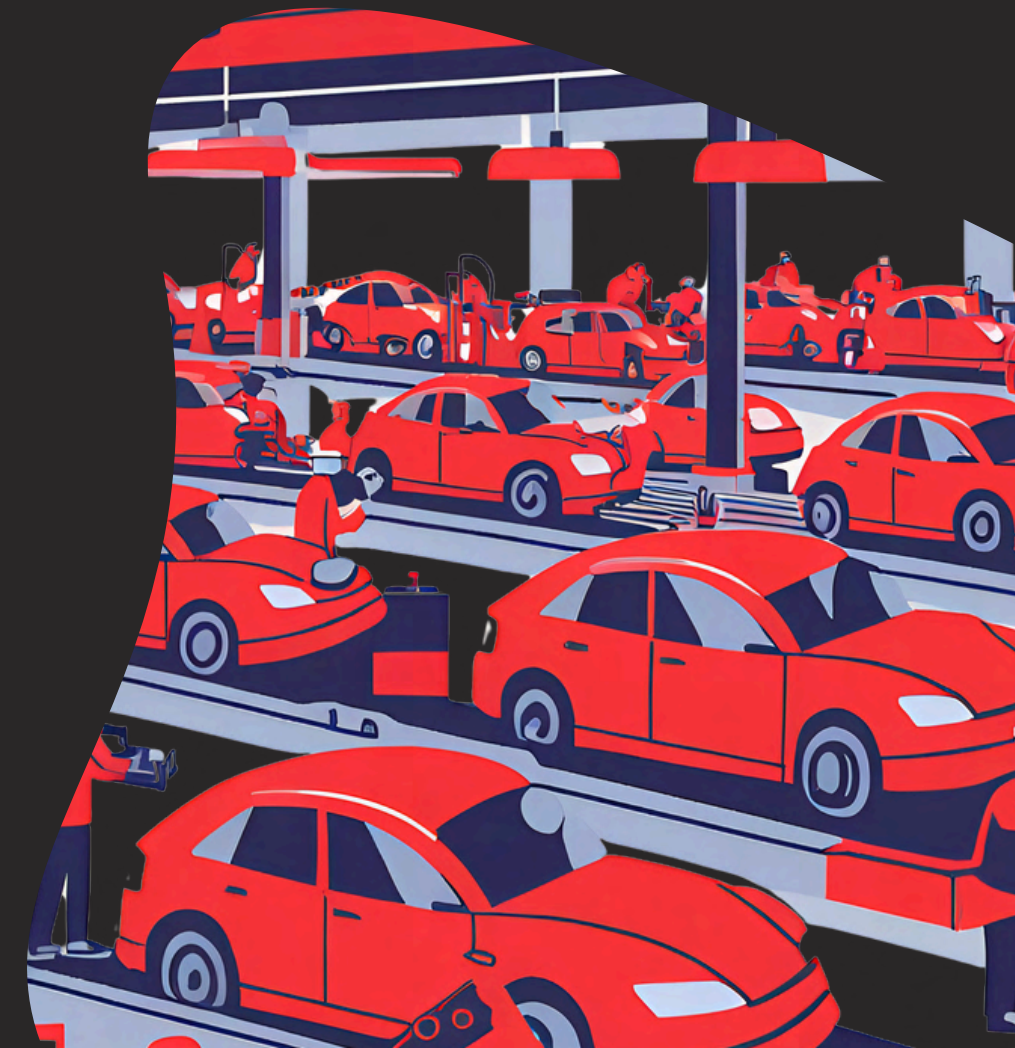
Perspective

Identity

Source

Experience

Significant

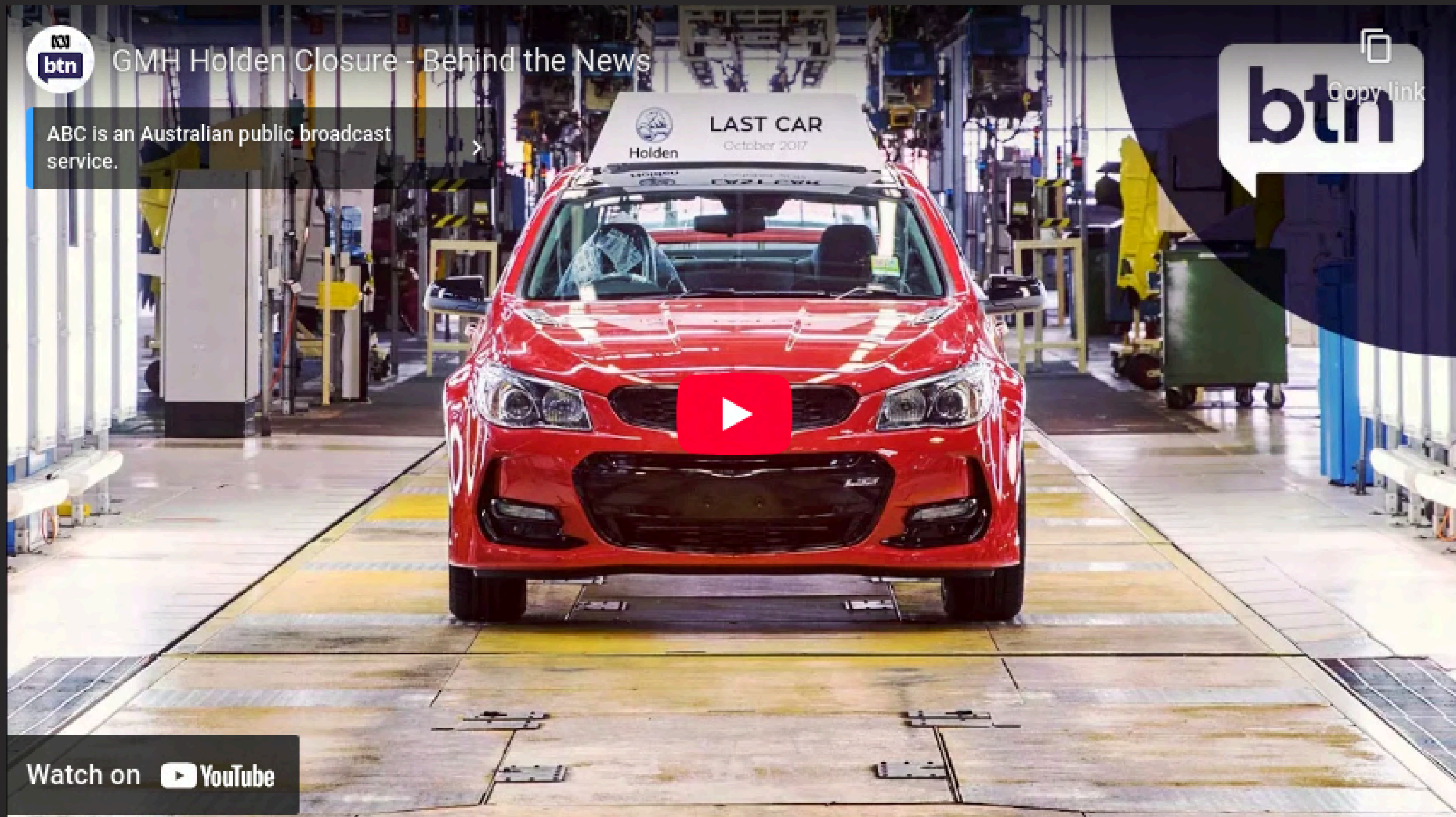


**Brainstorm:**  
**What do you know about...**

***HOLDEN***



# Holden's History




GMH Holden Closure - Behind the News

ABC is an Australian public broadcast service.



Copy link

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Watch on  YouTube



# Holden and South Australia

At its peak Holden employed over 24,000 workers across five states.

Holden employees were diverse and included different ages, genders, and cultures. Holden employed migrants, and people with different skills.

In 1962, Holden opened a new factory in Elizabeth where many migrants lived and worked.

After 55 years, the Elizabeth factory closed and Elizabeth lost their main employer and a large part of the community.



# Optional: Historical Sources

Watch this video to understand what a source is, the types of sources that exist, and how historians use sources to understand what might have happened in the past.







# What is an oral history?

An oral history is a historical **source** of information **spoken** by a person about their **experience** of an event.

Oral histories are usually sound recordings but can sometimes be videos.





# How do historians use oral histories?

Oral histories can help historians to **learn** about the past.

They use oral histories to understand the **experiences** and points of view of different people in the past.





# Holden Oral Histories

Joan & David Matthews



Joan started working at Holden when she was 15-years old in the typing pool. David worked in electrical maintenance.

They have been married for more than 60 years.

Lynette Tainsh



Lynette became an electrical fitter like her dad.

She was only the second female apprentice at Elizabeth and later became a supervisor

George Vassallo



George migrated with his parents from Egypt after World War II.

His father also worked at Holden.

George worked hard to create a specialist tool and was recognised for his work.

Keith Hamilton



Keith did lots of jobs from a forklift driver to warehouse team leader.

His happiest memories are of lunchtime games of indoor bowls, darts and table tennis, and soccer and cricket games against other factories.



# Hear, Think, Me, We



## Hear

- Listen to the oral history and list...
  - **Who**
  - **Where**
  - **When**
  - **What - special objects**
  - **Special memories**



## Think

- How do you think the person might be **feeling** in their story?
- What **questions** would you ask them about their time at Holden?



## Me

- Can you think of a time you **felt similar** to the person in the oral history?
- What would **you have done** if you were the person in the oral history?



## We

- How do you think the **community** might have felt to Holden closing down?
- Do you think everyone felt the same as the person in the oral history?

# Time to share!



# Final Question



**What question would you ask  
the person in the oral history?**

**Share with the class or a partner.**



# After this lesson, I can...



Explain what an oral history is and why historians use them.



Listen to an oral history and explain what the person is telling me.



Make connections between the story and myself.

