



Cultural experiences 4: language



Lessofour in a series of four lessons from Banksia Park Primary School's Aboriginal Education program

- Cultural experiences 1: excursion
- Cultural experiences 2: story and song
- Cultural experiences 3: art
- **Cultural experiences 4: language**

CURRICULUM INFORMATION

PHASE OF DEVELOPMENT

Early Childhood	Middle Childhood	Early Adolescence	Late Adolescence
✓	✓		

MAJOR LEARNING AREAS

The Arts	English	H & PE	LOTE	Mathematics	Science	S & E	T & E
✓	✓ ✓		✓	✓		✓	✓

VALUES

Pursuit of knowledge & commitment to achievement of potential	Self acceptance & respect of self	Respect & concern for others & their rights	Social & civic responsibility	Environmental responsibility
		✓	✓	✓

DISTRICT

This lesson has been developed by teachers in the following district:
Fremantle Peel

TOPIC INFORMATION

PURPOSE

To help students develop understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal culture through a range of activities.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Students:

- listen to Dreaming stories and retell them orally and in writing;
- view and discuss Aboriginal desert art;
- produce T-shirt drawings using some symbols created by Aboriginal artists; and
- produce a mosaic slab, reflecting Aboriginal art and Dreaming stories for the entrance of the Mungart Djenabidet (Banksia Park PS Trail).





OVERARCHING LEARNING OUTCOMES

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

KEY BACKGROUND POINTS

Activities in this program stemmed from an initial excursion to the Waalitj Corporation's centre at Bibra Lake. During the excursion, students listened to and participated in activities with Aboriginal storytellers and trail guides. Our school-based learning program was developed from this beginning. The Aboriginal Education team at the Fremantle-Peel District Education Office will advise you on availability and contact details for organising visits, as well as offering a range of other services.

In addition to the activities described, we also sourced funding to employ an Aboriginal artist to involve our kindergarten children in painting a mural depicting a favourite Dreaming story, on the wall of our demountable classroom. Students were guided through an exploration of Aboriginal art works to identify techniques used. They learned about and tried a variety of techniques using charcoal, ochre and paints, and were engaged in all phases of discussion, design and production of the mural.

This program could be adapted for use in all primary levels.

Note about stories:

- Stories represent explanations of real life phenomena through a storyline that has been passed down through the generations.
- Engaging Aboriginal people as story tellers was of significant value and had a great impact on children as they listened to the stories.

CULTURAL & PROTOCOL CONSIDERATIONS

Developing awareness of Noongar Language: teachers should seek advice on pronunciation and spelling of Noongar words before trying to teach any words.

It is important that teachers and students are:

- sensitive to and respect Aboriginal people and their lifestyles, when engaging guest speakers;
- open to a variety of beliefs: cultural, spiritual, and religious; that various groups within our society may hold, and be aware that these may differ from their own;
- respectful and aware of the diversity of Aboriginal people; and
- respectful of traditional and contemporary Aboriginal lifestyles.

RESOURCES

Medium	Author, producer, developer etc	Title	Source
reading series	National Museum of Australia, and Rigby Educational Publishers	<i>Our Voices</i>	educational booksellers, e. g. Wooldridge Dominie
book	E & R Publication	<i>Aussie Animals – Initial Sounds Phonics to Go – A Junior A-Z of Aussie Wildlife</i>	educational booksellers, and DEO resource centre
book	Kathie Atkinson (author), Omnibus	<i>A is for Australian Animals</i>	educational booksellers, and DEO resource centre
book	Elton Publications	<i>About Aboriginal People</i>	educational booksellers, and DEO resource centre





TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

TEACHING RESOURCES

- drawing and writing materials
- teacher prepared song chart of *Head, shoulders, knees and toes* (see under Preparation)
- teacher prepared flashcards of words in song (see under Preparation)
- *Aussie Animals – Initial sounds*, and *Phonics to Go – A Junior A-Z of Aussie Wildlife*
- *A is for Australian Animals*
- *About Aboriginal People*

LESSON STEPS

The suggestions below provide ideas for a series of lessons. Please feel free to develop and present the information in any way that suits your students’ and timetabling requirements.

Preparation

- **Liase** with AEIO, DEO Retention and Participation Program (RaPP) teachers DEO Aboriginal Education team, and/or school Aboriginal community to help locate and invite an Aboriginal person who speaks Noongar to work with your students and teach them words and pronunciations. The DEO team will also advise you about protocols which need to be observed when arranging and during visits.
- **Read** KEY BACKGROUND POINTS and CULTURAL & PROTOCOL CONSIDERATIONS above.
- **Invite** your Noongar LOTE teacher/AIEO (and/or community member) to assist in planning and presentation of lessons. This is essential for introducing Noongar words and their pronunciations.
- **Refer** to class collection of pictures, books of Dreaming stories (particularly local ones), dvds/videos and posters about Dreaming stories, Aboriginal artworks, and also Australian animals, in your ‘classroom corner’ display of materials. Encourage students to read/view these at appropriate times.
- **Prepare** chart of song, *Head, shoulders, knees and toes*, in English and Noongar:

English

Head, shoulders, knees and toes

Head, shoulders, knees and toes
 Knees and toes
 Head, shoulders, knees and toes
 Knees and toes
 We all clap hands together

Noongar

Kaat, djerdim, boornitj, djenbiri

Kaat, djerdim, boornitj, djen-biri
 Boornitj djen-biri
 Kaat, djerdim, boornitj, djenbiri
 Boornitj djen-biri
 Ngaalak baaminy maar

Acknowledgement:

Words for this song by Iris Woods, Aboriginal Liaison Officer, Fremantle-Peel Education District Office





- **Prepare** flashcards of words in song (English one side, Noongar the other): kaat – head; djerdim – shoulder; boornitj – knee; djenbiri – toes; ngaalak – we; baaminy – clap/hit; maar – hand
- You may also use other songs known by students to adapt and ask Noongar language speakers to assist with Noongar versions.

Implementation

The suggestions below provide ideas for a series of lessons. Please feel free to develop and present the information in any way that suits your students' and timetabling requirements.

- **Prepare** class assembly item singing *Kaat, djerdim, boornitj, djenbiri* (Head, shoulders, knees and toes) in both English and Noongar.
- **Use** song chart to teach *Head, shoulders, knees and toes* in English, with actions. Depending on the stage of development of your students, you may ask students to draw each step and write names next to drawings.
- **Introduce** flashcards to teach Noongar words – ask your AIEO, or Noongar speaking person to co-teach this step and the next, and to demonstrate pronunciations before you or the students try to say the words in Noongar (you'll find some of the sounds aren't even in English!). Place the cards around the classroom to use for practice.
- **Use** song chart to teach *Kaat, djerdim, boornitj, djenbiri* in Noongar – with actions.
- **Practise** words incidentally throughout the day until all are well known.
- **Perform** the item at assembly with a prepared introduction by one of the students – if you have an Aboriginal student willing to do this, so much the better! In the intro, tell the school that the Noongar language is that of the traditional owners of the land on which your school is standing.

Further language activities

Use suggested resources to provide activities that reinforce the alphabet and practise letters for handwriting, while introducing a wide range of animals specific to Australia. Ask your Noongar speaking 'co-teacher' to provide the Noongar names of the animals and birds. Some ideas for activities are:

- **Read** relevant resources with your students to expand students' knowledge of Australian animals, and teach them Noongar words. You may also guide students to research traditional local Aboriginal people to find how they interacted with the animals and birds (totems, food sources ...).
- **Generate** phonics activities. For example, using the alphabet books, the 'E' page familiarises students with native animals and birds, like: emu, euro, echidna, egret, eel and eagle. Students may then sort into categories: 'birds' and 'animals'.
- **Use** resources for comprehension activities. *About Aboriginal People* contains a variety of information and its activities use a range of word study approaches (e. g. word sleuths ...). Working as a whole class, students read together then underline key words necessary to answer comprehension activities, before writing appropriate answers.
- **Make books** that name and illustrate mixed-up animals, for instance: posatoo (possum/cockatoo); cockum (cockatoo/possum); dingaroo (dingo/kangaroo) ...

ASSESSMENT

Teachers observe and record, as required, student to:

- learn words and songs in English;
- learn words and songs in Noongar;
- participate in class performance;
- complete activities successfully; and
- demonstrate increased knowledge of Australian animals.

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