#### Victorian Curriculum: Foundation - 10



Aboriginal Placenames

Victorian Aboriginal Languages Levels 3-6

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# Introduction

*Aboriginal Placenames* introduces students to Aboriginal words and their meanings in the local topography. It highlights the influence of Aboriginal Languages on English and investigates the features of Aboriginal English.

Reclamation Languages will be at different stages of revival and the availability of particular words will vary from Language to Language.

The topics include:

* Local Aboriginal Placenames
* Influence of Aboriginal Languages on English

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Appropriate consultations with relevant Aboriginal communities are always central to the development of curricula and the provision of learning programs in schools. Victorian government schools are required to act in accordance with the*[Koorie Cross-Curricular Protocols for Victorian Government Schools.](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/Pages/koorieart.aspx)* The[*Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc*](http://www.vaeai.org.au/)(VAEAI) has produced a guide,[*Protocols for Koorie Education in Victorian Primary and Secondary Schools*](http://www.vaeai.org.au/support/dsp-default.cfm?loadref=126)*,* to assist schools to provide a welcoming environment for Aboriginal community members and how to work respectfully with the Koorie community to enrich schools' teaching and learning programs.

For assistance in identifying the appropriate people to consult, please contact [*VAEAI*](http://www.vaeai.org.au/)*.* Government schools can also seek assistance from the Department of Education and Training’s[*Koorie Education Workforce*](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/wannikregional.aspx)*,* and Catholic schools can contact the Education Officer for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in their relevant diocese. The[*Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages*](http://www.vaclang.org.au)(VACL) can also provide assistance.

# Establishing the Learning Environment

* The Language being reclaimed, rather than English, should be used wherever and whenever possible.
* A Welcome to Country or Acknowledgement of Country, whichever is appropriate, should be made at the beginning of class.
* Cards/posters with Language words can be put around the room, with an appropriate picture/drawing. Laminated cards, both small and large, can be utilised in many activities.
* Free teaching resources can be borrowed from the [Languages and Multicultural Education Resource Centre (LMERC)](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/support/pages/lmerc.aspx). Pictures could be sourced from the [Koori Mail](http://www.koorimail.com/) or similar Aboriginal publications.
* Victorian Aboriginal Language materials can be obtained by contacting the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages, or by going to [www.vaclang.org.au](http://www.vaclang.org.au).
* Parents and community members should be encouraged to participate in the lesson, and students could take their portfolio of work home to share with others, to aid the reclamation process in the community.
* Each student could take home the new words from each lesson to share. Alternatively, a sound file containing the new words could be emailed to parents and community members, or given to each student on an MP3 player/recorder to take home.
* Sharing information and resources with other schools teaching the same Language is encouraged. In cases where this involves a primary school and a secondary school, a mentoring program could be undertaken.
* Information about Victorian Aboriginal Languages in school programs can be found on the [Aboriginal Languages, Cultures and Reclamation in Schools website](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/alcv/about.htm).
* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural events should be celebrated throughout the year. It would be valuable for the entire school to be involved in these celebrations.
* It is suggested that the Language team liaise with any teacher who is involved in these areas of study when delivering this unit, to ensure a whole school approach, eg, choosing topics relevant to an inquiry unit.

**Information for Language Teams**

It is important to understand and be sensitive to the fact that Victorian Aboriginal Languages are revival Languages. This means that, initially at least, there may be gaps in the Language that prevent students and teachers from utilising standard Languages methodology. For example, in a Language classroom, students are routinely taught how to say *I like* or *I don’t like* in the language they are studying, but, in all probability, this may not be possible in most Victorian Aboriginal Languages, particularly those in the early stages of reclamation. This may be due to the amount of Language that was retained in the community and/or recorded in the old sources, or it may be that this was not a concept adopted by Aboriginal people at the time the material was recorded. This is not to say that the concept cannot be expressed. It may be that a construction like *that is good* or *that is not good* will be used to convey the same message.

However, it is critical that Language team members and school staff ask the local Aboriginal community to provide a suitable construction via the accepted protocols. An early discussion on this topic is recommended, inclusive of some realistic examples that are likely to be needed in the classroom.

An agreement about the most appropriate source dictionary or wordlist to use is essential to a full understanding of the range and variety of Language already documented. Any words or constructions required for the purpose of teaching in the reclamation classroom **must** come from the local Aboriginal Community.

Language reclamation is an important endeavour, and all concerned, including teachers, school principals and other education community partners, need to respect the agreed protocols and conventions. The recommended channel for seeking information about Language is through the Aboriginal community members on the school’s Language team. They will have been chosen by the community as their representatives and, as such, should be able to ascertain whether or not there is a Language construction sanctioned by the community; or, should the community decide that there is a need to develop such a construction, they will work with the community to develop it.

Should any member of the teaching team or education community fail to respect the agreed protocols, it could have an impact on the program ranging from a reminder that protocols have not been followed to cessation of the program. For information on the protocols relating to the establishment and implementation of Aboriginal Language programs, please see the ‘Getting Started’ section on the [ALCV website](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/alcv/vels.htm).

# Victorian Curriculum F-10: Victorian Aboriginal Languages

For an explanation of the new Victorian Curriculum and the terminology used therein, see the [Victorian Curriculum Overview](http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/overview/navigation-and-terminology).

The **achievement standards** for Victorian Aboriginal Languages describe what students should be able to understand and do by the end of Level 6. The **content descriptions** for Victorian Aboriginal Languages explain what has to be taught to the students between Levels 3-6.

Each achievement standard relates to at least one content description, for example, the achievement standard

*students use familiar language and modelled sentence patterns to share information about aspects of their personal worlds, such as their family and friends, interests, everyday routines and activities*

(what they must be able to do) relates to the content description

*Interact with peers, the teaching team and visiting Elders/community members about aspects of personal worlds, such as experiences at school, home, everyday routines, interest and activities*

(what you need to teach the students to do).

The [Curriculum Mapping Template](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/foundation10/viccurriculum/languages.aspx) has been designed to support language teams to identify, and keep track of, the content descriptions and achievement standards addressed by the content of your lessons. It is recommended that you read the Curriculum Mapping Instructions provided on the site.

## Victorian Aboriginal Languages Sample Units

There is no set order for the sample units on this website. Schools should order the units to suit their needs, students and other school programs.

Each sample unit presents a wide range of possible topics and activities that teachers may use in short or extended learning programs, depending on the age and interests of the students and language availability for particular topics.

**Community language and cultural input** is an assumed aspect of the development of each topic. It is expected that students will have opportunities for community input into their study of the topic of between 30 - 50 minutes across the unit. This will vary depending on the time allocated to each topic.

Each unit includes **language development** and revision exercises. Language activities may be distributed throughout the course of the unit. Each unit has been designed to involve 30 – 50 minutes of teaching and learning associated with language reinforcement and the acquisition of new language, including grammar, vocabulary and language specifically related to the topic.

Each topic involves a **cultural investigation**. There are many opportunities for student to engage with culture, language and the community through the investigations. Students may undertake some or all of the activities presented in the topic. Students use appropriate extended language to describe their findings, with emphasis on the development of extended text production (oral or written) in the language. Each unit has been designed to involve cultural investigation of between 30 – 120 minutes, depending on the age and level of language learning of the students.

Each topic provides **activities** that encourage students to apply their understanding of language, culture and identity. One or more of the activities may be used to demonstrate learning related to the cultural investigation. It is expected that students create a product or performance that can be shared with others and the community and demonstrate the use of language in their product or performance. Each activity has been designed to take 50- 60 minutes and may be an outcome of the cultural investigation, depending on the complexity of the activity and the extent of student engagement with the topic.

## Assessment

Before beginning an activity, assess the existing level of students’ knowledge. A range of strategies can be used for assessment, for example, if you greet the students in Language, the responses may range from familiarity with the greeting to no understanding at all. Alternatively, you could examine previous assessments.

Each unit includes activities that can be adapted for a range of student abilities. For example, with new students modelling would be appropriate; but for students with an existing knowledge, it may be more appropriate to ask them to lead the activity or to support beginners.

Each unit includes both language and culture. The language activities can be modified to cater for different student abilities. It is also possible to extend the cultural activities.

Additional information is provided on the [Victorian Curriculum Overview](http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/overview/navigation-and-terminology) page. The [achievement standards for Victorian Aboriginal Languages](http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/languages/victorian-aboriginal-languages/introduction/scope-and-sequence) can be found on the Victorian Curriculum website.

When assessing student achievement, assessment criteria can be developed from relevant achievement standards and associated tasks or activities, including teacher observations and records of students’ skills. Possible assessment methods are given in the last row of each topic.

Further information on these can be found in the [Revised curriculum planning and reporting guidelines](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/documents/auscurric/f-10curriculumplanningreporting.pdf).

# Teaching, Learning and Assessment Activities

*Note: This unit has been developed specifically for students learning an Aboriginal Language, and should be taught in line with the protocols in the* [Victorian Curriculum F-10– Victorian Aboriginal Languages](http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/languages/victorian-aboriginal-languages/introduction/rationale-and-aims) *and the* [*Koorie Cross-Curricular Protocols for Victorian Government Schools*](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/diversity/Pages/koorieart.aspx)*.*

# Aboriginal Placenames Levels 3-6

## Topic 1: Local Aboriginal placenames

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Overview** | **Suggested Student Activities** | **Insert words and grammar in target Language** | **Comments/resources for the Language Team and Aboriginal Teacher** |
| Greetings | * Greet the students in Language * Students return the teacher’s greeting * Students greet any guests in Language * Students greet each other in Language | Greeting: |  |
| Farewells | * Farewell the students in Language * Students return the teacher’s farewell * Students greet any guests in Language * Students greet each other in Language | Farewell: |  |
| Revision | * Revise known Language using resources created by students or a game. * Make a list of up to 10 true or false statements relating to the Language the students have learnt to date. Ask the students to write down whether each statement is true or false. Students swap their answers, to be marked by a friend. For example, statements such as ‘kulin’ is the word for man in [Language name]; there is no word for ‘cousin’ in [Language name]. | Learned Language | * Revision is critical to Language learning. * Utilise learned vocabulary and grammar as well as new vocabulary and grammar throughout this unit |
| Recognising the local Language in placenames | * Many placenames in Australia are in fact Aboriginal words. Here is a list of some location names, the local Language words and their meanings:   Geelong/ Djalang (Wathaurong) – tongue, language  Warragul/ Warigal (Gunnai-Kurnai) – dog  Banyule/ Banyul (Wathaurong) - hill  Nillumbik/ Nyilam Biik (Woiwurrung)– bad ground  Goonawarra/ Gunuwarr (Wergaia) - swan  (Lake) Coorong/ Kurong (Wathawurrung) – canoe, boat  Korumburra/ Garrambarra (Woiwurrung) – a type of biting fly  Yallock/ Yaluk (Woiwurrung) – creek  Colac/ Kulak (Gulidjan) – sand  Pyalong/ Piyal (Djadjawurrung) – red gum trees  Wycheproof/ Widyi Purrp (Wergaia) – basket-grass hill  Tongala/ Dungula (Yorta Yorta) – local name of the Murray River  Note that many of these words are found in more than one Language.   * Compile a list of names for local streets, suburbs, towns etc that you think might be Aboriginal words. * If you have a dictionary of the target Language, see how many of the words on your list are in it and record the meaning of each name on your list. Hint: They might not be spelt in exactly the same way. * Alternatively, the local historical society may know the meaning of the placenames. * If you don’t have a dictionary, ask a knowledgeable community member to help you identify the meanings. Record them next to the items on the list. * Practise saying the placenames and their meanings. * Using flashcards, write each placename on one side of the card then draw a picture to illustrate its meaning on the other side. Test yourself to see how many words you can remember by looking at the pictures. | Placename words and their meanings | * Please note that many internet sites purporting to know the meaning of placenames are incorrect. For the best results, use the wordlist for the target Language or a legitimate source such as *Macquarie Aboriginal Words*. Aboriginal words may be spelt in many different ways, so say the words out loud to see if they sound the same. * Invite an appropriate, knowledgeable community member to assist with identifying local placenames that originated in their Language. * [FAQs Australian Indigenous Languages](http://blogs.usyd.edu.au/elac/FAQs/ozlang.html/FAQs_ozlang.html) (note that the first FAQ tells you which sources to avoid) * [Indigenous place names](http://www.ourlanguages.net.au/languages/aboriginal-place-names/item/77-indigenous-placenames.html) * [Aboriginal placenames of Corangamite](http://www.ourlanguages.net.au/languages/aboriginal-place-names/item/75-aboriginal-placenames-of-corangamite.html) * [Dictionary of Aboriginal Placenames](http://www.vaclang.org.au/Resources/place-names.html) (Clark & Heydon, from VACL) * Aboriginal Languages in general don’t make a distinction between t and d, p and b, or k and g. Hence, some listeners will hear *piyal* and others will hear *biyal* for the same word. |
| How did it get its name? | * Form groups and choose one placename for each group. * Is there a story behind the placename? If so, create a role play of how the place got its name, using as much Language as possible.   If there isn’t a story, choose one of the following suggestions. Remember to use as much Language as you can.   * Develop a travelling song using placenames in the stories. * Create individual maps or a class map incorporating Language placenames (manually or digitally – google maps is a good starter for making images). * Prepare a powerpoint or video presentation about local places and their traditional names. * As a class, consider ways of promoting recognition and use of traditional and contemporary Aboriginal placenames, eg, the school song if the school is named for a place with a known name in the target Language, posters, signage etc. * Make a class book about local and regional Aboriginal placenames and the stories around their naming if known – work with community members and provide a copy to the relevant local organisations possible. | Words related to the story of how a place got its name. | * Some placenames have a story behind them. Ask a local community member if there are any in your area. If so, ask them to tell the story/stories to the class. |
| Quizzes | * Play the Placenames memory game created by your teacher. * Now create a memory game of your own using the Memory Game Maker and all of the Language words you have learnt. * Swap games with a classmate and try out each other’s game. |  | * Using the [Memory Game Maker](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/languagesonline/games/memory/index.htm), create a matching quiz for the students using placenames and their meanings. * [Languages Online Useful Resources](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/languagesonline/) - use these to create Language games for the students, or let them create the games themselves. |
| **Assessment:** observation, quizzes, role-play, contribution to class discussions, written work, oral presentation (**delete those not applicable**) | | | |

## Topic 2: Influence of Aboriginal Languages on English

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Overview** | **Suggested Student Activities** | **Insert words and grammar in target Language** | **Comments/resources for the Language Team and Aboriginal Teacher** |
| Greeting routine |  |  | See Topic 1 |
| Farewell routine |  |  | See Topic 1 |
| Revision | * Revise known Language using resources created by students or a game * Choose a student to be scorekeeper, then divide the class into two or three groups. Alternating, ask each group a question about the target Language. Eg, what is the word for ‘dingo’; what does ‘djina’ mean; what name do you call your mother’s sister. They get a point when they answer correctly. The team with the most points wins. |  | * Revision is critical to Language learning. * Utilise learned vocabulary and grammar as well as new vocabulary and grammar throughout this unit. |
| Aboriginal words in English | * As a class, try to think of as many words as you can that might be Aboriginal words, eg, billabong, boomerang, dingo and kookaburra. Write them down in list form. * Try to find out which Languages the words in your list come from. Compare the words to those in the target Language – talk about similarities and differences. |  | * [Indigenous loan words in English](http://www.ourlanguages.net.au/languages/background-information/item/29-indigenous-loan-words-in-english.html) * [Our Languages: resources](http://www.ourlanguages.net.au/resources.html) * [Meanings and origins of Australian words and idioms](http://andc.anu.edu.au/australian-words/meanings-origins?field_alphabet_value=161) (Australian National Dictionary Centre) * [Borrowings from Australian Aboriginal Languages](http://andc.anu.edu.au/australian-words/vocabulary/borrowings-from-australian-aboriginal-languages) * [Aboriginal words in Australian English](http://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/language/aboriginal-words-in-australian-english#axzz3bI7HHEwA) (words that have a different meaning in English) |
| Aboriginal English | * Aboriginal people speak English, but they use it in a different way from non-Aboriginal people. The way everyone speaks helps to identify us as belonging to a particular group. By using words and constructing sentences differently, Aboriginal people are telling the world who they are.   All groups do this, for example, the way Italian people use English is different to the way Chinese people use it.   * Although they sound the same, the meaning of some words differs between Standard English and Aboriginal English, for example, the words ‘deadly’ and ‘mob’. What could be described as deadly? What is a mob? * Brainstorm words that you think might have a different meaning in a Koorie English dialect from a Standard Australian dialect. Write these on the board along with their meanings. * Once you have agreed on which words have a different meaning, produce a glossary of terms by copying these down in your book with both meanings. |  | * [Aboriginal English (Eades)](http://www.hawaii.edu/satocenter/langnet/definitions/aboriginal.html) * [What is Aboriginal English like?](http://ab-ed.bostes.nsw.edu.au/go/aboriginal-english/what-is-aboriginal-english-like) |
| Finding a name for something new | * When Europeans first came to Australia, they saw many new things, like different animals and plants. Sometimes they used a word for an animal or plant from Europe for an Australian animal or plant that was similar. * The words in the list below were used for Australian animals and plants. Can you work out what names we use today for these animals?   Native bear  Native companion  Honeysuckle  Piping crow-shrike  Native dog  Kingfisher  Porcupine  Native cat   * Find pictures of these animals and label them in Language for a wall display or online presentation. * Imagine you are seeing an animal from another continent and try to give it a name in Language, eg, a lion, an elephant. |  | Native bear – koala  Native companion – brolga  Honeysuckle oak – white banksia  Piping crow-shrike - magpie  Native dog – dingo  Kingfisher – kookaburra  Porcupine – echidna  Native cat – quoll  [Glogster](http://edu.glogster.com/?ref=com) |
| **Assessment:** observation, quizzes, role-play, contribution to class discussions, written work, oral presentation (**delete those not applicable**) | | | |

# Unit Resources

## Websites

At the time of publication the URLs (website addresses) cited were checked for accuracy and appropriateness of content. However, due to the transient nature of material placed on the Internet, their continuing accuracy cannot be verified. Teachers are strongly advised to prepare their own indexes of sites that are suitable and applicable to this unit of work, and to check these addresses prior to allowing student access.

For information on the [Department of Education and Training’s Principles of Learning and Teaching (PoLT)](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingprinciples/default.htm) follow this link.

## Teacher resources

A comprehensive list of teacher resources is available under the resources tab on the [Aboriginal Languages and Cultures Victoria](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/alcv/about.htm) website. This site provides links to other states’ Language programs, and to a wide range of resources.

[Victorian Curriculum F-10 – Victorian Aboriginal Languages](http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/languages/victorian-aboriginal-languages/introduction/rationale-and-aims)

[Victorian Aboriginal Languages Resources](http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/languages/victorian-aboriginal-languages/introduction/resources)

## Student resources

A comprehensive list of student resources is available under the resources tab on the [Aboriginal Languages and Cultures Victoria](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/alcv/about.htm) website. This site provides links to other states’ Language programs, and to a wide range of resources.