Year 7 to 10

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Australian CURRICULUM

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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 7 to 10 Achievement Standard

The achievement standards for the Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages LR pathway are generalised in order to cater for the wide range of languages which may be learnt as an LR within the school context. They will need to be adapted for use for specific Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. They will be shaped by the current progress of language revival for a particular language and the amount of vocabulary and variety of language structures available for teaching and learning.

By the end of Year 10, students use the language to initiate, sustain and extend interactions, and to exchange information about interests, experiences and aspirations. They use spontaneous language wherever possible to participate in activities that involve taking action, collaborating, planning, organising and negotiating. They use culturally appropriate norms and skills, and respect protocols when engaging with and learning from visiting Elders and community members. When interacting in the classroom, they make suggestions, seek clarification, praise or compliment each other. Students use language where possible to locate, analyse and summarise factual information from a range of sources such as historical documents, Elders and community members. They demonstrate their understanding of Country/Place, for example, by explaining the origin, meaning and significance of local place names and features, or by presenting texts and stories about the Country/Place and associated social and cultural events, using language as much as possible and different modes of presentation. Students view, listen to, and share personal responses to a range of texts, such as songs, stories, films and other modes of artistic expression, and demonstrate understanding by identifying and explaining main ideas, key themes and sequences of events. They explain how artistic expression relates to land, water, sea, sky, people, animals, plants and social and ecological relationships. They use expressive language, gestures, and supporting materials to create a range of spoken, written and multimodal texts, for example, art work to convey messages using symbols and techniques appropriate to Country/Place, or narrations of real or imagined journeys involving a variety of characters, places and events. Students apply culturally appropriate and ethical behaviour and lexical and grammatical resources to interpret and translate texts to and from the language; and they explain culture-specific concepts, practices and expressions that do not easily translate. They co-create bilingual texts to inform the wider community about aspects of the language and culture. They reflect on how their own biography shapes their sense of identity and ways of communicating, and discuss the role that language and culture play in the identity and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. They explain how particular policies and practices have impacted on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' sense of identity, for example, through language loss and separation from Country/Place, family and community.

Students explain and use the sound system of the language, and a range of available vocabulary sets and grammatical structures when speaking and writing. They use metalanguage to explain sound and writing systems and grammatical structures in the language. They analyse the purpose and role of a range of spoken, written and visual texts, for example, declaring identity, acknowledging ancestors and traditional belief systems, and passing on knowledge and information. Students explain the importance of the kinship system in regulating relationships and behaviour in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. They explain how and why language use is adjusted to suit different social and cultural contexts, purposes and relationships, for example, expressions used with respected kin. They explain how languages change over time and influence one another, for example, by describing the history and impact of contact languages, including creoles, pidgins and Aboriginal Englishes. Students make comparisons between the ecologies of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and indigenous languages in other countries, in areas such as language policy and rights, language loss, advocacy and reform, and language revival. They identify the role of language in passing on knowledge, and explain how communities' ways of thinking, behaving and shaping worldviews influence how language is used. They investigate language revival efforts in their own community and neighbouring regions, and identify resources and processes that are available to build language, for example, lexical and grammatical resources. Students explain protocols for filling language gaps and extending semantic domains, including those required for borrowing from other languages, creating words by analogy and drawing from within existing resources of the language. They explain various techniques that can be used to build language, such as analysing historical sources or interviewing existing speakers, and identify associated challenges. Students reflect on their role as contemporary documenters of language, and recognise the importance of intergenerational collaboration in reviving and maintaining languages.

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

Pathways

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:
• First Language Learner Pathway (L1)
• Second Language Learner Pathway (L2)
• Language Revival Learner Pathway (LR).

This approach recognises that the two key variables are 'the learner' and 'the nature of the language'.

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.

First Language Learner Pathway (L1)

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Second Language Learner Pathway (L2)

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 having 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 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.

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.

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.

Language Revival Learner Pathway (LR)

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, renewal and reclamation.

LR covers a much broader range of language types and ecologies than either L1 or L2, and the vast majority of Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages are included in the LR category.

Schools teaching the Language Revival Learner Pathway (LR) will most likely be located broadly within the geographical region of the language and culture, sometimes in towns and cities and other times in rural and remote regions. Classes will likely include students who relate closely to the language and culture as well as students with varying degrees of affiliation 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 into 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') to those spoken fluently by members of the older generations; and the extent to which languages have been reintroduced into the community of owners and custodians.

These variables give rise to the following broad categories of language revival:
- Language Revitalisation: where there are fluent L1 speakers (typically members of the older generation) but intergenerational transmission of the language has been interrupted. In this case, younger generations may understand some of the language and may use some words and phrases but they do not speak it as their first 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 (Nunggubuyu) in Arnhem Land, and Adnyamathanha (Yura Ngawarla) in the Flinders Ranges.
- Language Renewal: where there are a number of adult speakers who use the language to varying degrees in 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. .
- 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, Yuwibara from central Queensland, Wemba-Wemba and Woiwurrung from Victoria, and Awabakal from the Newcastle area in New South Wales.

Year 7 to 10 Level Description

The nature of the learner, the pathway and particular language

The Language Revival Learner Pathway (LR) provides opportunities for students to study Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander languages being revived by their owners or custodians and which are in various stages of revitalisation, renewal and reclamation.
LR covers a much broader range of language types and ecologies than either L1 or L2, and the vast majority of Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages are included in the LR category.

Schools teaching the Language Revival Learner Pathway (LR) will most likely be located broadly within the geographical region of the language and culture, sometimes in towns and cities and other times in rural and remote regions. Classes will likely include students who relate closely to the language and culture, students with varying degrees of affiliation with the language and culture, and students who have no connections to the language and culture. A key expectation in the LR pathway is that of students having 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 into account key variables such as: how much is known about and documented for the language; the extent to which it is used or remembered, ranging from no longer being spoken (owners often use the term 'sleeping') to being spoken fluently by members of the older generations; and the extent to which it has been reintroduced into the community of owners and custodians.
These variables give rise to the following broad categories of language revival:

Language Revitalisation: where there are fluent L1 speakers (typically members of the older generation) but where the intergenerational transmission of the language has been interrupted. Younger generations may understand some of the language and may use some words and phrases, but do not speak it as their first 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 (Nunggubuyu) in Arnhem Land, and Adnyamathanha (Yura Ngawarla) in the Flinders Ranges.

Language Renewal: where there are a number of adult speakers who use the language to varying degrees in the community, but not 'right through', and where other language resources are drawn upon. Examples of renewal languages 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.

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, Yuwibara from central Queensland, Wemba-Wemba and Woiwurrung from Victoria, and Awabakal from the Newcastle area in New South Wales.
A number of factors and variables will need to be considered when planning for a language revival curriculum or program, and further information on these is presented in the context statement for this pathway and in the section Using the Framework.
At this level, students bring to their learning a range of language learning strategies. They are increasingly aware of the world beyond their own, and are engaging with the broader issues of youth and society, land and environment, education and identity, while establishing a balance between increasing personal independence and social responsibilities. They are considering their future pathways and choices, including how the language they are learning could be part of these.

Language learning and use

Learners interact using the language whenever possible in classroom routines and communicative tasks with peers, the teaching team, Elders and community members. They give presentations and participate in conversations, with some preparation and support, such as the use of cue cards. They acquire skills in accessing and analysing historical documents and recordings.
Learners extend the range and quality of their writing through drawing on increased vocabulary and grammar knowledge, to the extent that this is possible in the revived language; and by drafting and editing their own work and that of their peers. They use models to create a range of texts, including descriptions, recounts and reflections.
Students learn about the techniques used to build language, such as analysing historical sources, interviewing/recording existing speakers, and they discuss the contemporary orthographic and grammatical choices of the community.
Students act as contemporary documenters of the language, for example, by listening and transcribing spoken texts, and preserving language resources developed at school for future access and use.

Contexts of interaction

Learning occurs largely through interaction with peers and the teaching team, while additional enrichment and authentication of the learning experience is provided through access to Elders and other speakers living in the same community. Interacting with Country/Place to explore the environment and learn about Country/Place with Elders and other community members is essential to their continued learning. Students may also have access to community centres, such as interpretative museums or art and language centres. They may have opportunities to work with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in language-related projects, contributing to the development and maintenance of local language records and resources through structured and research-based projects.

Texts and resources

Country/Place and the community are the most important resources for learning and are the origin of most of the texts learners work with.
Learners engage with and help to shape a range of spoken, visual, written and digital texts that use as much language as possible. These include historical documents, photographs, maps, songs, raps, performance, stories, local environmental and social programs, painting and visual design, as well as teacher-generated materials such as games and items from the community and local environment. Some texts will incorporate English or another community language in a complementary role, filling in for items or expressions that have not yet been reconstituted in the language; other texts will be bilingual, with no mixing of languages.

Level of support

Learners are increasingly aware of and responsible for their own learning. They continue to access support resources such as word lists, modelled texts, dictionaries, grammars, and they seek teacher feedback to support their receptive and productive language use.
They require explicit instruction in the grammatical system of the language, which includes comparison with English and other known languages and opportunities to discuss, practise and apply their knowledge. They keep records of their learning, for example, through journals, folios or a blogs. They use these resources to reflect on their language learning and intercultural experiences.

The role of languages

The language is used whenever and to the extent possible in the revived language for classroom interaction, language learning tasks and experiences. Maximal use of the language increases learners' language proficiency and enhances language revival.
English and other known languages provide a basis for linguistic and cultural comparison and for a developing metalinguistic understanding of intercultural learning that supports the ability for consider different perspectives and ways of being mediated by language.
For revival languages that are at the 'beginning' end of the revival spectrum, English or another community language might be used in a complementary fashion, for example, to fill in for missing words or expressions. Alternatively, language owners and the community in general may decide to side-step these gaps altogether, thus avoiding the need to use other languages.

Year 7 to 10 Content Descriptions		
Communicating		**Understanding**

Socialising

Engage with peers, the teaching team and visiting Elders/community members to exchange information about interests, experiences, plans and aspirations.
[Key concepts: experience, aspiration; Key processes: recounting, exchanging, connecting]

Engage in activities that involve collaboration, planning, organising, promoting and taking action.
[Key concepts: event, experience; Key processes: planning, organising, negotiating]

Interact in class activities that involve making suggestions, seeking clarification, praising or complimenting one another.
[Key concepts: opinion, clarification, interaction; Key processes: requesting, negotiating, expressing, comparing, deciding, explaining]

Informing

Investigate and summarise factual information obtained from a range of sources on a variety of topics and issues related to the Country/Place.
[Key concepts: Indigenous knowledge, social and environmental issues, lifestyles - past and present community initiatives and projects;
Key processes: summarising, synthesising, referencing]

Convey information about Country/Place events, experiences or topics of shared interest, using different modes of presentation.
[Key concepts: audience, Country/Place, community life; Key processes: describing, explaining, creating, annotating]

Creating

Interpret and respond to texts by sharing personal reactions, comparing themes, describing and explaining aspects of artistic expression and how these relate to land, sky, sea, water, people, plants, animals and social and ecological relationships.
[Key concepts: representation, imagination; Key processes: interpreting, explaining, describing, discussing; Key text types: songs, dances, stories, paintings and visual design, video clips, films]

Create a range of spoken, written and multimodal texts to entertain others, involving real or imagined contexts and characters.
[Key concepts: imagination, journey; Key processes: creating, collaborating, performing, composing; Key text types : raps, songs, performances, stories, cartoons, advertisements, digital texts, video clips, skits, paintings, visual designs]

Translating

Translate and interpret texts from the language to English and vice versa, comparing their versions and considering how to explain elements that involve cultural knowledge or understanding.
[Key concepts: equivalence, representation, meaning, interpretation, idiom; Key processes: comparing, explaining, interpreting]

Create bilingual texts for the wider community collaboration with others.
[Key concepts: interpretation, expression, bilingualism; Key processes: designing, explaining, classifying, glossing, annotating, composing]

Identity

Consider and discuss their own and each other's ways of communicating and expressing identity, reflecting on how the language links the local, regional and national identity of its speakers with the land.
[Key concepts: identity, perspective, biography; Key processes: sharing, comparing, considering, reflecting, analysing]

Reflecting

Participate in intercultural interactions and consider own reactions when engaging with Elders and community members and resources.
[Key concepts: intercultural experience, perspective, insight, self-reflection, ways of knowing and being, reconciliation, discrimination; Key processes: comparing, analysing, explaining, reflecting, choosing]

Systems of Language

Understand and explain the sound patterns in spoken language and use developing phonemic awareness to represent these patterns in written form.
[Key concepts: metalanguage, patterns, phonetic articulation, syllable; Key processes: reading, investigating, comparing]

Expand vocabulary and understand and use a range of vocabulary sets and grammatical structures that are available in the language.
[Key concepts: system, grammatical case, transitivity; Key processes: explaining, discussing]

Discuss the purpose and roles of various spoken, written and visual texts in the language.
[Key concepts: text, relationship, intention; Key processes: analysing, investigating, linking and sequencing]

Investigate how the kinship system functions to integrate personal and community histories and relationships.
[Key concepts: interconnectedness, human relationships, ownership, rights and responsibilities; Key processes: describing, explaining, investigating, exploring]

Language variation and change

Discuss variations in language use that reflect different social and cultural contexts, purposes and relationships.
[Key concepts: respect, silence, kinship; Key processes: examining, explaining, analysing]

Describe and reflect on how languages change over time and influence one another.
[Key concepts: contact, change; Key processes: exploring, observing, reflecting]

Language awareness

Investigate and compare the ecology of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages to Indigenous languages in other countries, and consider issues such as language policy, language rights, language loss, advocacy, reform and multilingualism.
[Key concepts: environment, boundaries, policy, revival; Key processes: researching, investigating, exploring, considering]

Understand and apply cultural norms, skills and protocols associated with learning, using and researching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.
[Key concepts: ownership, custodianship, ethical behaviour, intellectual property; Key processes: acknowledging, investigating, applying]

Role of language and culture

Reflect on how ways of using language are shaped by communities' ways of thinking, behaving and viewing the world, and the role of language in passing on knowledge.
[Key concepts: Indigenous knowledge, value transmission; Key processes: reflecting, exploring, analysing, comparing]

Role of language and building

Explore language building processes and protocols in communities.
[Key concepts: language revival, protocols, lexical and grammatical resources, advocacy; Key processes: identifying, investigating, discussing]

Investigate and explain techniques used to build language, considering challenges involved and understanding their role as contemporary documenters of language.
[Key concepts: language revival, language building, authenticity, linguistic techniques; Key processes: identifying, analysing, discussing]