



Reclamation

Victorian Aboriginal Languages Levels 3-6

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# Introduction

*Reclamation* introduces students to what constitutes identity. It explores cultural reclamation and Language reclamation and the importance of stories to Koorie cultures. Due to the sensitivity of the topic, it is recommended that the second topic, *Native Title*, only be discussed in areas where Native Title has been granted.

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

The topics include:

* Topic 1 Identity
* Topic 2 Culture
* Topic 3 Language

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)*.*

**RECLAMATION LEVELS 3-6**

# Topic 1: Identity

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **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.
* Create a Language game using the templates at Languages Online for students to practice their Language skills.
 | Learned Language | * Revision is critical to Language learning.
* Utilise learned vocabulary and grammar as well as new vocabulary and grammar throughout this unit
 |
| Identity | * Think about the question ‘Who am I?’
* Draw a picture of yourself and list aspects of your identity. What makes you ‘you’ or different from others?
* In pairs, make a list of things that you think are part of your partner’s identity.
* Now compare your list for yourself and your partner’s list for you. Do you see yourself in the same way your partner sees you? Are you surprised by any differences?
* Join in a class discussion about the different ways people are perceived by themselves and others.
 | Words used in the student’s descriptions | * Identity is who a person is, or the qualities of a person or group that make them different from some people or groups; but similar to other people or groups. Identity is how you see yourself, and where you fit in. It involves your family, the groups you belong to, the language you speak, the things you believe in, etc.
* [Belonging and Identity](http://generator.acmi.net.au/education-themes/belonging-and-identity)
* [Indigenous Cultural Identity and film](http://generator.acmi.net.au/education-themes/belonging-and-identity/indigenous-cultural-identity)
* [Aboriginal Identity](http://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/people/aboriginal-identity-who-is-aboriginal#axzz3ZyRhznuO)
* [Reclaiming Indigenous Australian Identity: personal perspectives](http://generator.acmi.net.au/education-themes/indigenous-australian-voices/reclaiming-indigenous-australian-identity-personal-per)
* [The power of identity: naming oneself, reclaiming community](https://www.humanrights.gov.au/news/speeches/power-identity-naming-oneself-reclaiming-community-2011)
 |
| **Assessment:** observation, quizzes, role-play, contribution to class discussions, written work, oral presentation (**delete those not applicable**)  |
| Topic 2: Culture |
| **Overview** | **Suggested Student Activities** | **Insert words and grammar in target Language** | **Comments/resources for the Language Team and Aboriginal Teacher** |
|  |  |  |  |
| Greetings  |  |  | See Topic 1 |
| Farewells  |  |  | See Topic 1 |
| Revision | * Revise known Language using resources created by students or a game.
* Choose a word from the target Language and write it on a sticky note or label. Choose one student to sit out at the front and put the label on their forehead without letting them see what is written on it. The student must try to guess the word by addressing questions in language to different students of their choice. The answer to the questions can only be *yes* or *no*.
 | Learned Language | * Revision is critical to Language learning.
* Utilise learned vocabulary and grammar as well as new vocabulary and grammar throughout this unit
 |
| Culture | * What do you think ‘culture’ means? Before the guest speaker arrives, discuss what is meant by culture and find examples of cultural differences in Australian society.
* Talk on Koorie culture: Take notes during the guest speaker’s talk on life as a Koorie person. Write down Language words used by the speaker and their meanings.
* Using your notes, have a class discussion about the things that happened to Koorie people and how this might have contributed to a sense of lost identity.
 | Names of cultural items mentioned | * Culture is the distinctive characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, including their language, religious beliefs, food, social organisation, music and art.
* Invite an appropriate community member to talk about life as a Koorie person.
* [Culture, not colour, is the heart of Aboriginal identity](http://theconversation.com/culture-not-colour-is-the-heart-of-aboriginal-identity-30102)
 |
| Strengthening culture | * Brainstorm ways students express or maintain cultural connections (eg food, dress, music, cultural festivals, spiritually). Create a class list.
* Interview your grandparents, or an older member of the family or a friend who came to Australia from another country. Ask them what they do to maintain their connection to their cultural heritage. Take notes.
* As a class, list the things your interviewees told you about maintaining their connection to their culture. Put these suggestions on the board.
* Compare these suggestions with your notes from the talk on Koorie culture and the list from your brainstorming session. What are the similarities and what are the differences?
* Write an informative report about the significance of culture and heritage, based on talks by the Koorie guest speaker and the person you interviewed.
* Present your reports to the class, using Language where possible.
* Create a poster for the classroom wall that illustrates aspects of Koorie culture, labelling the images in Language.
* Collect information about the linguistic and cultural heritages of students (both Koorie and non-Koorie) and present as a multicultural class project, e.g. a presentation with headings in Language.
 | Words relating to culture | * [Strengths of Australian Aboriginal cultural practices in family life and child rearing](https://www3.aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/strengths-australian-aboriginal-cultural-practices-fam/introduction)
* [Narragunnawali resources](http://www.reconciliation.org.au/schools/resources/)
* [The importance of teaching and learning Aboriginal Languages](http://www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au/about/publications/) (How we understand language and culture p.6)
 |
| The importance of stories  | * Why are Creation stories and Dreaming stories so important to Aboriginal people? Prepare some questions using as much Language as you can. Put your questions to the guest speaker and take notes.
* The guest speaker will tell a story. Listen and take notes.
* Write an explanation of why stories are so important to Aboriginal people, using as much Language as possible.
* Swap your explanation with a classmate and see if you had the same ideas.
* Write the story that the guest speaker told you in your own words, using as much Language as you can, illustrate the story and label the illustrations in Language.
 | Words relating to the story | * [Story telling](http://splash.abc.net.au/digibook/-/c/613035/storytelling?WT.tsrc=Email&WT.mc_id=Innovation_Innovation-Splash|Secondary_email|20150506)
* Invite an appropriate community member to talk about the importance of stories to Koorie people.
* Ask the community member to tell a local story to the students, explaining its importance to the community.
* [Finding meteorite impacts in Aboriginal oral tradition](http://theconversation.com/finding-meteorite-impacts-in-aboriginal-oral-tradition-38052)
 |
| Cultural Festival | * As a class, organise a local, school-based cultural festival (not NAIDOC) in conjunction with the Traditional Owner Group.
 |  | School-based and class organised local cultural festival (not NAIDOC) with Traditional Owner Group eg Wurundjeri Festival at Thornbury Primary School |
| **Assessment:** observation, quizzes, role-play, contribution to class discussions, written work, oral presentation (**delete those not applicable**)  |
| Topic 3: Language |
| **Overview** | **Suggested Student Activities** | **Insert words and grammar in target Language** | **Comments/resources for the Language Team and Aboriginal Teacher** |
| Greetings  |  |  | See Topic 1 |
| Farewells  |  |  | See Topic 1 |
| Revision | * Revise known Language using resources created by students or a game.
* Students use a resource created for an earlier unit they have completed to revise the Language from that unit.
 | Learned Language | * Revision is critical to Language learning.
* Utilise learned vocabulary and grammar as well as new vocabulary and grammar throughout this unit
 |
| Reclaiming Language | * Watch the videos of Community leaders discussing the importance of Language and cultural reclamation. Write down ideas and discuss in class.
* How can we get back words that are no longer in common use? Discuss Language revival and any examples where this has occurred.
* Create a Language resource using the Aboriginal words, phrases or sentences you have learnt so far. This might be a game, cards, or an online resource. Then swap resources with a partner and try them out.
* Use known Language to express ideas, information and opinions in class about Language reclamation.
* Using the list of different spellings for the name of your target Language when it was first recorded by non-Aboriginal people in the 19th century, work out how you think it was pronounced. Everyone says the Language name as they think it should be pronounced based on the spellings. Remember that European letters and spelling were used. Are there many variations in the way the Language name is said? Why do you think there were so many different spellings? Discuss.
 |  | * [Reviving Indigenous Languages through Old Novels, Dictionaries and Documents](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-03-03/reviving-indigenous-languages-through-old-novels-dictionaries/7215638)
* [Rediscovering Indigenous languages](http://indigenous.sl.nsw.gov.au/) Click on a language, then click on ‘explore [language name]. If a digitised text is shown, click on it to read original text.
* Show a selection of videos from the [Aboriginal Community Leaders Interviews](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/alcv/interviews/index.aspx)
* Discuss [Language Reconstruction](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/alcv/language_reconstruction.aspx) and how this supplements existing community knowledge of Language.
* Prepare a list of the different spellings used for the name of the target Language when it was first recorded by non-Aboriginal people who collected Language in the 19th century. Ask the students to work out how they think the word was pronounced based on the various spellings. This illustrates how difficult it can be to work out how to say a word that is no longer used.
* To find the various spellings used for your Language, type your Language name into the search box at [AUSTLANG](http://austlang.aiatsis.gov.au/main.php).
* [Rebirth of Wergaia: a collaborative effort](https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/bitstream/2123/6955/1/RAL-chapter-21.pdf) – the story of a Victorian language revival project
 |
| **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.