

Koorie Perspectives in Curriculum Bulletin: August-September 2021

This edition of the Koorie Perspectives in Curriculum Bulletin features:

- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day
- Walking Together & Aboriginal Early Childhood Protocols
- International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples
- National Science Week 2021
- Wurundjeri hero William Barak
- National Indigenous Literacy Day
- New Curriculum Resources

Focused on Aboriginal Histories and Cultures, the aim of the Koorie Perspectives Bulletin is to highlight Victorian Koorie voices, stories, achievements, leadership and connections, and suggest a range of activities and resources around key dates for starters. Of course any of these topics can be taught throughout the school year and we encourage you to use these [Bulletins](#) and VAEAI's [Koorie Education Calendar](#) for ongoing planning and ideas.

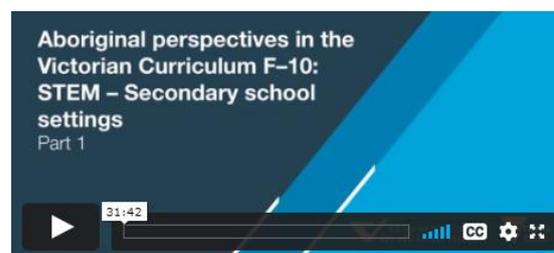
In this bulletin, you will find Victorian Curriculum links to Content Descriptions. Select the code and it will take you directly to the Victorian Curriculum P-12 site with additional elaborations.

We know that Aboriginal people are the best equipped and the most appropriate people to teach Indigenous knowledge. Therefore, wherever possible you should seek to involve your local Koorie community in education programs that involve Aboriginal perspectives. For some guidance about working with your local Koorie community to enrich your early childhood and schools teaching program, see VAEAI's [Protocols for Koorie Education in Primary and Secondary Schools](#).

During Reconciliation Week 2020, VAEAI launched two early childhood education resources, [Walking Together](#) and [Aboriginal Early Childhood Cultural Protocols](#). These resources will help educators create Koorie-inclusive learning environments that respect and reflect Aboriginal people, content and perspectives – benefitting the experiences of all children. More details in this bulletin.

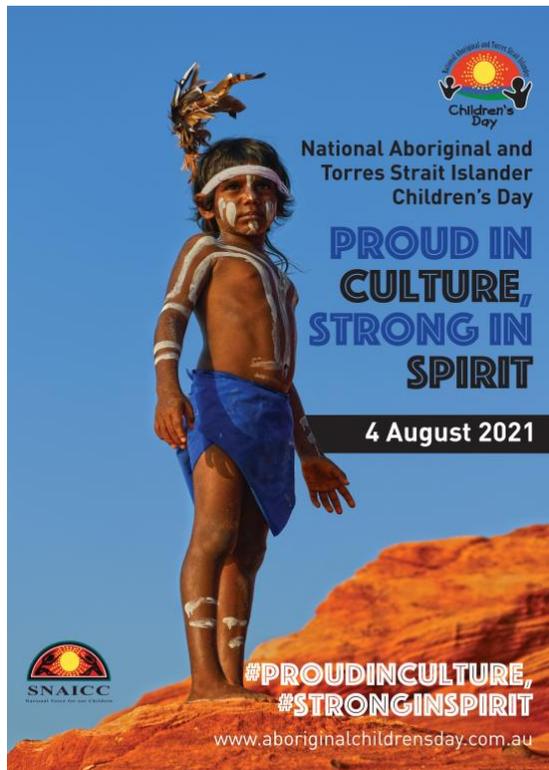
Both the Australian Curriculum and the Victorian Curriculum focus on cross-curricular priorities. **For a summary of key Learning Areas and Content Descriptions directly related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures within the Victorian Curriculum F-10**, go to the VCAA's guide: [Learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures](#).

In 2020, the VCAA in partnership with VAEAI ran a series of professional learning webinars: 'Making Visible: Aboriginal perspectives in the Victorian Curriculum F-10'. The aim was to provide teachers and the Koorie Education Workforce with a comprehensive program of professional learning webinars that covered how teachers could incorporate Aboriginal perspectives across different curriculum areas in both primary and secondary school settings. Advice was also provided about working with policies, protocols and teaching about First Nation peoples' perspectives in a localised and Victorian context. **Click on the video below to learn more.**



August

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day



"Proud in culture, strong in spirit"

National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day (NAICD) is held on 4 August each year to honour and celebrate the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children within family and community.

First held in 1988, the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) also uses this day to increase awareness in the wider community of important issues impacting on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. This year, we celebrate with the theme "Proud in culture, strong in spirit."

Embrace National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day 2021 and find innovative ways to mark this special day, whether at your early years' service, school or with your family at home.

Looking for some fun and creative cultural activities for your kids?



Explore SNAICC's brand-new website ahead of this year's National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day on 4 August.

The [dedicated website](#) provides children, families and early childhood educators with resources, activities and ideas to help you learn about and celebrate Children's Day.

[Download the deadly poster](#) and check out the Resources, Activities and very cool videos on the Children's Day site.





Hear more about National Children's Day from 2019 Ambassador Nanna, from the animated children's series *Little J & Big Cuz*.



One Fire Dancers, Scienceworks Children's Day 2019

Victorian Early Years Learning & Development Outcomes:

- 1: children have a strong sense of identity
- 2: children are connected with and contribute to their world
- 3: children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- 4: children are confident and involved learners
- 5: children are effective communicators

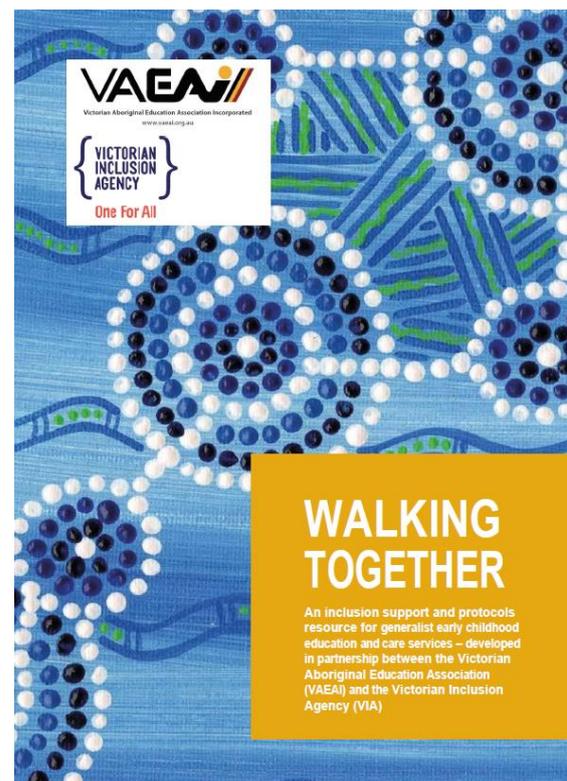
In particular, the VEYLDF recognises and respects Aboriginal cultures and their unique place in the heritage and future of Victoria. Learning about and valuing the place of Aboriginal people will enhance all Victorian children's sense of place in our community

Victorian Curriculum:

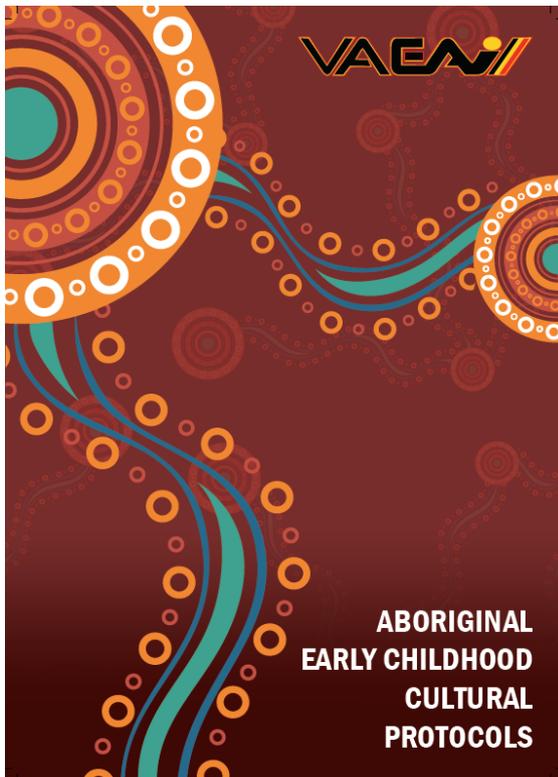
VCHHK076 Significance of days and weeks celebrated or commemorated in Australia and the importance of symbols and emblems, including Australia Day, ANZAC Day, Harmony Week, National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC week and National Sorry Day: *History 3-4*.

VAEI Early Childhood Resources: Walking Together & Aboriginal Early Childhood Protocols

During Reconciliation Week 2020, VAEI launched two new early childhood resources. [Walking Together](#) and [Aboriginal Early Childhood Cultural Protocols](#). These resources have been published to help educators create Koorie-inclusive learning environments that respect and reflect Aboriginal people, content and perspectives – benefitting the experiences of all children.



Walking Together provides an introductory overview of Koorie people, communities, customs and protocols. It is the culmination of insights from professionals working in Aboriginal education and includes resources and suggestions for practice.



Aboriginal Early Childhood Cultural Protocols was developed in response to requests for advice and direction on how to provide a welcoming educational environment for Victoria's Koorie communities. The Protocols outline the foundational principles, procedures and behaviours requested of the early childhood education and care sector in Victoria, in order to demonstrate respect to Koorie people.

9th August: International Day of the World's Indigenous People

The International Day of the World's Indigenous People is observed on August 9 each year to recognise the first United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations meeting in Geneva in 1982. The International Day of the World's Indigenous People aims to

promote and protect the rights of the world's indigenous populations.

There are an estimated 370 million indigenous people in the world, living across 90 countries. We make up less than 5 per cent of the world's population, but account for 15 per cent of the poorest. We speak an overwhelming majority of the world's estimated 7,000 languages and represent 5,000 different cultures. As Indigenous people,

'We are inheritors and practitioners of unique cultures and ways of relating to people and the environment. We have retained social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which we live.'

<http://www.un.org/en/events/indigenousday/>



The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by the General Assembly on 13 September 2007, by a majority of 144 states in favour, 4 votes against: Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States, and 11 abstentions: Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burundi, Colombia, Georgia, Kenya, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Samoa and Ukraine.

This was the culmination of more than 20 years of negotiation between the Indigenous peoples and governments of the world.

14 years have passed since the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted by the General Assembly. Since then, the four countries who voted against have reversed their position and now support the Declaration. The Australian Government announced its support for the Declaration in 2009.

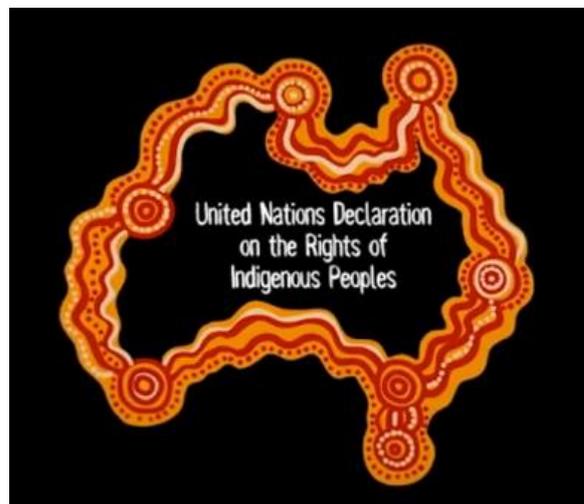
Today the Declaration is the most comprehensive international instrument on the rights of indigenous peoples globally. It establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world and it elaborates on existing human rights standards and fundamental freedoms as they apply to the specific situation of indigenous peoples.

The Declaration is particularly significant because indigenous peoples, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, were involved in its drafting.

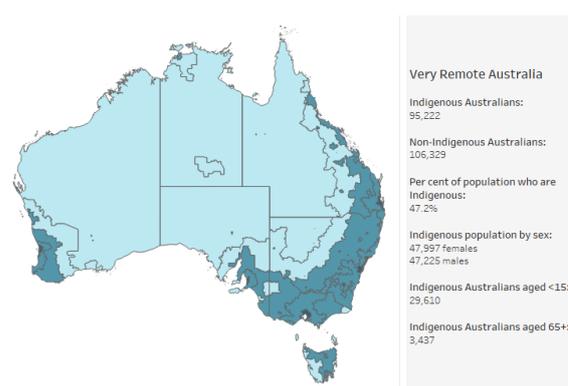
“The Declaration is the most comprehensive tool we have available to advance and protect the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. I use the Declaration as my guide as Social Justice Commissioner.”

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, June Oscar AO.

Watch the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples video and explore the dedicated website by selecting below.



Indigenous Australians live in all parts of the nation, from cities to remote tropical and desert areas. However, overall Indigenous Australians are more likely to live in urban and regional areas than remote areas.



Distribution of Indigenous Australians on 30 June 2016. Note darker regions indicate larger numbers of Indigenous Australians.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), in the 2016 census, an estimated 798,400 Australians identified as being Indigenous Australians (3.3% of the total Australian population).

Among the Indigenous Australian population in 2016, 91% identified as being of Aboriginal origin, 4.8% identified as being of Torres Strait Islander origin, and 4.0% were of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin (ABS 2018b, 2019a).

Did you know that the largest Aboriginal populations are in the cities? In the 2016 Census, just over one-third (35%) of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population lived in capital city areas. States with relatively high proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in capital cities include South Australia (54%) and Victoria (50%).

In contrast, 78% of the population who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin in the Northern Territory lived outside the Capital City area. Likewise, in Queensland, 71% of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population lived outside of the Capital City area.

Source: <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples/census-population-and-housing-counts-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-australians/latest-release>



In 2020, tens of thousands of Australians took part in protests calling for an end to Indigenous deaths in custody and highlighting racial inequality in this country.



Image: Erin Semmler (ABC) | Design: Daniel Mee (BTN)

In [Australian Black Lives Matter](#), Behind the News (BTN) focuses on those recent protests,

what they are all about and why many people see what is happening in the USA as a reflection of human rights struggles here in Australia.

Victorian Curriculum:

VCECD002: Explore the type of acts often considered right and those often considered wrong and the reasons why they are considered so: *Capabilities, Ethical Capability, F to Level 2, Decision Making and Actions.*

VCPSCSO039: Investigate human rights and discuss how these contribute to a cohesive community: *Capabilities, Personal and Social Capability Levels 7 – 8, Social Awareness and Management, Relationships and diversity.*

VCECU014: Explore the contested meaning of concepts including freedom, justice, and rights and responsibilities, and the extent they are and should be valued by different individuals and groups: *Capabilities, Ethical Capability, Levels 7 and 8, Understanding Concepts.*

VCPSCSO048: Acknowledge the importance of empathy and the acceptance of diversity for a cohesive community and reflect on the effectiveness of strategies for being respectful of diversity and human rights: *Capabilities, Personal and Social Capability Levels 7 – 8, Social Awareness and Management, Relationships and diversity.*

VCHHK153: Effects of the US civil rights movement and its influence on Australia: *History, Levels 9 and 10, The modern world and Australia, Rights and freedoms (1945 – the present).*

VCHHK156: Continuity and change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in securing and achieving civil rights and freedoms in Australia: *History, Levels 9 and 10, The modern world and Australia, Rights and freedoms (1945 – the present).*

VCCCC025: Identify how values can promote cohesion within Australian society, including the values of freedom, respect, inclusion, civility, responsibility, compassion, equality and a 'fair go': *Civics and Citizenship, Levels 7 and 8, Citizenship, Diversity and Identity.*

VCGGK152: Different ways of measuring and mapping human wellbeing and development, and how these can be applied to measure differences between places: *Geography, Levels 9 and 10, Geographies of human wellbeing.*

VCGGK154: Role of initiatives by international and national government and non-government organisations to improve human wellbeing in Australia and other countries: *Geography, Levels 9 and 10, Geographies of human wellbeing.*

VCGGK093: Differences in the demographic, economic, social and cultural characteristics of countries across the world: *Geography 5-6, Geographical Knowledge, Factors that shape places and influence interconnections.*

VCGGC103: Select and represent data and information in different forms, including by constructing appropriate maps at different scales that conform to cartographic conventions, using digital and spatial technologies as appropriate: *Geography 7-8 Geographical Concepts and Skills, Data and information.*



National Science Week is on from August 14-22

National Science Week is Australia's annual celebration of science and technology and thousands of individuals – from students to scientists to chefs and musicians – get involved, taking part in more than 1000 science events across the nation.

The Week provides an opportunity to acknowledge the contributions of Australian scientists to the world of knowledge. It also aims to encourage an interest in science pursuits among the general public, and to encourage younger people to become fascinated by the world we live in.

The 2021 schools theme is Food: Different by design.

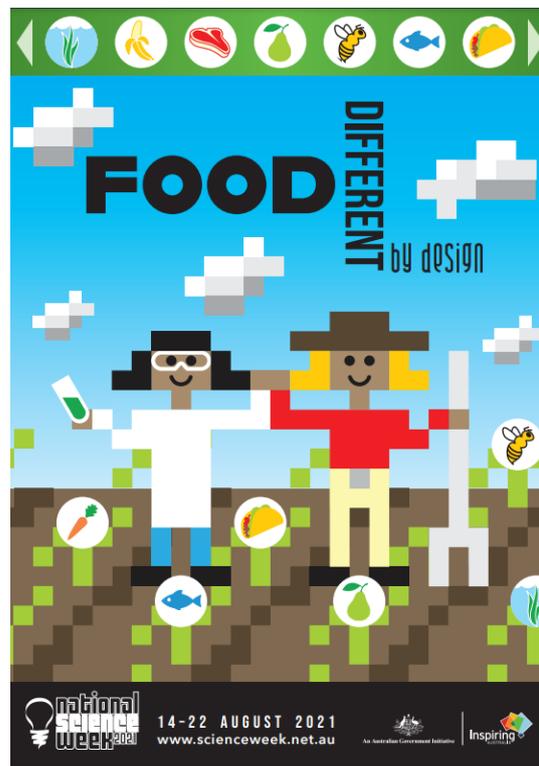
National Science Week is Australia's annual celebration of science and technology, and in 2021, the schools theme is Food: Different by Design. The theme offers teachers an opportunity to explore Australia's enormous contribution to food production and to learn more about the ways in which science and technology are continually shaping its future, in farming, nutrition and sustainability.

When exploring the topic of agriculture and food in Australia, we must also uncover its rich history in Indigenous culture and understand how Australia's traditional owners harnessed the land's natural resources in innovative and sustainable ways that would feed their communities whilst protecting country across generations.

In 2021, the Australian Science Teachers Association has produced an [Indigenous Resource Book](#), which includes perspectives on

the controversial bestseller publication by Bruce Pascoe, *The Dark Emu* as well as a range of resources that might interest students in early childhood, primary and secondary school settings, linked to the ACARA Science Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority elaborations and content for different year levels relevant to this year's theme. Food and agriculture are an integral part of the Australian Science Curriculum Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority. The ACARA content elaborations and teacher background information can be accessed via the following links: Foundation to Year 6: [ccp-tbi-f-6-ver5-online.pdf](#) , and Years 7 to 10: [ccp-tbi-7-10.pdf](#).

National Science Week 2021 is like no other, and there are heaps of ways to get involved. With Virtual tours, webcasts, talks, DIY experiments, quizzes, citizen science and competitions. Discover online and real-world activities you can experience from home throughout **Science Week 2021** and the remainder of the year, as well as the **Indigenous Science Experience** - a series of online presentations showcasing a wide range of Indigenous and Western science presented by Indigenous secondary students, Elders and community members and science outreach providers.



If you are looking for a taster, Aboriginal people have survived on bush food for more than 80,000 years. Over this time they have passed down from generation to generation a deep knowledge of Australian native ingredients and their myriad uses.

In recent times, Victoria has seen a marked increase in the use of native ingredients, with chefs at city and regional restaurants, cafes, food trucks and wineries exploring and celebrating these local flavours. While the influence of native ingredients varies, many Victorian kitchens feature these bush foods prominently and maintain their cultural integrity by being sourced and prepared by Aboriginal people.

For those who have a taste for bush food but don't know where to start, there are several Victorian eateries that pride themselves on showcasing native ingredients in their dishes, showcasing staple indigenous meats and plants, such as eel, which sustained Aboriginal people in Victoria for thousands of years. Learn more about what Aboriginal food is on show, and taste *Foods: Different by Design*.

Changes of state in materials like beeswax or resins?



Nearly 100 practical teaching examples for the Australian Science Curriculum have been released by ACARA. The suite of learning ideas relates to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority and aims to improve learning outcomes for all students.

The 95 examples (also labelled as elaborations) span the Science learning areas for Foundation to Year 10 and were developed with the assistance of ACARA's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory group and Taskforce, as well as Science and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum specialists.

'These elaborations ... are scientifically rigorous, demonstrating how Indigenous history, culture, knowledge and understanding can be incorporated into teaching core scientific concepts,' CEO Randall says.

The examples are for optional use by classroom teachers. Currently, background information is available for teachers of Years 7-10 Science which details the cultural and historical significance of each elaboration, and how it connects to the Science Curriculum. Similar background information will soon become available for F-6 educators.

The suggestions are highly practical. For example, for Year 3 students learning how a change of state between solid and liquid can be caused by adding or removing heat, ACARA suggests students look at the changes of state evident in materials used by Indigenous peoples, like beeswax or resins.

Students in Year 6 can investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' knowledge of the physical conditions needed for certain plants and animals to survive in order to learn how the growth and survival of living things are affected by the physical conditions of their environment.

And educators can explain the methods used by Indigenous Australians to convert toxic plants into edible food products in order to teach Year 10 students about the different types of chemical reactions to produce a range of products.

It is hoped that the resources will provide a more culturally responsive learning experience for Indigenous students and, ultimately, lead to better educational outcomes.

Think about a future topic or unit of work you're teaching: How could you integrate the histories and cultures of Indigenous people into this learning area?

Educators can access the new ACARA materials by clicking [this LINK](#).

Indigenous Science goes far Beyond Boomerangs and Spears



I am an Aboriginal science educator.

I have a love of the scientific method and all the amazing knowledge that exists within Western science, but I also have a huge amount of awe and fascination with all of the amazing scientific knowledge, technologies and processes that Indigenous peoples have developed over thousands of years.

Hear from [Joe Sambono](#), Jingili (NT) science educator, zoologist and Curriculum Specialist in Science and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education with the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority. [Here](#), Sambono reflects on the place of Indigenous science in today's education.

Australian Academy of Science Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Scientist Travelling Research Award

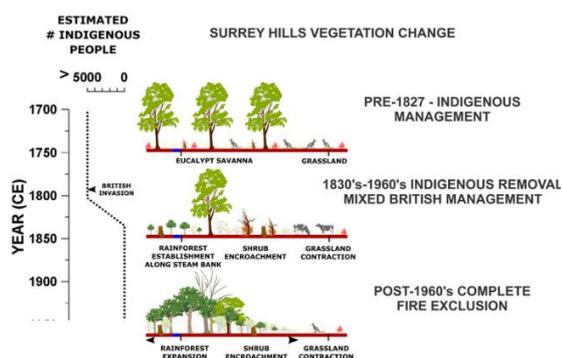


Indigenous scientist Dr Michael-Shawn Fletcher is interested in processes and events through time and specialises in geography, ecosystems, landscape and climatology. And Indigenous scientist and PhD student Frank Loban is passionate about managing marine resources. To further their research and work, both have been awarded the 2020 Australian Academy of Science Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Scientist Travelling Research Award for 2020.

Dr Fletcher plans to visit Udayana University in Bali to establish a research collaboration and to collect paleoclimatic data that will act as pilot data for another larger research grant proposal in 2020. Frank Loban will visit New Zealand to discuss and learn from fisheries management organisations how they are managing their fisheries, governance framework and indigenous interests. [Learn more here](#).



Using pollen, charcoal and dendrochronological (tree-age) analyses, Dr Fletcher's research has shown that the Australian landscape at the time of British invasion in the 18th century was a heavily constructed one - the product of millennia of active maintenance by Aboriginal Australians. Read about the [deep human imprint on the Australian landscape](#).



Frank Loban, a PhD student at James Cook University, will use the award to visit New Zealand and learn from members of Terra Moana New Zealand, the largest Maori-owned fisheries company in NZ, about their fisheries management and governance framework with the aim of applying this knowledge in managing the Torres Strait fisheries into the future.

“The key objective of my project is to investigate existing national and international research knowledge ... that have recognised Indigenous interests, how this knowledge interfaces with commercial enterprises, and sustains the health of the fisheries and the cultural traditions of the Indigenous people.”

The award recognises research in the natural sciences by outstanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early- and mid-career scientists and PhD students. It also supports the expansion and growth of each scientist's research networks and international knowledge exchange.

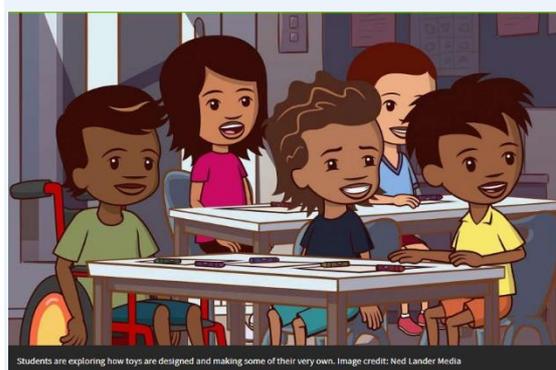
Navigate Science Week with Little J & Big Cuz as they take to the seas



Little J & Big Cuz is an animated children's series that follows two Aboriginal children who live with their nanna and lovable dog. The 13 episodes explore the unfamiliar world of school and how, with the help of their teacher Miss Chen, Little J and Big Cuz navigate their first years of school life.

In this regular blog, [Miss Chen](#) shares some of the F-2 resources she's been using in her classroom, which are all available to download for free via the [Little J & Big Cuz website](#).

Experience Science through an [exploration of Oceans](#), suitable for Foundation – Prep level, just right for Science Week. The dedicated website also has an [Educator Resource Page](#) with teaching resources.



Anniversary of the passing of William Barak on the 15th August 1903



William Barak known also as Beruk, was an extremely significant Wurundjeri activist, and cultural leader, as well as a prominent artist. He is featured in Melbourne [architecture](#) and signage, and his artwork is owned by public institutions and private collectors across the world.

Most significantly for Wurundjeri and all Australians, Barak's paintings depict ceremonies, cultural and spiritual life. He combined traditional Indigenous materials – like ochre and charcoal – with European techniques and manufactured paints, and was one of the few Indigenous artists in the 19th century who experimented with new materials: For an introduction and links to resources, see the State Library Victoria's [SLV site](#).

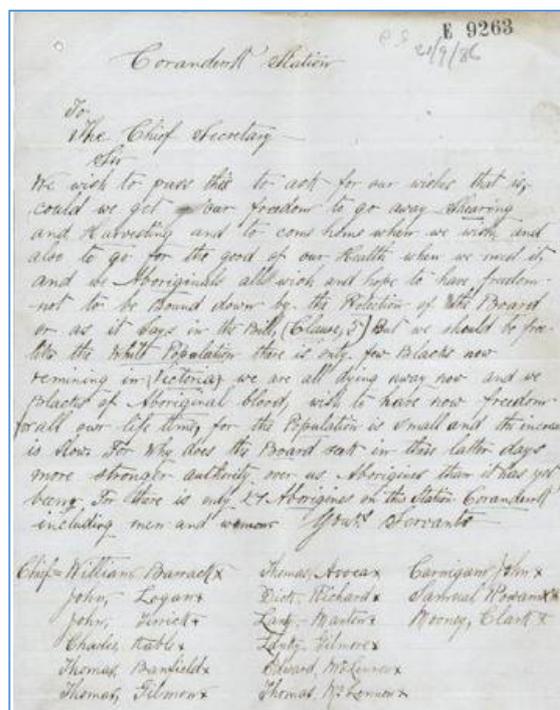
An inductee of the Victorian Aboriginal Honour Role in 2011, Barak is closely associated with Coranderrk, the Aboriginal settlement established near Healesville in 1863. He campaigned for its creation, contributed to its early success as a thriving, self-sufficient community, and was its indefatigable defender

until the end of his life. He saw Coranderrk as a way for the Kulin people to maintain a physical connection to their country; a connection he played a key role in educating non-Aboriginal people about.

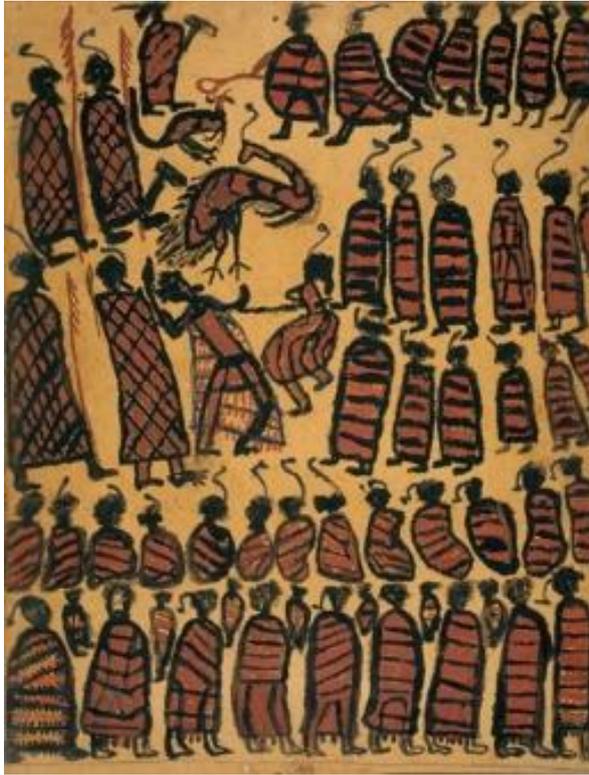
Culture Victoria features a brief essay, [William Barak : King of the Yarra](#) drawn from the booklet [William Barak - Bridge Builder of the Kulin](#) by Gibb Wettenhall published by Aboriginal Affairs Victoria.

Barak was educated at the Yarra Mission School in Narm (Melbourne), and was a tracker in the Native Police before, as his father had done, becoming ngurungaeta (clan leader). Known as energetic, charismatic and mild mannered, he spent much of his life at Coranderrk Reserve, a self-sufficient Aboriginal farming community in Healesville.

Barak campaigned to protect Coranderrk, worked to improve cross-cultural understanding and created many unique artworks and artefacts, leaving a rich cultural legacy for future generations.



Coranderrk petition - Activist William Barak and others sent this petition on behalf of the Aboriginal people of Coranderrk to the Victorian Government in 1886.



Ceremony, with wallaby and emu: This painting features a ceremony which depicts hunting, with wallaby and emu. William Barak was ngurunggaeta (a clan leader) of the Woiwurung (Wurundjeri).

Learn more about William Barak's life, political involvement, art, homeland language and mob through Culture Victoria's [site](#), and click on the image of *Ceremony, with wallaby and emu* for a range of perspectives on William Barak.

The National Gallery of Victoria produced this [Education Resource](#) to accompany the exhibition *Remembering Barak* (2003) which commemorated the life and work of the great Ngurungaeta senior leader Barak. The illustrated resource explores Barak's life and work and includes a detailed discussion of his subject matter and technique, and his life at Coranderrk Station. A series of questions help students examine Barak's imagery.

[Download](#) Yorta Yorta, Jaara artist Lou Bennet's interview of Wurundjeri Elder Aunty Joy Wandin-Murphy about William Barak and study it with your students. Consider how interviews of Aboriginal people by Aboriginal people draw out particular personal reflections and cultural information.



In 2016, a painting entitled *Ceremony* by William Barak was auctioned in London. Descendants of Barak and Wurundjeri Council attempted to raise funds through crowdfunding in order to purchase the painting and return it home. The painting sold to a private collector for over half a million dollars, double the estimated amount!

"That painting there showed you how we painted ourselves, it showed you the clothes we wore, it showed possum skin drums. How many people knew our women played possum skin drums? It was so important the stories there. It's just another little bit of my culture, another little bit of my people that someone has taken from me."

Read the report from [The Conversation](#) and discuss the significance of this sale for Wurundjeri people.



Victorian Curriculum:

VCCCC006: Investigate why and how people participate within communities and cultural and social groups: *Civics and Citizenship, Levels 3 and 4, Citizenship, Diversity and Identity.*

VCHHK092: The role that a significant individual or group played in shaping and changing a colony: *History, Levels 5 and 6, The Australian colonies.*

VCECU015: Investigate why ethical principles may differ between people and groups, considering the influence of cultural norms, religion, world views and philosophical thought: *Capabilities, Ethical Capability, Levels 7- 8, Understanding Concepts.*

VCHHK134: Intended and unintended causes and effects of contact and extension of settlement of European power(s), including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples: *History, Levels 9 and, The making of the modern world | Australia and Asia.*

VCAVAR024: Respond to visual artworks, including artworks by local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, by describing subject matter and ideas: *Visual Arts, Levels 1 and 2, Respond and Interpret*

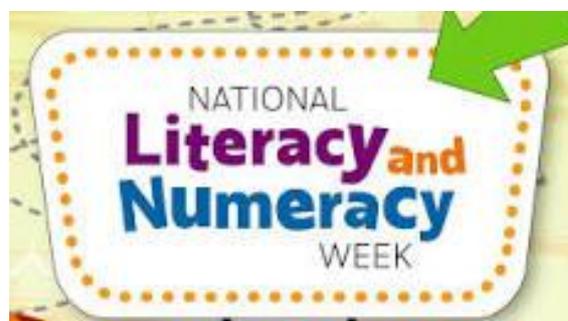
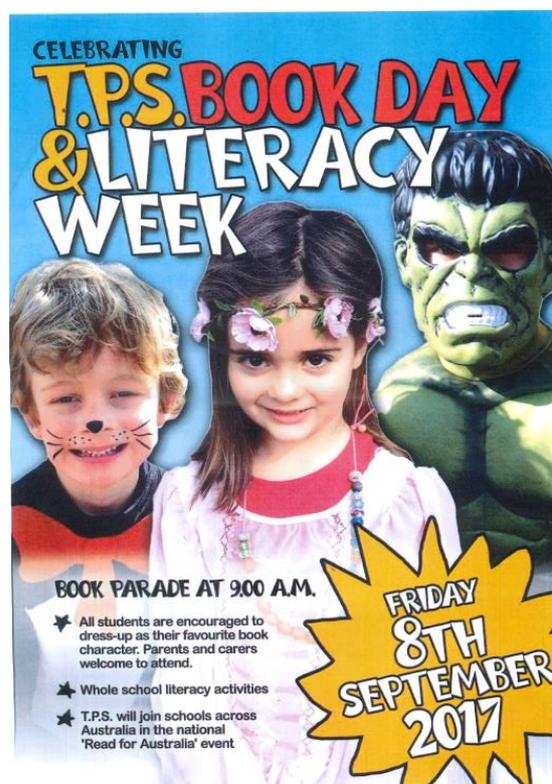
VCAVAE034: Explore how artists use materials, techniques, technologies and processes to realise their intentions in art works: *Visual Arts 7 and 8, Explore and Express Ideas.*

VCAVAE041: Explore how artists manipulate materials, techniques, technologies and processes to develop and express their intentions in art works: *Visual Arts 9-10, Explore and Express Ideas.*

VCAVAR045: Analyse and interpret artworks to explore the different forms of expression, intentions and viewpoints of artists and how they are viewed by audiences: *Visual Arts, 9 and 10, Respond and Interpret.*



September



National Literacy and Numeracy Week has been held in the first week of September annually. The Week helped to raise awareness of the importance of literacy and numeracy at school and beyond.

Indigenous Literacy Day continues to be celebrated on the first Wednesday in September annually, and aims to raise funds to raise literacy levels and improve the lives and opportunities of Indigenous Australians living in remote and isolated regions. This year, Indigenous Literacy Day is on Wednesday 2nd September.



In 2021, The Indigenous Literacy Foundation (ILF) is celebrating language and literacy in remote communities and the immense opportunities that positive community-led engagement can provide.

Check out the [Indigenous Literacy Foundation](http://ild.org.au) website for events and activity suggestions, a host of resources and an online celebration of stories and language, going live from 9am Wednesday September 1.

For a great selection of books to be poured over and read any day by Australian Indigenous authors see our dedicated resource [For the Love of Reading](#)



Hold a fundraiser leading up to or following Indigenous Literacy Day and make a donation to the Foundation – some inspiring examples can be found on their website.

There are many ways to get involved in 2021, but when it comes to Indigenous Literacy, we believe that **EVERY DAY** should be about Indigenous literacy. There’s a host of fantastic books written and illustrated by Aboriginal people across the nation.

A record seven Indigenous authors and illustrators were shortlisted from a for this year's Children's Book Council of Australia awards.

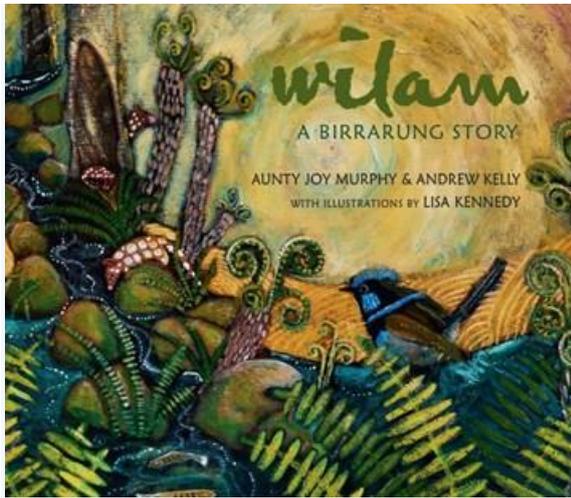


Bruce Pascoe's *Young Dark Emu: A Truer History* leads contemporary Indigenous perspectives on universal themes of identity and place, while three of the six books shortlisted in the award category of new illustrators are by Indigenous creators published by Broome-based Aboriginal publisher Magabala Books.

Magabala publisher Rachel Bin Salleh said there was a growing appetite in Australia and globally for Indigenous children's stories.

According to the [Sydney Morning Herald](#), Wurundjeri Elder and Author Aunty Joy Murphy and artist Lisa Kennedy, whose collaboration *Welcome to Country* was a 2017 children's picture book hit, impressed judges again with their "breathtakingly beautiful tribute to the Yarra River" in *Wilam: A Birrarung Story*, flowing with Woiwurrung language words for the flourishing riverside flora and fauna, co-authored by Andrew Kelly.

Following are some of the books shortlisted.



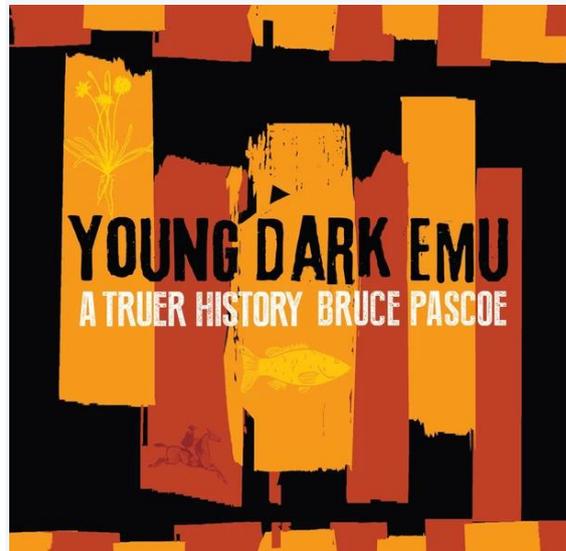
Wilam: A Birrarung Story is one day on a vital, flourishing river. As ngua rises, Bunjil soars over mountain ash, flying higher and higher as the wind warms. Below, Birrarung begins its long winding path down to palem warren, wilam – home.

Yarra River-keeper Andrew Kelly joins award-winning picture book duo Aunty Joy Murphy and Lisa Kennedy to tell the Indigenous and geographical story of Melbourne's beautiful Yarra River, from its source to its mouth; from its pre-history to the present day.

Aunty Joy Murphy is a respected Wurundjeri Elder and author of the multi-award winning children's book [Welcome To Country: A Traditional Aboriginal Ceremony](#). Andrew Kelly is the Yarra Riverkeeper, part of an international organisation of Riverkeepers. He has written numerous books for children and adults.

Illustrator Lisa Kennedy is a descendant of the Trawlwoolway People on the NE coast of Tasmania. Lisa was born in Melbourne and as a child lived close to the Maribyrnong River. Here she experienced the gradual restoration of the natural river environment alongside cultural regeneration and reclamation.

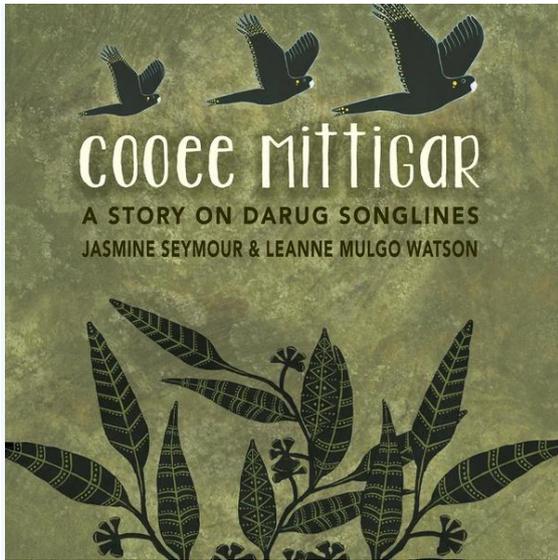
Published April 2019, by Black Dog Books of [Walker Books](#).



Winner of the 2020 Australian Booksellers Association Kids' Reading Guide Children's Book of the Year, [Young Dark Emu - A Truer History](#) by Bruce Pascoe is a journey.

Following the huge success of Dark Emu (2014), Bruce Pascoe has brought together the research and compelling first-person accounts in a book for younger readers. Using the accounts of early European explorers, colonists and farmers, Bruce Pascoe compellingly argues for a reconsideration of the hunter-gatherer label for pre-colonial Aboriginal Australians. He allows the reader to see Australia as it was before Europeans arrived – a land of cultivated farming areas, productive fisheries, permanent homes, and an understanding of the environment and its natural resources that supported thriving villages across the continent.

[Young Dark Emu - A Truer History](#) asks young readers to consider a different version of Australia's history pre-European colonisation.



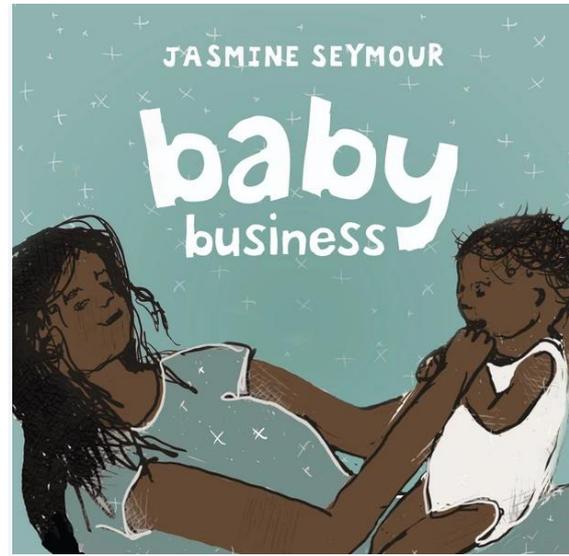
Cooee Mittigar, meaning Come Here Friend, is an invitation to yana (walk), on Darug Country, around Parramatta Sydney in NSW.

Cooee mittigar. Tread softly on our lands. Know that this dreaming was here. Is still here. Will be forever.

In this picture book, Darug creators Jasmine Seymour and Leanne Mulgo Watson tell a story on Darug Songlines, introducing children and adults-alike to Darug Nura (Country) and language.

Greeted by Mulgo, the black swan, readers are welcomed to Nura. Journeying through the seasons, Mulgo describes the land, skyscape, birds, animals and totems. It is a gentle guide to how Darug people read the seasons, knowing when it is time to hunt and time to rest. It is also an appeal to remember, offering new ways of seeing and reading the lands of the surrounding Sydney region.

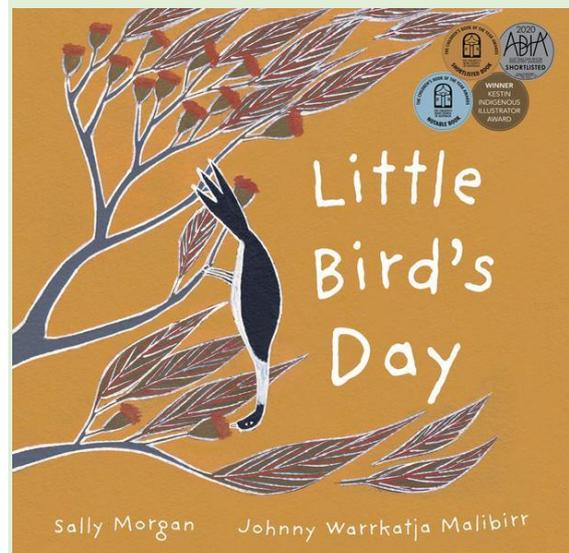
With Darug language interspersed with English and an extensive glossary throughout, Cooee Mittigar presents an important tool for learning, told as a tender story with exquisite illustrations. It is Jasmine and Leanne's wish that with this book, everyone will know that the Darug mob are still here and still strong.



Warm smoke from the fire on your mouth. Keep our language on your tongue. Our words are the song of our ancestors and show the pathway to Dreaming.

Baby Business tells the story of a Darug baby smoking ceremony that welcomes baby to country. The smoke is a blessing – it will protect the baby and remind them that they belong. This beautiful ritual is recounted in a way young children will relate to and is enhanced by gentle illustrations.

Central to this stunning book is a message of connection to Country and the need to care for it.



[Little Bird's Day](#) by renowned Aboriginal author Sally Morgan and illustrated by award-winning artist Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr is a simple, universal story of a day in the life of Little Bird as she sings the world alive, flies with Cloud, travels with Wind, nestles with Moon and dreams of flying among the stars.

Sally Morgan's beautiful words and Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr's sensitive artwork combine to make this a beautiful, distinctive publication with global appeal.

Illustrator Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr was the winner of the inaugural Kestin Indigenous Illustrator Award in 2017. A Yolŋu man from the Ganalbingu clan he is known for his paintings of Ganalbingu song lines as well as his mother's Wāgilak clan stories. Johnny lives in the remote East Arnhem Land community of Gapuwiyak, where he is Chair of the Gapuwiyak Arts and Cultural Centre.

Illustrating the manuscript of author and illustrator Sally Morgan, Johnny worked with Magabala Books to bring his fine-art aesthetic, traditional motifs and quirky sense of humour to *Little Bird's Day*. A simple, universal story of a day in the life of Little Bird as she sings the world alive, *Little Bird's Day* is now a best-selling 2019 release.

'When I heard I had won the award I felt really proud with my whole family. I like it that kids can learn reading and see my artwork. I hope kids around Australia will like this book.' - Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr.



Pictured: Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr's winning illustrations as published in 'Little Bird's Day'.

A must for young readers and dancers is children's book *Dance with Me* by Gunai Kurnai, Yorta Yorta, Dja Dja Wurrung, Gunditjmara, and Wiradjuri author and educator Leann Graham.

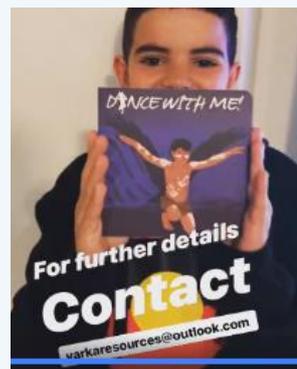


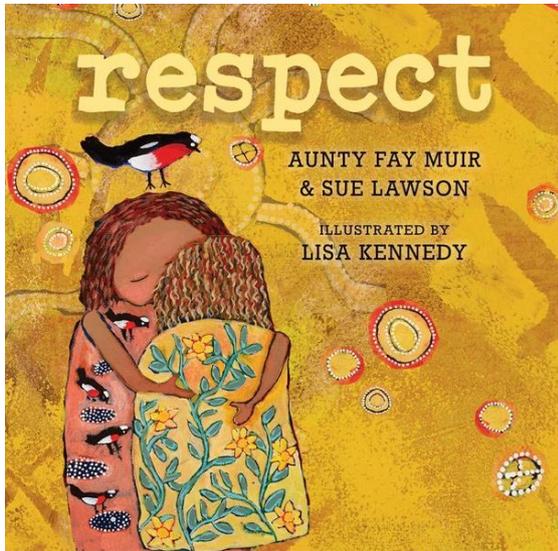
Dance with Me takes readers through a variety of animal dance moves, shared by a Koorie child who loves to dance, and introduces readers to Aboriginal cultural storytelling in a fun and interactive way.

Mother to four young children and a qualified early childhood educator, this is Leann Graham's first children's book, entirely self-published and released under her own label, Yarka Resources. Yarka is a Yorta Yorta and Bangerang word, meaning children.

Dance with Me introduces readers to Aboriginal cultural storytelling in a fun and interactive way. It is sure to be the first of many engaging and educational releases from Leann Graham and Yarka Resources.

Dance with Me is available directly from the author through Yarka Resources.





Boon Wurrung author Aunty Fay Stewart-Muir whispers soft and heartfelt messages in her latest children's books

Respect by Boon Wurrung Elder and teacher Aunty Fay Stewart-Muir and Sue Lawson, illustrated by Trawlwoolway artist Lisa Kennedy is the first title in the 'Our Place' series of four children's picture books by Magabala Books which welcome and introduce children to important elements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

Respect whispers a soft and heartfelt message about the basic cultural principle that informs all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nations throughout Australia. **Respect** is about a way of life that is older than flickering stars, about stories that shimmer through tall grasses, and redgum leaves that tumble to a parched and red earth. It teaches children the importance of family who show the way and how we need to listen, learn and share.

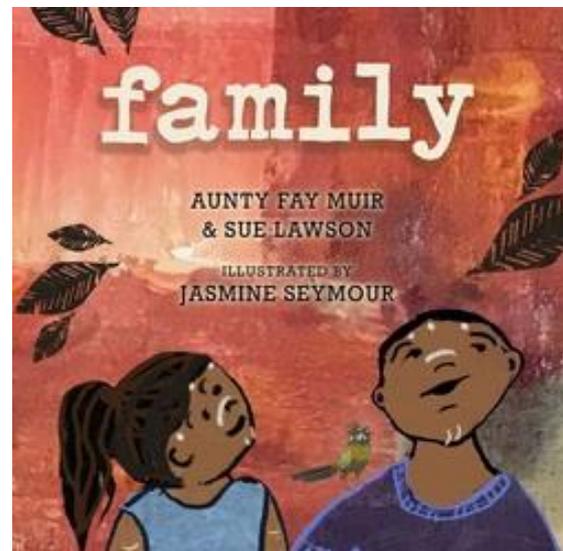
This eloquent and delicate story shows young and old alike, what **Respect** looks like for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

New off the presses **Family** by the same team. **Family** is thoughtful contemplation for

all to learn the different ways that family makes us whole.

This beautifully illustrated children's picture book shows everyone that 'family' can be about heart and home; an endless sky; stories and songs. It 'learns' us how to be with each other and with Country. Families come in all shapes and sizes, and this remarkably simple story teaches us all, that family can be many things.

This is the second book from the **Our Place** series, that introduces young minds to First Nations' cultural philosophies that Aunty Fay Muir, a Boon Wurrung Elder holds close to her heart.

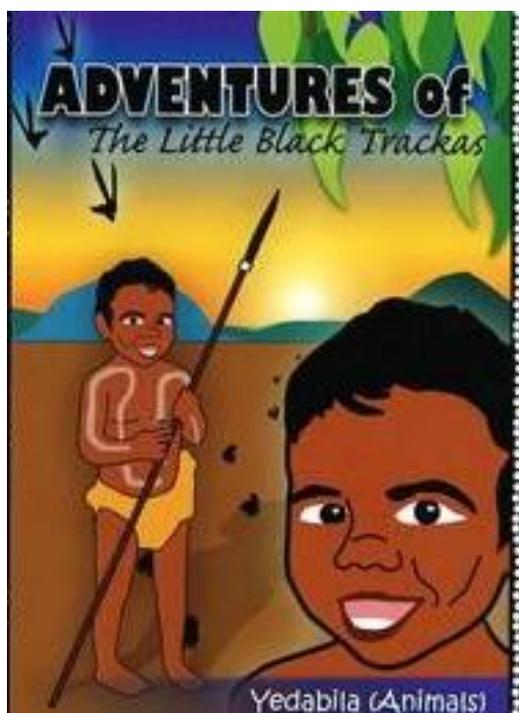


Throughout the year, explore a range of Aboriginal literature with your students. Children's stories like *TomTom*, fiction, plays, poetry, essays, and autobiographies like *The Black Swan: A Koorie Woman's Life* by Gunai Kurnai author and artist Eileen Harrison.

The Black Swan charts the way the policy of assimilation impacted on Eileen's family at Lake Tyers and her emerging talent as a painter.

With much younger students, focus on stories such as those suggested on the [Better Beginnings](#) site: [Deadly books for little kids](#).

Also check out the adventures of [The Little Black Trackas](#) by Victorian Bangerang educator and author Esme Bamblett.

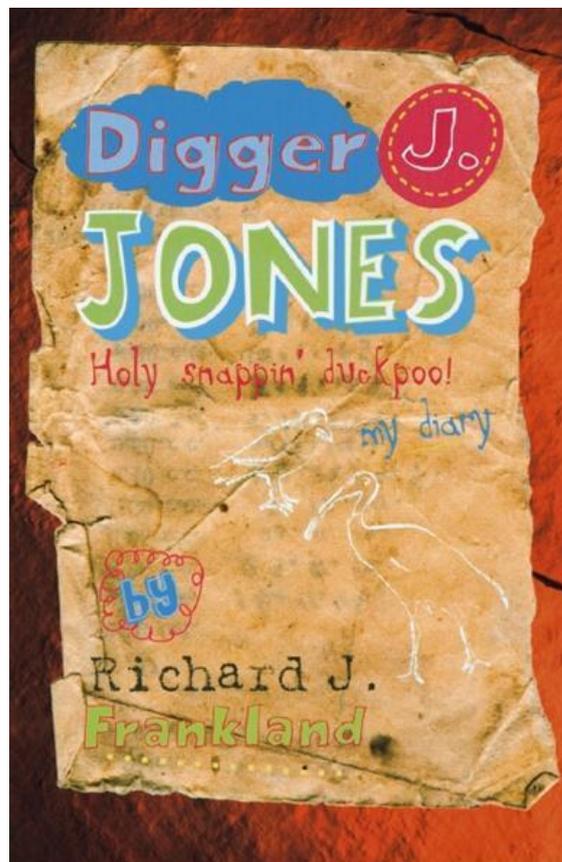


With older students study the highly readable novel [Digger J. Jones](#) by prominent Gunditjmara author Richard Frankland.

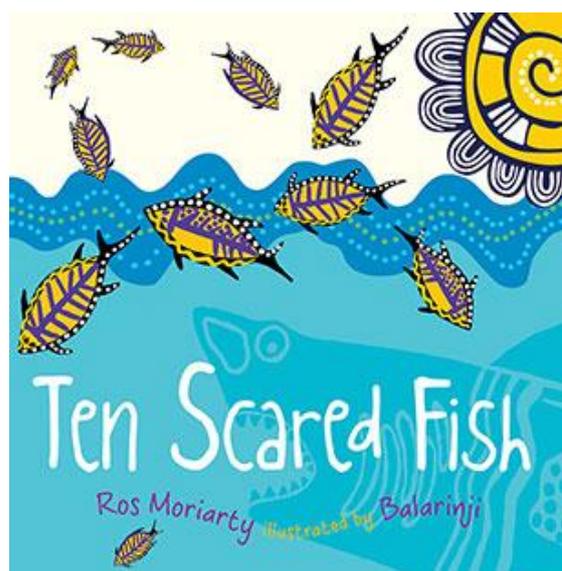
[Digger J. Jones Teaching notes](#) offer a range of class discussion points. Told in diary form, *Digger J. Jones* tells the story of Digger - an Aboriginal boy caught up in the events of the 1960s and the lead up to the 1967 Referendum which officially counted Aboriginal people in Australia as citizens in the eyes of the Federal Government.

Source or download a copy of [Nyernila: Listen Continuously – Aboriginal Creation Stories of Victoria](#) for a range of Victorian creation stories told by Traditional Owners.

The Macquarie Pen [Anthology of Aboriginal Literature](#), edited by Wiradjuri (NSW) writer Anita Heiss and Peter Minter is worth exploring with older students.



The Pen Anthology includes journalism, petitions and political letters from both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as well as major works that reflect the blossoming of Aboriginal poetry, prose and drama from the mid-twentieth century onwards.



Ten Scared Fish is an animal counting book with a difference. Following the river to the sea, the reader meets and counts the animals until finally ten little fish meet a big scary shark! By Ros Moriarty, author of *Listening to Country*, and founder of a non-profit organisation, Indi Kindi, supporting pre-literacy education.

Five Indigenous female writers who should be on school reading lists.

According to Wiradjuri writer, activist and social commentator [Anita Heiss](#), as we move into appropriately embedding Indigenous perspectives into the ... curriculum, and we increasingly recognise the need to move away from a homogenous reading experience, these are the women writers and their works that Australian educators in particular (secondary and tertiary) should be adding to their reading lists and class discussions. Here is a selection of the more powerful novels that should be considered for inclusion:

Mullumbimby — Melissa Lucashenko (2014)

Set in the northern NSW town of the same name, this is an emotionally powerful and impossible-to-put-down read. Through its main characters Jo Breen and her lover, the gorgeous Two Boy Jackson, readers get a glimpse into the complex meaning of connection to country, Bundjalung country specifically. Their relationship is offset against a story about native title, and the difficulties faced by many if not most claimants today, especially on the east coast that bore the brunt of colonisation. The novel has a raw honesty and is dotted with shocking but hilarious one-liners.

Home — Larissa Behrendt (2004)

Home won the David Unaipon Award in 2002 and the Commonwealth Writers' Prize in the South-East Asia region three years later. It is the story of three generations of removed children in NSW. Also recommended is Behrendt's second novel, *Legacy*, for a basic understanding of the meaning of sovereignty and the history of land rights.

The Boundary — Nicole Watson (2009)

Set in Brisbane's West End, *The Boundary* has everything: native title, community activism, black bureaucrats, police thuggery and black deaths in custody, infidelity, and racism – all

wrapped up in a multi-murder mystery. Eloquenty written by a first-time novelist, Birri-Gubba, Yugembeh lawyer Nicole Watson, it won the *David Unaipon Award* in 2009.

Mazin' Grace — Dylan Coleman (2012)

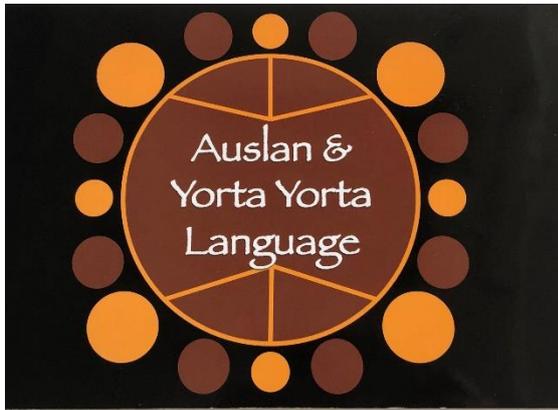
Coleman won the David Unaipon Award in 2011 with this, a fictionalised account of her mother's childhood at the Koonibba Lutheran Mission in 1940s and 1950s South Australia. It is one of the few novels by a First Nations writer that embeds her traditional language within the text.

Butterfly Song — Terri Janke (2005)

Janke's work is pretty much my idea of the 'great Australian novel'. It covers the geography from Sydney to Cairns and the Torres Strait, and manages to be a love story, crime novel, legal lesson, and a comment on contemporary Indigenous Australians who live in cities, go to university and contribute to every part of the nation's society. And it's a treasure trove of eloquent writing.

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/australia-culture-blog/2014/jul/08/five-indigenous-female-writers-who-should-be-on-school-reading-lists>





Auslan & Yorta Yorta Language

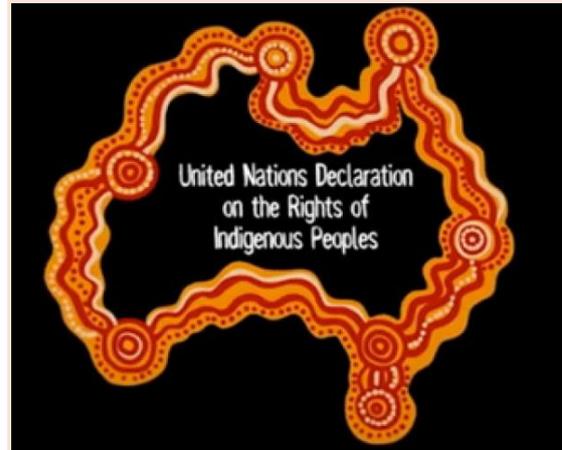
Aunty Merle Miller is a strong and proud Yorta Yorta woman, mother, grandmother, sister, aunty, cousin, friend and community member. She has worked as a teacher, early childhood educator, community development officer and more recently as a writer.

In her beautifully produced tri-lingual book *Auslan and Yorta Yorta Language*, we see Merle's granddaughter Pearl sign commonly used words and expressions in Yorta Yorta language and English, using Auslan. Published with the support of the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages (VACL), *Auslan & Yorta Yorta Language* is available directly from the author. Enquiries can be made through VAEAI.



Anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by the General Assembly on **Thursday, 13 September 2007**.



QUIZZES

Time to test your knowledge? Try these [quizzes](#) from Creative Spirits.

 <p>Aboriginal Australia Quiz: Test your knowledge Test your knowledge about Aboriginal Australia with the following 10 quiz questions. ...</p>	 <p>Are you an Aboriginal movie buff? Take this 5-question quiz and check if you are in the know about Aboriginal movies!</p>
<p>MYTH Do you spread Aboriginal myths? Take the quiz to find out if you perpetuate common myths about Aboriginal culture!</p>	 <p>Aboriginal population basics: How do you stack up? Many people only know outdated (if any) statistics about Aboriginal population. Are y...</p>
 <p>How much of an Australian politician are you? How much of an Australian politician is in you? Take this 5-question quiz to find out...</p>	 <p>Would you pass the Aboriginal Studies HSC? Check if you have the answers to the Aboriginal Studies multiple-choice section of th...</p>

Victorian Curriculum:

Issue #5 Koorie Perspectives in Curriculum Bulletin is dedicated to Koorie literature. Most themes and topics from the curriculum can be deeply explored through literature written by Aboriginal writers – this is how to best learn about Koorie Perspectives. The following content descriptors are just a start.

Geography

VCGGK052 The Countries/Places that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people belong to in the local area: *Geography Level D: Places and our connections to them.*

VCGGK068 Natural, managed and constructed features of places, their location and how they change
Elaboration: identifying constructed features such as eel traps and exploring activities in local rivers and lakes:
Geography F-2: Places and our connections to them.

VCGGK080 The many Countries/Places of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples throughout Australia, and the custodial responsibility they have for Country/Place, and how this influences views about sustainability: *Geography 3-4: Diversity and significance of places and environments.*

VCGGK082 Types of natural vegetation and the significance of vegetation to the environment, the importance of environments to animals and people, and different views on how they can be protected; the use and management of natural resources and waste, and different views on how to do this sustainably: *Geography 3-4: Diversity and significance of places and environments.*

VCGGK083 Similarities and differences in individuals' and groups' feelings and perceptions about places, and how they influence views about the protection of these places: *Geography 3-4: Diversity and significance of places and environments.*

VCGGK120 Spiritual, cultural and aesthetic value of landscapes and landforms for people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, that influence the significance of places, and ways of protecting significant landscapes: *Geography 7-8: Landforms and Landscapes.*

History

VCHHK078 The diversity and longevity of Australia's first peoples and the significant ways Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are connected to Country and Place (land, sea, waterways and skies) and the effects on their daily lives: *History 3 – 4: First contacts.*

VCHHK105 How physical or geographical features influenced the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' communities, foundational stories and land management practices: *History 7 - 8: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures.*

VCHHK106 The significant beliefs, values and practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures including trade with other communities, causes and effects

of warfare, and death and funerary customs: *History 7 – 8: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures.*

VCHHK094 The different experiences and perspectives of Australian democracy and citizenship, including the status and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, migrants, women, and children: *History 5-6: Australia as a nation.*

VCHHK155 Effects of methods used by civil rights activists to achieve change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the role of one individual or group in the struggle: *History 9 – 10: Rights and freedoms (1945 – the present).*

VCHHK153 Effects of the US civil rights movement and its influence on Australia for rights and freedoms to national attention: *History 9-10: Rights and freedoms (1945 – the present).*

VCHHK156 Continuity and change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in securing and achieving civil rights and freedoms in Australia: *History 9-10: Rights and freedoms (1945 – the present).*

VCECU014 Explore the contested meaning of concepts including freedom, justice, and rights and responsibilities, and the extent they are and should be valued by different individuals and groups: *Ethical Capability: 7 and 8: Understanding Concepts.*

Auslan

VCASF010 Explore ideas of identity, social groupings, relationship, space and place, and how these relate to the Deaf community Auslan: *First Language Learner F-2, Communicating, Identity.*

VCASFU162 Explore connections between identity and cultural values and beliefs and the expression of these connections in Auslan: *Auslan: Second Language Learner 3-4: Understanding, Role of language and culture.*

VCASFC134 Translate words used in everyday contexts from Auslan into English and vice versa: *Auslan: Second Language Learner F-2: Communicating, Translating.*

Dance

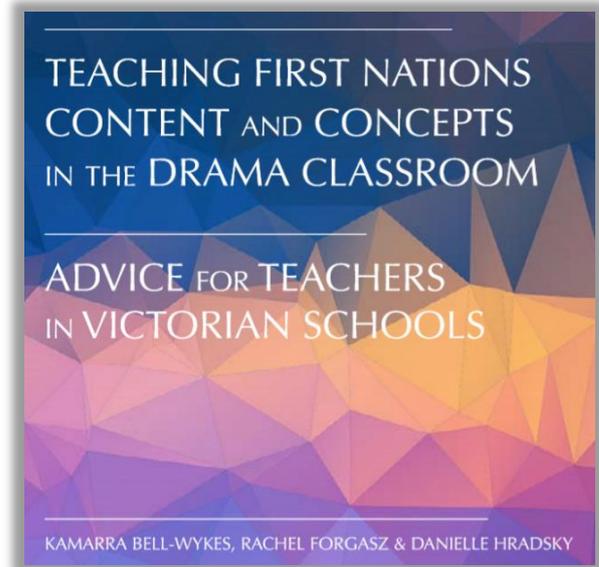
VCADAR024 Identify where people can experience dance in the local community, for example, talking with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people about how dance sustains and communicates cultural knowledge: *Dance 1-2, Respond and Interpret.*

VCADAD026 Use choreographic devices to organise dance sequences, and practise body actions and technical skills: *Dance 3-4, Dance Practices.*

VCADAR028 Identify how the elements of dance and production elements are used to express ideas in dance they make, perform and view, including in dances from local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples: *Dance 3-4, Respond and Interpret.*

WHAT'S NEW?

Should I refer to First Nations peoples, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Aboriginal Australians, or Indigenous Australians? *It depends who you ask.* Is it appropriate for students to perform traditional dances or ceremonies within the performance? Is it ok to cast non-Indigenous students as First Nations characters? Why can't you just give me straight forward answers? *Because there are none.*



Through a simple question and answer format, **TEACHING FIRST NATIONS CONTENT and CONCEPTS in the DRAMA CLASSROOM: ADVICE for TEACHERS in VICTORIAN SCHOOLS** details the answers to these and many more questions common in the teaching of Aboriginal histories and cultures. The use of artefacts and props, language, themes and concepts to explore are all covered.

In particular, this landmark resource addresses questions about embedding First Nations content and perspectives in the Drama classroom. There are many ways you can do this, including seeing performances by First Nations artists, studying plays by First Nations playwrights, and devising work about aspects of Australia's past, present, and future. Whichever approaches you choose, this resource is intended to support you to be a positive presence at the cultural interface.

TEACHING FIRST NATIONS CONTENT and CONCEPTS in the DRAMA CLASSROOM was developed through an ongoing collaboration between ILBIJERRI Theatre Company, Drama Victoria, and Monash University. It was co-authored by Kamarra Bell-Wykes, Rachel Forgasz, and Danielle Hradsky.

Kamarra Bell-Wykes (Yagera/Butchulla and ILBIJERRI Education and Learning Manager 2014-2018) began working on this project in 2015 after fielding countless calls from teachers seeking advice about exploring First Nations content in the drama classroom. Questions about devised performance had not really been addressed in Drama Australia's education guidelines, and while there were existing protocols for professional performing arts, Kamarra recognised that school-based drama and theatre contexts presented quite different potential problems and possibilities. Through Drama Victoria, Kamarra surveyed Victorian Drama teachers, asking about their areas of confidence and their concerns about teaching First Nations content, perspectives, and performance conventions. She also established an ILBIJERRI Advisory Group of First Nations performing artists. The group composition invited multiple perspectives and included the voices of performing artists at different career stages, working across multiple art forms, and in diverse contexts. Their brief was to consider teachers' survey responses, and to develop advice about teaching First Nations content and performing First Nations plays in school contexts. Over the years through consultations and trials, work continued.

In December 2019 TEACHING FIRST NATIONS CONTENT and CONCEPTS in the DRAMA CLASSROOM was unofficially launched at the Drama Australia National Conference, and in February 2020, was presented to a meeting of the VAEAI Schools Specialist Sub-Committee, in the very same room where the original ILBIJERRI Advisory Group had convened for its inaugural meeting back in 2015, and in March, 2020 was subsequently presented to a meeting of the full VAEAI Victorian Representative Council, and officially endorsed by the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc.

New videos take students on virtual agriculture tours

Victoria's own world heritage-listed Budj Bim National Heritage Landscape was a natural choice for filming part of a new video series produced by the VCAA that takes VCE Agricultural and Horticultural Studies students on virtual field study trips.

The videos were filmed at locations around Victoria, carefully selected to tell the story of food and fibre production from local, state, national, and global perspectives, and are a valuable resource for the newly accredited study. The seven videos explore food and fibre production through an interdisciplinary approach. Land cultivation and the raising of plants and animals are seen through evidence-based, sustainable and ethical practices.

Budj Bim National Heritage Landscape, in southwest Victoria, provides an outstanding example of complex Aboriginal aquaculture and hydraulic engineering and is a unique part of global agriculture and horticultural history. Eileen Alberts, Greg Shelton, Talara Harrison and Denis Rose were involved in demonstrating some of these techniques.

Indigenous agriculture and horticulture



[Indigenous agriculture and horticulture \(docx - 28.36kb\)](#)

The eel traps at Budj Bim comprise a vast network of weirs, dams and stone canals constructed to manipulate water levels in various lake basins. These structures provided the region's Gunditjmara people with a year-round food supply, which was also important for trade. The site also features the remnants of almost 300 stone houses. The stone-walled traps have been carbon dated to 6600 years old, meaning they predate more internationally renowned examples of ancient engineering such as the Egyptian pyramids or Stonehenge.

The videos can be viewed on the [VCE Agricultural and Horticultural Studies study design](#).

Article adapted from the [VCAA Bulletin](#), July 2020.



And a final word ...

We are always seeking to improve this bulletin and to make it useful, relevant and highly readable. We invite you to email through suggestions including how you as educators incorporate Aboriginal perspectives, especially Victorian ones in your teaching and curriculum.

This and previous *Koorie Perspectives in Curriculum Bulletins* are available on the [VAEI website](#).

Produced by the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEI), September 2021.

Any enquiries, feedback and suggestions are welcomed, by contacting VAEI on (03) 94810800 or emailing vaso@vaei.org.au.

For more Koorie Perspectives, see the [VAEI Koorie Education Calendar](#).

