

INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

MUUYA BARRIGI – ‘FLYING BREATH’

LESSON PLAN: SECONDARY SCHOOL

The following lesson activities build on the work of Dhangatti and Gumbayngir man Dr Ray Kelly who is working to keep Indigenous languages alive through his innovative language program *Muuya Barrigi* (meaning ‘flying breath’).

Dr Kelly’s work highlights many of the distinct sounds and unique grammatical structures of Indigenous languages, offering insights into the importance of language for ongoing cultures, and practical pronunciation activities. It is noted that these activities are designed to teach about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages as a cross-curriculum priority, however schools are strongly encouraged to establish a connection with, and work alongside, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, groups, and communities in your school community. For further information about connecting follow the QR code below.



 Website resource

Discover how our language program, *Muuya Barrigi*, gives a sense of identity, connection and belonging.

[NEWCASTLE.EDU.AU/HIPPOCAMPUS](https://newcastle.edu.au/hippocampus)





INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES (ALIGNMENT)

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- | | |
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| 4. Quality Education | 16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions |
| 10. Reduced Inequalities | 17. Partnerships for the Goals |
| 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities | |



ALIGNED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HISTORIES AND CULTURES (CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITY)

The activities included in this lesson may be adapted by teachers to suit any secondary school year level (please note: It is strongly advised that these activities take place after students have had the opportunity to develop a working understanding of the loss of Indigenous languages following British colonisation).

HISTORY LEARNING AREA:

Stage 4

ACDSEH148 - The importance of conserving the remains of the ancient past, including the heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

Stage 5

ACDSEH020 - The extension of settlement, including the effects of contact (intended and unintended) between European settlers in Australia and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

GEOGRAPHY LEARNING AREA

Stage 4

ACHGK049 - Spiritual, aesthetic and cultural value of landscapes and landforms for people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

Stage 5

ACHGK072 - The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' approaches to custodial responsibility and environmental management in different regions of Australia



The activities included in this lesson may be adapted by teachers to suit any secondary school year level.

OUTCOMES - STAGES 4 AND 5

Aboriginal Studies

A student:

- describes the factors that contribute to an Aboriginal person's identity (4/5.1)
- explains ways in which Aboriginal Peoples maintain their identity (4/5.2)
- defines the concepts of self-determination and autonomy in relation to Aboriginal Peoples (4/5.6)

TOPIC 1 LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY – WHO AM I?

Identity chart: Individually, students create their own identity charts with both words and drawings.

- Students should then be encouraged to share and discuss their charts in small groups or with the class to allow for deeper consideration of the similarities and differences present in the class group.
- While completing this activity, teachers can also prompt students to think about the changing nature of identity, and how what is important to us, may not be important to others and vice versa. The teacher may also create their own basic identity chart as a model for students
- Following this activity, students should then consider what their class identity might be, responding to the question “who are we?” – encouraging consideration of individual and group identities.

Identity charts can be described as a graphic (or ‘mind map’) helping students to extend their thinking about identity and how they describe themselves. Teachers may like to view the following resource as a guide:



 Website resource

TOPIC 2 INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE MAP

Introduction to Indigenous languages: Visit the First Languages Map.

- identify how and why the word *Country* is used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples for the places to which they belong
- identify, and henceforth use, the name of the local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language group

It is at this stage that teachers should consider connecting with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, allowing opportunities (if desired and appropriate) to share knowledge and talk about connections to Country and language.

In addition, teachers may explore the language listings in Gambay as many places include links to local language resources that may be used to show students and/or inform practise.



Gambay – first languages map



Additional map



Information about Country

TOPIC 3 LANGUAGE AND COUNTRY

During this activity, students are encouraged to consider the connections between language and Country, as well as the healing potential of the re-awakening of ancient languages to inspire healing and connections to place.

Students view the video resource from Warrgamay Country in North Queensland.

Individually or in small groups, students should respond to the following questions:

- How are languages connected to the concept of Country?
- How might the re-awakening of Indigenous languages contribute to a greater sense of group identity and empowerment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples?



If someone got lost on Country you could use language to find them, Country talks back - This Place”.



Website resource: Living languages



TOPIC 4

REAWAKENING LANGUAGE

Like Warrgamay custodian - Troy Wyles-Whelan, Dhangatti and Gumbayngirr man Dr Ray Kelly encourages language learning through building *particles* of Indigenous language.

- Students view the map of Gumbayngirr Country (Dr Kelly's Country)
- Students then view *Reviving Indigenous languages*

Class discussion:

- Exploration of the terms 'dislocation' or 'dispossession' and how these apply to the historical experience of Australian Indigenous peoples
- Dr Ray Kelly talks about "stories, language, and culture" – how may these ideas be tied to self-determination for Indigenous peoples as we move forward together?
- How may the preservation and/or reawakening of language be a force for healing in Australia?



Gumbayngirr Country



Reviving Indigenous languages

TOPIC 5

LEARNING LANGUAGE WITH THE KNIGHTS

This resource emphasises the rich nature of language and how through speaking in language we can help to "reawaken" Indigenous languages and be proud of our diverse Australian culture and heritage. Building on the idea of learning language through the use of single words and familiarity, students consider how this approach could be applied to everyday activities, such as a game of Rugby League.

In the following video, Dr Ray Kelly teaches language to members of the Newcastle Knights NRL team.



Learning language with Dr Ray Kelly and the Newcastle Knights

ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER LANGUAGE CURRICULUM

Schools, in partnership with local communities, are encouraged to consider the implementation of a local language curriculum in your school. The following resource may be viewed as a guide for educators: gambay.com.au/teachers/developing

People in the Hunter and around the Country are using a unique community program to keep Indigenous languages alive.

VISIT NEWCASTLE.EDU.AU/HIPPOCAMPUS

