No More Boomerang

No more boomerang
No more spear;
Now all civilized-
Colour bar and beer.

No more corroboree,
Gay dance and din.
Now we got movies,
And pay to go in.

No more sharing
What the hunter brings.
Now we work for money,
Then pay it back for things.

Now we track bosses
To catch a few bob,
Now we go walkabout
On bus to the job.

One time naked,
Who never knew shame;
Now we put clothes on
To hide what’saname.

No more gunya,
Now bungalow,
Paid by hire purchase
In twenty year or so.

Lay down the stone axe,
Take up the steel,
And work like a nigger
For a white man meal.

Technique: Alliteration
Creates rhythm.

Technique: Symbolism
Beer is symbolic for the alcohol issues experienced by Indigenous people. Alcohol was introduced to the Aboriginals by the ‘white people’.

Technique: Allusion
Conveys the racism experienced by Aboriginals, their isolation and exclusion.

Technique: Irony (Stanza 1)
The new ‘civilized’ way of life has created issues for the Aboriginals that did not exist before ‘white settlement’.

Stanza 2 reinforces that ‘white man’s’ ‘civilized’ is driven by commercialism.

Negative connotations; conveys isolation and a loss of communal culture.

Stanzas 4 reinforces commercialism and that ‘civilized’ society is all about ‘chasing’ money.

Stanza 5
Introduction of shame and modesty.
This could be likened to the bible passage about Adam & Eve.

Reinforces commercialism of ‘white society’. This is the ultimate sign of commercialism as people buy things they cannot yet afford.

Technique: Repetition
Emphasises key parts.
No more – conveys what is lost/old way of life.
Now – conveys new ‘civilised’ life.

Techniques: emotive language/part of a simile.
Simile conveys inequality; the need or the Aboriginal to work harder to make the same amount of money as the ‘white man.’
The term ‘nigger’ conveys negative connotations due to the term’s links with slavery.

Colloquial language and fractured sentence structure creates a voice within the text. This mimics the voice of many Aboriginals.

Indigenous terms – Symbolic for the Indigenous way of life and aid the juxtaposition.

Overall tone: negative
No more firesticks
That made the whites scoff.
Now all electric,
And no better off.

Bunyip he finish,
Now got instead
**White fella** Bunyip,
Call him Red.

Abstract picture now-
What they coming at?
Cripes, in our caves we
Did better than that.

Black hunted wallaby,
**White** hunt dollar;
**White fella** witch-doctor
Wear dog-collar.

No more message-stick;
**Lubras** and **lads**
Got television now.
Mostly **ads**.

Lay down the **woomera**, 
Lay down the **waddy**.
Now we got **atom-bomb**, 
End everybody.

By: Oodgeroo Noonuccal (1985)

### Stanza 8
Demonstrates that the Aboriginals must give up their ‘primitive’ ways to avoid exclusion from ‘civilized’ society, but suggests that this new way of life isn’t necessarily better.

### Technique: Metaphor
Conveys that the ‘white people’ share the same characteristics as the evil mythical creature/spirit.

### Technique: Allusion
Reference to the ‘red coats’ worn by the British soldiers who colonized Australia.

### Stanza 10
Is the first the composer openly says the Aboriginal way of life was better. In other stanzas the composer suggests this, but never says it directly.

### Technique: rhetorical question.
Asks the reader/listener to reflect on whether the ‘white way’ is always the better way.

### Technique: religious reference.
Refers to the ‘dog collar’ as a ‘dog collar’ it conveys the constraints put on Christians by the church. The term ‘witch doctor’ refers to the healing powers ‘civilized’ society believe the church has.

### Technique: alliteration
Creates rhythm.

### Technique: allusion
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### Technique: alliteration
Creates rhythm.

### TECHNIQUE: Juxtaposition
Throughout the poem the composer **juxtaposes** the life in Australia in the present and the past and how it is slowly changing for the worst. This technique occurs on a whole poem level, as well as, in most stanzas.

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### Notes to aid understanding
1. The colour bar is a social system in which black people are denied access to the same rights, opportunities, and facilities as white people.
2. A hire purchase is the legal term for a contract, in which a purchaser agrees to pay for goods in parts or a percentage over a number of months. It is colloquially know as never-never because goods purchased this way often feel they will never be paid off.
3. The bunyip is a large mythical creature from Aboriginal mythology, said to lurk in swamps, billabongs, creeks, riverbeds, and waterholes.
Additional Information

- The poem explores the struggles of the Aboriginal people adapting to the ‘white way of living.’
- The poem describes the differences between the life in Australia in the present and the past and how it is slowly changing for the worst. Their traditional ways and lands have been replaced by a ‘white way of life’ and by Western civilisation.
- The theme of the poem is how the aboriginal traditional ways were taken away and suggests if they believed in those ways they were excluded from society.
- The poem talks about how the ‘white man ways’ were alien to the Aboriginal people.
- The emotions that are conveyed in the poem are anger towards the people that enslaved the aboriginals, but she conveys it in a non-direct way. The composer mostly hints towards her, but never states what they did was bad/wrong.