



Names of parts of the environment 5: sand tray model



Number five in a series of five lessons, **Names of parts of the environment**, planned to provide students with opportunities to practise traditional Aboriginal words in context:

- Names of parts of the environment 1: environmental walk
- Names of parts of the environment 2: making posters
- Names of parts of the environment 3: wall mural
- Names of parts of the environment 4: barrier games
- **Names of parts of the environment 5: sand tray model**

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
✓		✓	✓	✓

TOPIC INFORMATION

PURPOSE

- To provide students with opportunities to learn words from another language.
- To provide students with an opportunity to explore their local environment from an Aboriginal perspective.
- To appreciate why understanding an Aboriginal perspective is important for all students (link to social responsibilities and Overarching Outcomes).

STUDENT OUTCOMES FROM THIS LESSON

- Students listen to the target language demonstrating understanding through non-verbal response, repetition, action or response in English.
- Students become aware that English was not the first language of Australia.
- Students develop a greater understanding of the difficulty of speaking another language.
- Students recognize the importance of one's language.
- Students are able to name vocabulary associated with the environment in English and in an Aboriginal language.





KEY BACKGROUND POINTS

- Numerous Aboriginal languages were spoken in Australia at the time of the first contact with non Aboriginal people. Many languages have been lost due to their verbal nature and the fact that Aboriginal people were forbidden from speaking their own languages. Government law which was aimed at assimilation prohibited any use of Aboriginal languages, and at times Aboriginal elders forbade public use of their language as they did not want it spoken in front of white people.
- Language and culture change to reflect changes in society.
- Some English words don't have literal Aboriginal language translations. Discussions of reasons for this (e.g. the traditional Aboriginal way of describing distances rather than using western units of measurement) provides insights into the way Aboriginal people perceived aspects of the world around them.

CULTURAL & PROTOCOL CONSIDERATIONS

It is vital to consult Aboriginal experts in your district (e.g. at school, in the community, District Education Office or Aboriginal Education Advisory Council) to learn correct protocols, words, pronunciation and spelling *before* teaching Aboriginal words.

Local language experts may include Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers (AIEOs) who should be involved in two-way teaching where they provide language knowledge and the teacher supplies teaching knowledge.

If an Aboriginal language program exists as a LOTE program it is important that the class teacher works closely with the LOTE teacher to integrate language across all learning areas. Students must have many opportunities throughout the day to practise new vocabulary. This is most important in areas where the Aboriginal language is not the students' first language.

As there may be Aboriginal students from different language groups in your class it is essential to check out this aspect with local Aboriginal people and find out the associated protocols. For instance, it may not be appropriate for some Aboriginal people to speak another group's language.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Sand tray model – creating in a sand tray a landscape that includes all local environmental features.

TEACHING RESOURCES

- flashcards of environmental words (from lesson 2 in this series, Making Posters)
- blank strips of paper on which students may copy Aboriginal vocabulary
- felt pens
- sand tray(s)
- collections of objects from first lesson, Environmental Walk
- digital camera
- popsticks
- student copies of **Learning Guide 1: Names of parts of the environment** (if required)

PREPARATION

Consult Aboriginal experts in your district (e.g. at school, in the community, District Education Office or Aboriginal Education Advisory Council) to learn correct protocols, words, pronunciation and spelling, *before* teaching Aboriginal words.

Plan your lessons with your school's AIEOs and LOTE teachers where possible – this lesson may need to be completed over two or three days, depending on time available.

Please note:

Where possible, include Aboriginal staff members, parents or community members to assist in this group activity. Throughout the activity, teacher, and other adults, should model the Aboriginal language, reinforcing words previously taught and incidentally introducing new words. Encourage students to use Aboriginal words as they talk about what they are doing.





LESSON STEPS

Whole class, teacher:

- **guides** discussion about the sand tray project;
- **brainstorms** and lists features in the local environment that they will include;
- **organises** class into small groups; and
- **discusses** tasks for each group (e. g. planning topography/landscape – first to work on sand tray – planning and making objects to go on different parts of the landscape ...)
- **allocates** roles for group members.

How you do this will depend on the resources you have available, and the way you organise students to take turns to work with the sand tray(s), while others are involved in other tasks required.

Working in small groups, students:

- use sand tray and sand to mould the landscape;
- use objects collected, and some custom-made objects, to complete the environment (additional features, using material found in the classroom, may include: grass trees, other flora and fauna they observed on their Environmental Walk that they couldn't bring back to the classroom);
- copy Aboriginal words onto cards and attach these to popsticks to make labels for the sand tray environment (use prepared flashcards where appropriate);
- use the digital camera to take photos of the environment they have created.

When completed, allow time for students to adapt and talk about what they have made.

ASSESSMENT

Use photos of the completed sand tray model, in conjunction with **Learning Guide 1: Names of parts of the environment**, for assessment and reporting to parents. Words known may be ticked and written, in Aboriginal language, near the photo to inform the parent of the progress their child is making.

Use the **Sand tray model** for peer tutoring and practising names of objects.

Learning Guide 1: Names of parts of the environment, an assessment rubric, is useful as an ongoing assessment tool. When you introduce additional words, add them to the grid. Use it to keep a record for each student indicating whether they can read, say and write each word in English and the Aboriginal language they are learning.

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