



**Rationale**

The overall rationale for learning Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages in Australian schools is that they are the original languages of this country. Through learning them, all students gain access to knowledge and understanding of Australia that can only come from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander perspective. The languages by their nature embed this perspective. Learning to use these unique languages can play an important part in the development of a strong sense of identity, pride and self-esteem for all Australian students.

Each Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language is unique to the Country/Place on which it arose. It gives voice to the landscapes, thoughts and ways of seeing and interpreting the world. When the language of the land is spoken, it brings together all of the elements of the landscape and its people. It encompasses the relationships of these people with one another and with the landscape, past, present and future. The learning of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language incorporates the realities of its people and facilitates students' deep engagement with knowledge, ways of being and ways of knowing. It develops in students an understanding of historical, current and ongoing connection to Country/Place and culture. Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages are fundamental to the identity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and this is recognised throughout the Framework. It is also the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to have access to education in and about their own languages, as enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Education systems can play a vital role in facilitating access to language learning and supporting community language revival and maintenance and revitalisation of these languages also contribute to reconciliation.

Learning Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages meets the needs and rights of young people to learn their own languages and recognises the significance of these languages in the language ecology of Australia. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, learning their own language is crucial to their overall learning and achievements. It enables them to develop a wider recognition and understanding of their language, culture, Country and Place, land, water, sea and sky, and this contributes to their wellbeing. For all students, learning Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages provides a distinctive means of understanding the Country/Place in which they live, including the relationship between land, the environment and people. The ongoing and necessary revival, maintenance and development of these languages also contribute to reconciliation.

Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages are complex and diverse. Engaging with the study of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language will develop communication skills in the language studied and will also contribute to the intellectual enrichment of students. For non-Indigenous students, the study of an Aboriginal language or Torres Strait Islander language will provide intellectual challenge and development while also giving them insight into and understanding of Indigenous Australian cultures and knowledge. In some cases it will provide these students with the opportunity to communicate with Indigenous Australians in their own language. In other cases, in addition to communication skills, it will give insight into language change and language revival within its historical context.

The government report 'Our Land Our Languages: Language Learning in Indigenous Communities' (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Commonwealth of Australia, September 2012), found that there is an ongoing and close relationship between the work of communities to maintain and revive their languages and that of schools as vehicles for language instruction. The study 'Indigenous Languages Programs in Australian Schools: A Way Forward' (Purdie et al., 2008,) found that over 16 000 Indigenous students and 13 000 non-Indigenous students located in 260 Australian schools were involved in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages programs. The opportunity to learn an Aboriginal language and/or a Torres Strait Islander language is becoming available in an increasing number of Australian schools, and an aim of this Framework is to make that option available for all students. In this way, all students will have the opportunity to benefit from the social and intellectual development that results from this learning.

**Year 3 to 6 Achievement Standard**

The achievement standards for the Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages Second Language Learner Pathway are generalised in order to cater for the range of languages that may be learnt as an L2 in the school context. The achievement standards will need to be adapted for use for specific Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

By the end of Year 6, students share information about aspects of their personal worlds, such as their family and friends, interests, everyday routines and experiences, using familiar language and modelled sentence patterns. They interact appropriately with Elders and community speakers, and apply principles and protocols of cultural safety when engaging with cultural material such as artefacts, works of art, texts and performances. When interacting in the classroom, they ask and respond to questions, request help, repetition or clarification, and respond to requests and instructions. Students locate key points of information and messages in a range of spoken, written, visual and multi-modal sources associated with the target language region, community and culture. They demonstrate their understanding of the language region, community and culture, for example, by labelling, organising and classifying natural objects, plants and animals from the environment, identifying and describing key features and landforms, seasonal characteristics, and aspects of traditional and contemporary ways of life. Students view, read and listen to stories, songs, dances and artistic traditions, and demonstrate understanding, for example, by describing characters and events, creating timelines, explaining iconographies and identifying key messages, comparing these to messages conveyed by stories in their own cultures. They recognise that ownership of songs, stories, dances and designs is determined by kinship and other social groupings. They know that song and story carry Indigenous knowledge in the context of Country/Place and family. Students use simple and formulaic language, with the support of structured models, to create short informative and imaginative connected texts in various modes and formats. They translate a range of community texts, such as signs, notices, health charts, posters, relying on key words, and they identify and describe culture-specific concepts and expressions. They create bilingual texts for the classroom and school community that explain target language words and related cultural ideas. They identify markers of identity across cultures and recognise the importance of language, Country/Place and culture to the identity and future aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Students reflect on their own cultural identity in light of their experience of learning the language, explaining how their ideas and ways of communicating are influenced by their own cultural backgrounds.

Students know that the target language has its own pronunciation, spelling and grammar, and they apply this knowledge to predict the sound, spelling and meaning of new words and expressions. They use metalanguage for language explanation, for making comparisons with English forms, and for reflecting on the experience of learning the target language and culture. They identify the distinct purpose, language features and conventions of texts such as stories, paintings, songs and dances. Students demonstrate understanding of core elements of the kinship system and its role in social behaviour, by identifying and explaining kin terms, recognising that everyone belongs to certain types of sub-groups and recognising that interactions are patterned by these structures. Students know that language use must be adjusted to suit different contexts, situations and relationships. They provide examples of how languages change over time by identifying words and phrases borrowed from English and other languages, including words that are similar to or borrowed from neighbouring Indigenous languages. Students recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are in various states of maintenance, development and revival and can give some historical reasons for this. They identify connections between identity and cultural values and beliefs, and explain the importance of maintaining and strengthening Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages for the particular community involved and for the broader Australian community. They make connections with their own experience when talking about languages and cultures.

**Aims**

The Australian Curriculum: Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages aims to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to ensure that students:

- communicate in the language
- understand language, culture, and learning and their relationship, and thereby develop an intercultural capability in communication
- understand themselves as communicators
- understand the process of language building as a means to extend the potential of the language (in vocabulary, expression and discourse) and to develop knowledge of linguistic techniques (such as, collecting, describing and recording language), including processes of language revival.

These four aims are interrelated and provide the basis for the two organising strands: Communicating and Understanding.

**Structure**

<p><b>Pathways</b></p> <p>To cater for differences between the ecologies of languages and the communities who are owners and custodians of those languages, and to cater for students who come from a variety of learner backgrounds, the Framework has three pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Language Learner Pathway (L1)</li> <li>• Second Language Learner Pathway (L2)</li> <li>• Language Revival Learner Pathway (LR).</li> </ul> <p>This approach recognises that the two key variables are 'the learner' and 'the nature of the language'.</p> <p>The Framework is designed to be flexible in use for developing language-specific curricula and programs. Aspects of the content and achievement standards from the various learner pathways can be selected, adapted and modified in ways that best suit a particular language, to ensure that the curriculum and subsequent programs are appropriately pitched and to recognise the nature of the language, the nature of the learners and the context of learning.</p>	<p><b>First Language Learner Pathway (L1)</b></p> <p>Languages studied in the First Language Learner Pathway (L1) are typically used in spoken form as the language of everyday communication by whole communities across all generations.</p> <p>Typically, but not exclusively, L1 programs will occur on Country/Place and will have constant involvement from a variety of speakers from the community. A key expectation in the L1 pathway is that of students having opportunities to interact with Elders and particular places on Country/Place.</p> <p>Learners are typically Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children who have learnt the language from their families as a first language and continue to use it naturally at home and play. Students may have varying skills in other languages, including varieties of English.</p> <p>The First Language Learner Pathway provides students with an opportunity to study a first language at school. For these students, having the opportunity to learn their own language at school supports their cognitive development and signals recognition of the value and status of their language and ways of using and understanding language. Learning and using one's own language at school also meets a widely held community aim to strengthen students' identity and their connection between their families, community and Country/Place. Students develop language skills to expand the domains of use in the language. This includes developing skills in registers and genres not normally encountered in their family and home community; in effect, this may involve the students in the creative development of new registers/genres, vocabulary and expressions in the language. As well as continuing to develop, extend and strengthen oracy, a key feature of the First Language Learner pathway is the development of written literacy.</p> <p>The curriculum content and achievement standards in the First Language Learner Pathway are generalised in order to cater for the range of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander languages that may be learnt as a first language. The curriculum content and achievement standards will need to be adapted when developing language-specific curricula, and will need to be modified if the program occurs off-Country.</p>	<p><b>Second Language Learner Pathway (L2)</b></p> <p>Languages studied in the Second Language Learner Pathway (L2) are typically languages used in spoken form as the language of everyday communication by whole communities across all generations.</p> <p>The second language learner pathway has been written on the assumption that learning will occur off-Country, involving students who are typically not from the language community and having little or no experience of the language and culture. They are introduced to learning the language at school as an additional, new language.</p> <p>The language chosen for curriculum development should have a sizeable set of resources in a variety of media, such as local documentaries, bilingual narrative and descriptive texts, and educational materials in print and digital form. Learning is enriched and authenticated by interaction with visiting Elders and community speakers, and where possible visits to Country/Place. Information and communications technologies provide additional resources to support a range of language and culture experiences.</p> <p>The Second Language Learning Pathway provides students with an opportunity to study a language that is structurally very different from English and one from a culture quite distant from the English-speaking mainstream. This develops a deeper appreciation of the nature and diversity of languages and cultures, and supports the acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary to learn and understand an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language and its cultural context.</p> <p>For students who are from the language community but who did not grow up speaking the language, it is an opportunity to reaffirm their cultural identity through learning the language of their community.</p> <p>The curriculum content and achievement standards in the Second Language Learner Pathway are generalised in order to cater for the range of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander languages that may be learnt as a second language. The content descriptions, content elaborations and achievement standards for the Second Language Learner Pathway will need to be adapted for use with the particular language being taught and will need to be modified if the program occurs on-Country or if the learners are from the language community.</p>	<p><b>Language Revival Learner Pathway (LR)</b></p> <p>The Language Revival Learner Pathway (LR) provides opportunities for students to study Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander languages that are being revived by their owners or custodians and are in various stages of revitalisation, reclamation and reclamation.</p> <p>LR covers a much broader range of language types and ecologies than either L1 or L2, and the vast majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages are included in the LR category.</p> <p>Schools teaching the Language Revival Learner Pathway (LR) will most likely be located broadly within the geographic region of the language and culture, sometimes in towns and cities and other times in rural and remote regions. Classrooms likely include students who relate closely to the language and culture as well as students with varying degrees of affinity with the language and culture, including some with no connections to the language and culture. A key expectation in the LR pathway is that students have opportunities to interact with Elders and particular places on Country/Place. The Language Revival Learner Pathway draws on the Australian Indigenous Languages Framework (AILF) and takes account key variables such as: how much is known about and documented for the language; the extent to which languages are used or remembered, ranging from languages no longer spoken (owners often use the term 'sleeping languages' for those spoken fluently by members of the older generations; and the extent to which languages have been reintroduced to the community of owners and custodians.</p> <p>These variables give rise to the following broad categories of language revival:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language Revitalisation: where there are fluent L1 speakers (typically members of the older generation) and intergenerational transmission of the language has been interrupted. In this case, younger generations need to understand some of the language and may use some words and phrases but they do not speak it as the language. Examples of revitalisation languages include: Walmajarri in the Kimberley, Yindjibarndi in the Pilbara, Meriam in the Torres Strait, Dyirbal in north-eastern Queensland, Wubuy (Nungubuyu) in Arnhem Land, and Adnyamathanha (Yura Ngawarla) in the Flinders Ranges. .</li> <li>• Language Renewal: where there are a number of adult speakers who use the language to varying degrees within the community, but not 'right through', and where other language resources are drawn upon. Examples of languages being renewed include: Noongar in south-west Western Australia, Gumbaynggirr on the north coast of New South Wales, Ngarrindjeri on the Lower Murray Lakes in South Australia, Djabugay in the Atherton Tablelands in northern Queensland and Yugambeh in southern Queensland. .</li> <li>• Language Reclamation: where language revival by necessity relies primarily on historical documentation of the language in the absence of active community knowledge of it. Examples of reclamation languages include: Kaurna from Adelaide, Narungga from the Yorke Peninsula, Dharuk or Eora (Iyora) from Sydney, Yuwipi from central Queensland, Wemba-Wemba and Woiwurrung from Victoria, and Awabakal from the Newcastle area in New South Wales.</li> </ul>
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**Year 3 to 6 Level Description**

**The nature of the learner, the pathway and particular language**

Languages studied in the Second Language Learner Pathway (L2) are typically languages used in spoken form as the language of everyday communication by whole communities across all generations.

The second language learner pathway has been written on the assumption that learning will occur off-Country involving students who are typically not from the language community and have little or no experience of the language and culture. They are introduced to learning the language at school as an additional, new language.

The language chosen for curriculum development should have a sizeable set of resources in a variety of media, such as local documentaries, bilingual narrative and descriptive texts, and educational materials in print and digital form. Learning is enriched and authenticated by interaction with visiting Elders and community speakers, and where possible visits to Country/Place. Information and communications technologies provide additional resources to support a range of language and culture experiences.

The curriculum content and achievement standards in the Second Language Learner Pathway are generalised in order to cater for the range of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander languages that may be learnt as a second language. The content descriptions, content elaborations and achievement standards for the Second Language Learner pathway will need to be adapted for use with the particular language being taught and will need to be modified if the program occurs on-Country or if the learners are from the language community.

At this level, children are developing awareness of their social worlds and of their membership of various groups. They are widening their social networks, experiences and communicative repertoires. They are gaining greater awareness of the world around them. They benefit from various forms of activity-based learning that build on their interests and capabilities, and make connections with other learning areas.

**Language learning and use**

Learners use formulaic phrases in the target language to participate in classroom routines, presentations and structured conversations with the teaching team, peers, visiting Elders and community speakers. They respond to teacher-generated questions about texts, participate in games, and follow instructions and procedures.

They focus on aspects of their personal worlds and are introduced to content related to the target language Country/Place and the communities where it is spoken.

The development of oral proficiency relies on rich language input. Learners engage in different types of listening and develop active-listening and comprehension skills using contextual, grammatical, phonic and non-verbal cues. They extend their oral fluency by focusing on sentence-level intonation and stress.

They participate in shared and guided reading and learn to apply their knowledge of key words and textual features to predict the meaning of unfamiliar language. Learners use modelled language to create new texts and to extend their language use through expanding and connecting sentences to express more complex ideas and situations. To support their developing knowledge of vocabulary and sentence construction, learners continue to build metalanguage for describing aspects of the target language and how it works.

**Contexts of interaction**

Learning occurs largely through interaction with peers and the teaching team. Learners may have some access to visiting Elders and community speakers, opportunities to communicate with peers in the target language region using technology, perhaps visit the target language region themselves, or view touring performances or art displays from there.

**Texts and resources**

Learners engage with a growing range of visual, spoken, written and digital texts, such as photographs, maps, bush calendars, seasonal charts, posters, songs, raps, dances, stories, paintings and visual design accompanying performance, video clips and films.

**Level of support**

The primary support for learners is the teaching team, which provides instruction, explanation, examples of modelled language use, repetition, reinforcement and feedback on student work. Learning experiences and activities are carefully scaffolded and resourced, with sufficient time allowed for experimentation, drafting and redrafting. Learners need practice and guidance in using resources such as dictionaries, word charts, vocabulary lists and exemplars when translating and creating texts.

**The role of languages**

Learners use the target language for classroom routines and language learning tasks, for listening to, reading and viewing texts and in interactions with the teaching team, visiting Elders and other community speakers.

The language of response varies according to the nature and demands of the learning experience, with the target language used primarily for communicating in structured and supported tasks and English and other known languages used for open-ended, comparative tasks that develop learners' understanding of language and culture.

**Year 3 to 6 Content Descriptions**

Year 3 to 6 Content Descriptions		Understanding
<b>Communicating</b>		<b>Systems of Language</b>
<b>Socialising</b> Interact with peers, the teaching team and visiting Elders/community speakers about aspects of their personal worlds, such as experiences at school, home, everyday routines and favourite pastimes, interests and activities. [Key concepts: relationship, kinship, family, experience; Key Processes: describing, sharing, responding, recounting]  Participate in guided tasks that involve following instructions, making things, cooperating with peers, planning for and conducting shared events or activities or presenting at a school performance. [Key concepts: collaboration, planning; Key processes: compiling, rehearsing, presenting, making]  Participate in everyday classroom activities and routines, such as responding to questions and requests, asking permission, requesting help, praising or complimenting one another and apologising. [Key concepts: routine, interaction; Key processes: responding, contributing, enquiring]	Produce sounds, stress, intonation patterns of the target language, using developing phonemic awareness linked to the writing system. [Key concepts: punctuation, upper and lower case letters, diacritics, intonation, spelling; Key processes: identifying, discriminating, noticing, listening, reading]  Expand vocabulary in the target language through word-formation and building processes, and recognise and use simple structures. [Key concepts: word formation, word class, grammatical person and number, negation; Key processes: noticing, comparing, applying, understanding, modifying meaning]  Understand that texts such as stories, paintings, songs and dances have a distinct purpose and particular language features, and understand and apply text conventions. [Key concepts: purpose, genre, text features; Key processes: recognising, identifying, distinguishing, applying, linking]  Understand the core role of the kinship system in social behaviour and the relationship between Place, History and society. [Key concepts: kinship system, ways of talking, human relationships, interrelatedness; Key processes: recognising, interpreting, discussing]	
<b>Creating</b> Listen to, read and view different real and imaginative texts, identifying and making simple statements about key elements, characters and events, and interpreting cultural expressions and behaviours. [Key concepts: visual design, representation, journey; Key processes: participating, describing, predicting, recalling, responding, listening, shared/guided reading; Key text types: songs, raps, dances, traditional and contemporary stories, paintings and visual design, video clips]  Create and present imaginative texts that use familiar expressions and modelled language for a range of audiences. [Key concepts: imagination, entertainment; Key processes: imagining, creating, experimenting, performing, storytelling; Key text types: raps, songs, performances, digital texts, video clips, skits, paintings and visual design]	<b>Language variation and change</b> Understand that speakers vary language forms according to kin relationship and context of situation. [Key concepts: kinship, respect, register, silence, taboo; Key processes observing, examining, explaining, investigating; noticing, recognising]  Recognise that languages change over time. [Key concepts: regional languages, language shift, language loss, borrowing and relatedness; Key processes: identifying, recognising]	
<b>Translating</b> Translate simple texts from the target language into English and vice versa, identifying elements which require interpretation rather than translation and involve cultural references. [Key concepts: equivalence, meaning; Key processes: translating, predicting, selecting, comparing]  Create bilingual texts for the classroom and the school community, such as songs, picture dictionaries, photo stories, captions for images and displays. [Key concepts: bilingualism, expression; Key processes: performing, describing, code-mixing, captioning]	<b>Language awareness</b> Explore the language situation of target language communities and the diversity of language situations in Australia. [Key concepts: language communities, language transmission, language maintenance and development, language revival, change, sign; Key processes: recognising, discussing, investigating]	
<b>Informing</b> Gather, classify and compare information from a range of sources associated with the target language Country/Place, community and daily life. [Key concepts: community life, leisure, environment, Indigenous knowledge, health and well-being; Key processes: identifying, researching, compiling, presenting, tabulating, categorising, giving directions]  Convey information on specific topics using formats such as oral or digital presentations, displays, diagrams, timelines and guided descriptions. [Key concepts: Country/Place, community life; Key processes: creating, presenting, profiling]	<b>Identity</b> Interact with others, noticing how ways of communicating with and responding to each other shape and reflect identity. [Key concepts: identity, kinship, community, membership; Key processes: creating, representing, comparing]  <b>Reflecting</b> Notice and describe some ways in which the target language and associated communicative behaviours are similar or different to their own language(s) and forms of cultural expression. [Key concepts: language, culture, values, similarity, difference, communication; Key processes: noticing, comparing, describing, explaining, questioning, reflecting]	
	<b>Role of language and culture</b> Explore connections between identity and cultural values and beliefs and the expression of these connections in an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander language. [Key concepts: Country/Place, cultural expression and transmission, values, beliefs, spirituality; Key processes: observing, making connections, discussing, investigating]  <b>Role of language and building</b> Understand ways the target language and culture can be maintained and strengthened in changing contexts. [Key concepts: language maintenance, and development ; Key processes: discussing, exploring, considering, investigating, language building]	