Getting started –   
2. Greetings and routines

Foundation to Level 2,   
Victorian Aboriginal Languages,   
sample unit of work



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Contents

[Introduction 4](#_Toc45784423)

[Overview of the unit of work 4](#_Toc45784424)

[Teaching Victorian Aboriginal Languages F–10 5](#_Toc45784425)

[Learning activities 9](#_Toc45784426)

[Learning activity 3: Greetings 9](#_Toc45784427)

[Learning activity 4: Classroom routines 14](#_Toc45784428)

[Appendices 18](#_Toc45784429)

[Appendix 1: Learning activity 3 words and phrases 18](#_Toc45784430)

[Appendix 2: Learning activity 3 assessment grid 20](#_Toc45784431)

[Appendix 3: Learning activity 4 words and phrases 21](#_Toc45784432)

[Appendix 4: Learning activity 4 assessment grid 23](#_Toc45784433)

[Appendix 5: Kangaroo and possum greeting game 24](#_Toc45784434)

[Appendix 6: Whisper and action game 26](#_Toc45784435)

[Appendix 7: ‘Kangaroo says …’ game 27](#_Toc45784436)

[Appendix 8: Gesture game 28](#_Toc45784437)

Introduction

Overview of the unit of work

This sample unit of work is the second of three in the ‘Getting started’ series. The units of work are designed to support teachers implementing the Victorian Aboriginal Languages curriculum and to demonstrate how the Foundation to Level 2 content descriptions and achievement standard may be addressed. Ensure you have read Getting started – 1. Community, Country and Languages before reviewing this sample unit of work.

Teachers of Victorian Aboriginal Languages may wish to use this sample unit of work as a model from which they can develop their own unit of work.

Further advice on implementing the Victorian Aboriginal Languages curriculum in schools is available in the [Help me plan](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/foundation-10/resources/languages/victorian-aboriginal-languages/help-me-plan/Pages/default.aspx) section of the Victorian Aboriginal Languages pages on the VCAA website.

Links to the Victorian Curriculum F–10

This unit of work is linked to the Victorian Aboriginal Languages curriculum Foundation to Level 2. A list of all relevant content descriptions plus relevant extracts from the achievement standard is included at the start of each learning activity in this document.

Cross-curriculum links

**Curriculum area and level:** English, Foundation

**Content description:** Understand that English is one of many languages spoken in Australia and that different languages may be spoken by family, classmates and community [(VCELA164)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCELA164)

**Curriculum area and level:** English, Level 1

**Content description:** Understand that people use different systems of communication to cater to different needs and purposes and that many people may use sign systems to communicate with others [(VCELA198)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCELA198)

**Curriculum area and levels:** Geography, Foundation to Level 2

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Country/Place on which the school is located and why Country/Place is important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the ways in which they maintain special connections to particular Country/Place [(VCGGK066)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCGGK066)

**Curriculum area and level:** Health and Physical Education, Foundation

**Content description (extract):** Participate in play that promotes engagement with outdoor settings including … the natural environment [(VCHPEP063)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCHPEP063)

**Curriculum area and levels:** Intercultural Capability, Foundation to Level 2

**Content description:** Identify and discuss cultural diversity in the school and/or community [(VCICCD003)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCICCD003)

Other cross-curriculum opportunities

This unit of work can also be linked to the cross-curriculum priority of [learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/overview/cross-curriculum-priorities). Students begin to understand the uniqueness of these cultures and the wisdom and knowledge embedded in them.

Teaching Victorian Aboriginal Languages F–10

Protocols

**Victorian Aboriginal Languages can only be taught after permission has been granted by the language’s Traditional Owners.**

Read [Victorian Curriculum F–10 – Victorian Aboriginal Languages](http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/languages/victorian-aboriginal-languages/introduction/rationale-and-aims) carefully, and ensure that you follow the protocols on the Department of Education and Training’s  [Koorie Cross-Curricular Protocols](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/multicultural/Pages/koorieculture.aspx)  for Victorian government schools. These are complemented by the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc.’s (VAEAI)  [Protocols for Koorie Education in Victorian Primary and Secondary Schools [PDF – 0.99MB]](http://www.vaeai.org.au/wp-content/uploads/delightful-downloads/2020/01/Protocols-for-Koorie-Education-in-Victorian-Primary-and-Secondary-Schools-2019.pdf). The protocols encourage respect and trust between Aboriginal communities and schools. A school should not commence Aboriginal language classes without agreement and support from appropriate local Aboriginal people, the Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (LAECG) and/or the appropriate Traditional Owners. It is important that everyone involved shows respect for the intellectual property rights of First Nations Peoples pertaining to Aboriginal languages and cultural knowledge, and follows Community protocols and school guidelines.

Key information

Learning in Victorian Aboriginal Languages

Before the arrival of Europeans, Koorie people often learnt multiple languages, including the language of the Country where their family was located and the languages of neighbouring Countries. Each language contained sacred, cultural and scientific information, which was passed orally from generation to generation.

There are at least 44 Victorian Aboriginal Languages. All Victorian Aboriginal Languages are revival languages.

The F–10 [Victorian Aboriginal Languages curriculum](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/languages/victorian-aboriginal-languages/introduction/learning-in-victorian-aboriginal-languages) provides opportunities for students to study Victorian Aboriginal Languages that are being revived by their owners, and to become more richly connected to the Countries of the First Peoples. The amount of vocabulary and variety of language structures available for teaching and learning will be influenced by the current progress of language revival for a particular language.

Consultation with the appropriate Traditional Owners is always essential. This is relevant when providing language learning programs in schools based on the Victorian Aboriginal Languages curriculum. Respectful engagement also extends to visits, excursions to the Country or Place, and use of cultural material as part of the teaching and learning program. In order to establish a program, approval must be sought and received from the school council or similar, the local Aboriginal Community (ideally through the [Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group](http://www.vaeai.org.au/local-aboriginal-education-consultative-groups/); for more information, contact [VAEAI](https://www.vaeai.org.au/templates/contact/)) and the [Traditional Owners](https://achris.vic.gov.au/weave/wca.html) of the land on which the school stands.

Language Team

It is very important that students understand the relationship between Language, Country and Community. Victorian Aboriginal Language programs have different needs to other language programs. Currently, Victorian Aboriginal Languages are not often used on a daily basis, and each is at a different stage of revival. There are very few books or teaching materials available for most Victorian Aboriginal Languages.

To ensure appropriate resources are sourced, developed and taught, schools are advised to establish a Language Team. Where possible this team should include an Aboriginal Language authority or custodian from the Community, an Aboriginal Language teacher or assistant, a linguist and possibly a qualified language teacher. The Language Team can be further supported by a [Koorie Education Coordinator (KEC) and/or a Koorie Engagement Support Officer (KESO)](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/marrungregional.aspx), and a [Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (LAECG)](https://www.vaeai.org.au/local-aboriginal-education-consultative-groups/)representative.

The Aboriginal members on the school’s Language Team will assist staff and students in learning about Aboriginal ways of ‘knowing, being, doing, valuing and learning’ (Yunkaporta, 2010). This Aboriginal language pedagogy will strengthen and complement common language teaching methodology such as repetition and systematic building of vocabulary and language structures.

Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country

Conducting a Welcome to Country or an Acknowledgement of Country demonstrates respect for the Traditional Owners of the land on which the event or class is taking place and acknowledges the spiritual, physical and cultural connection to Country as the First Peoples.

An official Welcome to Country can only be provided by a member of the Traditional Owner group from the Country where the event or class is taking place.

An Acknowledgement of Country can be given by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people who wish to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which they stand. An Aboriginal specialist in the local language may help write an Acknowledgement of Country in the local language that students can learn. Teachers may also encourage more advanced students of Victorian Aboriginal Languages to write their own individual or group Acknowledgement of Country, following appropriate local Community protocols and with the guidance of the Language Team.

For further advice, see [Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Welcome to Country in Schools](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/acknowledgement-traditional-owners-and-welcome-country-schools/policy) on the Department of Education and Training website.

Dictionaries, databases and applications

Traditional language custodians, often in conjunction with a linguist, can provide an understanding of the range and variety of language already documented. An agreement with Traditional Owners about the most appropriate source dictionary and/or word lists to use is essential. For some languages, simple databases and word-learning applications exist. Permission must be sought prior to using such tools and materials. Any words or constructions required for the purpose of teaching a Victorian Aboriginal Language must come from the local Aboriginal Community. Further resources for Victorian Aboriginal Languages are available from the [Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages](https://www.vaclang.org.au/).

Word creation and spelling

All Victorian Aboriginal Languages are revival languages and certain words and grammatical structures may have been lost or did not exist at the time language information was being documented. Teachers and students need to be guided by the Language Team when creating new words and phrases. Strategies can include using known word-formation processes for the local and neighbouring Aboriginal languages, and borrowing words from other related Aboriginal languages with permission. Aboriginal languages were not traditionally written, and colonists who recorded Aboriginal languages were often unable to hear or distinguish unfamiliar sounds and used inconsistent and varying spelling systems influenced by their own languages. The Victorian Aboriginal Language specialist should be consulted for Community’s preferred spelling conventions.

Pronunciation

All teachers are encouraged to become familiar with the local language sounds that do not occur in English prior to commencing teaching a Victorian Aboriginal Language. Stress patterns are also different from those in English. Teachers should do this in consultation with their Language Team and/or the designated language custodian. If teachers have not previously spoken or taught this language, they will need to practise these sounds until they are comfortable both pronouncing them as individual sounds, and in words and phrases, with the correct stress patterns. Teachers are strongly encouraged to program regular visits from knowledgeable Community members who can model pronunciation. Where possible programs should also include audio and/or video recordings of Community speakers pronouncing the local language sounds and speaking in the local language.

Sign language and gestures

Sign language is a common characteristic of many Australian Aboriginal languages. These ‘alternate sign languages’ (Kendon, 1988) are not related to deafness and are not a primary means of communication. They appear to have been developed to be used when spoken communication was not practical (for example, to communicate over distances, such as when hunting), not permitted (for example, during rituals related to mourning, initiation, kinship relationships) or during ceremonies, dancing and children’s play. In some parts of Australia, hand signs are still commonly used. In many parts of Australia, including Victoria, body, face and eye movements also have specific meanings, and are used to communicate instead of speaking.

Before using any sign language or gestures, it is essential to talk to your local Language Team about whether there is existing sign language from the local language in use. If not, they may approve using borrowed sign language from another Aboriginal language or adapted from Australian Sign Language (Auslan), following appropriate protocols.

Key resources

Background resources for teachers

* Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (2018) ‘Yarning circles’, [www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/about/k-12-policies/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-perspectives/resources/yarning-circles](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/about/k-12-policies/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-perspectives/resources/yarning-circles)
* Research Unit for Indigenous Language (n.d.) ‘The sounds of Australian Aboriginal Languages’ video series, Faculty of Arts, University of Melbourne, <https://arts.unimelb.edu.au/research-unit-for-indigenous-language/training/australian-indigenous-languages/sounds-of-aboriginal-languages>
* Yunkaporta T (2010) ‘Our ways of learning in Aboriginal languages’, in J Hobson, K Lowe, S Poetsch & M Walsh (eds) *Re-awakening Languages: theory and practice in the revitalisation of Australia’s Indigenous languages*, Sydney University Press, Sydney, 37–49, [https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au//bitstream/2123/6914/1/RAL-chapter-3.pdf [PDF – 277KB]](https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/bitstream/2123/6914/1/RAL-chapter-3.pdf); see also [www.8ways.online](https://www.8ways.online/)

Additional resources for teachers

The following resources may be helpful for those wanting to know more about the teaching and learning of Aboriginal languages.

Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country

* Reconciliation Australia (n.d.) ‘Let’s Talk: Welcome to Country, Acknowledgement of Country’, [www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/welcome\_acknowledgement\_v4.pdf [PDF – 629KB]](https://www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/welcome_acknowledgement_v4.pdf)

Sounds and spelling

* Jones C, Chandler P and Lowe K (2010) ‘Sounds, spelling and learning to read an Aboriginal language’, in J Hobson, K Lowe, S Poetsch & M Walsh (eds) *Re-awakening Languages: theory and practice in the revitalisation of Australia’s Indigenous languages*, Sydney University Press, Sydney, 281­–292, [https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/bitstream/handle/2123/6956/RAL-chapter-24.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y [PDF – 160KB]](https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/bitstream/handle/2123/6956/RAL-chapter-24.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)
* Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages (VACL) (n., ‘Language fact sheets’ (including 2. Language Sounds; 3. Spelling; 4.Spelling decisions – consonants; 5. Spelling decisions – vowels), [www.vaclang.org.au/Resources/language-fact-sheets.html](http://www.vaclang.org.au/Resources/language-fact-sheets.html)
* Webb, T (2020) ‘Changing the ABC’s pronunciation guidance on Indigenous words’, ABC News, [www.abc.net.au/news/about/backstory/2020-06-04/tiger-webb-abc-pronunciation-guide-indigenous-languages/12317822](http://www.abc.net.au/news/about/backstory/2020-06-04/tiger-webb-abc-pronunciation-guide-indigenous-languages/12317822)

Sign language

* Colin Jones, Queensland Rural Medical Education Limited (2013) ‘What is the importance of body language and sign language in communication?’ video, YouTube, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=03bPHQktqiI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=03bPHQktqiI) (Note: The statement in this video that ‘we had one sign language which we used over the whole continent before Europeans arrived here’ is contested in Victoria.)
* Kendon, A (1988) *Sign Languages of Aboriginal Australia: cultural, semiotic and communicative perspectives*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne
* Living Tongues Institute for Endangered Languages (2010) ‘Clifton Bieundurry – traditional hand signs (Australia)’ video, YouTube, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=qLwf2b4kWKo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qLwf2b4kWKo) (Wangkajunga, north-western Australia)
* Miller, M (2017) *Auslan and Yorta Yorta language*, in consultation with Yorta Yorta Nations Aboriginal Corporation and Yalca Loitjiba (for more information, contact [VAEAI](https://www.vaeai.org.au/administration))

Learning activities

Both of the following sample learning activities were designed to cover elements of the content from the Victorian Aboriginal Languages curriculum Foundation to Level 2. All parts of the sample learning activities would need to be delivered to ensure the content descriptions that are listed here are explicitly covered.

**Before beginning a unit of work, review all resources and activities and discuss with the Language Team to ensure that everyone is comfortable to proceed. If not, make adjustments where necessary.**

Learning activity 3: Greetings

**Timing (approximate):**  2 × 1-hour sessions

**Learning intentions – Session 1:**  Know and understand that ways of greeting people are different in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages to English

Be able to greet and respond to one or more people in the local language

**Learning intentions – Session 2:**  Know relevant sign language and/or gestures relating to greetings and farewells

Understand that messages in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages can be communicated in a number of ways

Be able to greet, respond to and farewell one or more people in the local language

**Content descriptions (extracts):** Interact with each other, the teaching team and visiting respected community members, using language and gestures to greet and talk about self … [(VCLVC130)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCLVC130)

Participate in guided group activities, such as games, ... using movement and gestures to support understanding and to convey meaning [(VCLVC131)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCLVC131)

Recognise there are many ways of communicating messages in Aboriginal languages [(VCLVU143)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCLVU143)

Recognise that different words and language forms are used to address and communicate with people according to relationship and context [(VCLVU145)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCLVU145)

**Achievement standards (extracts):** By the end of Level 2, students interact with the teaching team ... to talk about themselves ... using familiar modelled language and gestures. They use … modelled questions and responses to participate in guided group activities ...

[Students] understand that messages in Aboriginal [and Torres Strait Islander] languages can be communicated in a number of ways … They know that different words are used to address and communicate with different people, depending on relationship and situation.

Preparation

* Review the lists of resources (see [the background resources for teachers](#BackResources) and [the list of resources for this learning activity](#Resources1)). Make sure to read the ‘Yarning circles’ resource and review ‘The sounds of Australian Aboriginal Languages’ video series.
* Review the greetings videos. If preferred, the Language Team can prepare their own greetings video, using the videos in the resources as inspiration.
* Prepare Learning activity 3 words and phrases lists (see [Appendix 1](#Appendix1)) with the Language Team.
* Review the sign language video and/or prepare own resource for local language gestures with the Language Team.
* Find a quiet, safe outdoor space, away from traffic and noise.
* Prepare resources for the Kangaroo and possum greeting game (see [Appendix 5](#Appendix5)) with the Language Team.
* Conduct any pre-assessment of student knowledge (see an example in [Assessment ideas](#Assessment1)).

**Note:** Language for greetings and ways of greeting or meeting differ between cultures. In many Aboriginal languages, there are at least three different ways of saying ‘you’, often depending on the number of people being addressed.Greeting a single student is likely to be different from the way you would greet a group of students or the class. Please discuss with your Language Team to ensure correct local usage.

Session 1

Activity 1: Learning greetings for different numbers of people

* Sit in a yarning circle. Show the students the ABC’s [‘Greetings](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxD8v-d5XKY&list=PLmWe-V9tacwHqIfIBPvZMThlaYH6gH2u0&index=24&t=0s)’ video to review introducing yourself and the language you speak.
* Model language for students to introduce themselves in the local language and say they are speaking the language, using sign language and/or gestures where appropriate.
* Going around the circle, students introduce themselves one by one in the local language and say they are speaking that language.
* Explain briefly what a greeting is and discuss the different ways of greeting people in different languages.
* Watch the [‘Greetings for different people](https://vimeo.com/430549516?ref=em-share)’ video or a video prepared by the Language Team.
* Teach appropriate greetings and responses for the local language for singular, dual and plural groups of people.

Activity 2: Practising greetings

* Go outside.
* Sit in a yarning circle.
* Model greeting the whole class, then greeting two students, and then greeting an individual student. Prompt students each time to respond.
* Ask one student in the circle to greet the person to their right. That person then responds before greeting the person to their right, and so on. Continue around the circle until everyone has had a turn.
* Teach students a positive and negative response in reply to the greeting, for example, good and not good, or yes and no, as appropriate. Students repeat the responses several times.
* Get two students to stand in the middle of the circle and get the group to greet them. Model a reply for the students and get them to repeat it.
* Get three students to stand in the middle of the circle and get the group to greet them. Model a reply for the students and get them to repeat it.
* Ask some students to form groups of two, some students to form groups of three or more, and some students to stand by themselves. Groups and individuals circulate and greet each of the other groups and individuals with the appropriate language term and responses.
* Students add to the word wall of Aboriginal language they started in the activities in Getting started – 1. Community, Country and Languages. Words can be illustrated or have an English translation.

**Extension:** Students with more advanced knowledge or skills can write the words for the word wall of language.

Activity 3: Reflection and farewell

* Students reflect on what they have noticed and learnt.
* Farewell students in local language and explain what the word or phrase means. If this is a created word or phrase, explain how it was created. Get students to repeat the farewell word or phrase.

**Tips:**

* From Activity 2 onwards, students are asked to provide dual and plural forms. Re-model the language and prompt students as often as is needed.
* During the reflection, students can be asked to share in pairs to ensure every student has an opportunity to reflect and share.
* Students with more advanced writing skills may prefer to record their reflection in written form. Other students may prefer to draw their reflection.

Session 2

Activity 4: Practising sign language and/or gestures for greetings

* Sit in a yarning circle.
* Model greeting the whole class, then greeting two students, and then greeting an individual student. Prompt students each time to respond.
* Ask one student in the circle to greet the person to their right. That person then responds before greeting the person to their right, and so on. Continue around the circle until everyone has had a turn.
* Watch [‘Sign Language Video 1](https://vimeo.com/414663556)’ from members of the Wadeye Community in the Northern Territory or watch a video of local sign language created by the Language Team. Explain the concept of borrowing words and signs from other languages when creating language.
* Practise appropriate sign language or gestures for greetings. Students then repeat the circle activity using sign language or gestures.

**Tips:**

* Always talk to students about the protocols of language learning and language creation, especially if there are no language custodians present.
* Ask students with more confidence to greet more than one student in the local language using appropriate sign language or gestures.

Activity 5: Kangaroo and possum greeting game

* Teach the students the words for ‘one’, ‘two’, ‘three’ and ‘possum’ (or words for different types of possum), and practise by repeating aloud, chanting or rapping.
* Explain the Kangaroo and possum greeting game (see [Appendix 5](#Appendix5)). Revise the words for ‘kangaroo’ and ‘leaf’ (introduced in Getting started – 1. Community, Country and Languages), and the words for greeting one, two or more people, and then play in pairs or small groups.
* Continue to add to the word wall of language.

Activity 6: Reflection and farewell

* Students reflect on what they have noticed and learnt.
* Farewell students in local language and sign language or gestures. Get students to repeat the farewell word or phrase.

**Tip:** It is important to work with the Language Team when building new language, incorporating or developing sign language, or adding culturally appropriate gestures into your program. It is also important to share how words were created with students, and to remind students about following local protocols.

Assessment ideas

Pre-assessment

Ask students if they know any of the local language, for example greetings, instructions or numbers.

Ongoing assessment

Students begin by mainly observing, listening and showing understanding by following simple instructions and behaving respectfully. Then they progress to answering simple questions, repeating individual words that are modelled several times, contributing occasionally to discussions, and showing understanding of respectful behaviours. Finally students will provide more detail in answers, say words without prompting, contribute regularly and thoughtfully to discussions, encourage others to behave respectfully, and show knowledge of key Aboriginal concepts and places discussed.

The teacher can use the table in [Appendix 2](#Appendix2) as a guide when observing students’ interactions in the language; participation in class activities and games; answers to questions; following of instructions; respect for language, culture and Country; and reflection on learning.

Resources

Resources used in Session 1

* ‘Greetings’ video, ABC Indigenous, YouTube, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxD8v-d5XKY&list=PLmWe-V9tacwHqIfIBPvZMThlaYH6gH2u0&index=24&t=0s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxD8v-d5XKY&list=PLmWe-V9tacwHqIfIBPvZMThlaYH6gH2u0&index=24&t=0s) (saying your name and the language you speak)
* ‘Here’s 11 ways to say “hello” in an Indigenous language’ video, Australian Red Cross, Facebook, [www.facebook.com/AustralianRedCross/videos/heres-11-ways-to-say-hello-in-an-indigenous-language/10156395365157222/](http://www.facebook.com/AustralianRedCross/videos/heres-11-ways-to-say-hello-in-an-indigenous-language/10156395365157222/)
* ‘Greetings for different people’ video, Thamarrurr Youth, Vimeo, <https://vimeo.com/430549516?ref=em-share> (Wadeye region, Northern Territory)
* ‘Contemporary greetings in Kaurna’, (Jack Buckskin) Kaurna Warra Pintyanthi, Vimeo, <https://vimeo.com/66780707> (includes simple and more complex examples)
* Learning activity 3 words and phrases lists (see [Appendix 1](#Appendix1))

Resources used in Session 2

* Kangaroo and possum greeting game instructions and board (see [Appendix 5](#Appendix5))
* ‘Sign Language Video 1’ (greetings), Thamarrurr Youth, Vimeo, https://vimeo.c om/414663556 (Wadeye region, Northern Territory)
* Learning activity 3 words and phrases lists (see [Appendix 1](#Appendix1))

Learning activity 4: Classroom routines

**Timing (approximate):** 2 × 1-hour sessions

**Learning intentions:**  Know and understand basic classroom routine vocabulary

Be able to follow and give basic instructions in the local language

**Content descriptions (extracts):**  Interact with each other, the teaching team and visiting respected community members, using language and gestures to greet and talk about self … [(VCLVC130)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCLVC130)

Participate in guided group activities, such as games, songs and simple tasks, using movement and gestures … to convey meaning [(VCLVC131)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCLVC131)

Interact in classroom routines and respond to teacher instructions [(VCLVC132)](http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCLVC132)

Recognise there are many ways of communicating messages in Aboriginal languages [(VCLVU143)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCLVU143)

Recognise that different words and language forms are used to address and communicate with people according to relationship and context [(VCLVU145)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCLVU145)

Build the resources of the language by creating [and] performing ... new texts, and by creating new contexts for its use [(VCLVU151)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCLVU151)

**Achievement standards (extracts):** By the end of Level 2, students interact with the teaching team and respected community members to talk about themselves … using familiar modelled language and gestures … They use movement [and] gestures … to participate in guided group activities, for example, collaborating to adapt and perform action songs. They interact in familiar classroom exchanges, using routine classroom language, movement, gesture and action, for example when … following instructions.

They understand that messages in Aboriginal [and Torres Strait Islander] languages can be communicated in a number of ways, such as … through song … They know that different words are used to address and communicate with different people, depending on relationship and situation … They recognise that new words can be formed from within the language itself and work with the community language team to build resources for the language, such as … songs.

Preparation

* Review the [list of resources](#Resources2) for this learning activity.
* Prepare Learning activity 4 words and phrases lists (see [Appendix 3](#Appendix3)) with the Language Team.
* If possible, organise a language custodian to attend this learning activity to assist with the goodbye song. Prepare useful words and phrases for the goodbye song with the Language Team.
* Find a quiet, safe outdoor space, away from traffic and noise.
* Conduct any pre-assessment of student knowledge (see an example in [Assessment ideas](#Assessment2)).

Session 1

Activity 1: Introduction to classroom routine language

* Sit in a yarning circle. Greet the whole group, first saying the greeting and then getting students to repeat the greeting. Prompt students to provide an appropriate response.
* Ask one student in the circle to greet the person to their right. That person then responds before greeting the person to their right, and so on. Continue around the circle until everyone has had a turn.
* Introduce the new classroom routine words or phrases. Explain that these words or phrases will be used in the classroom instead of English.
* Ask all students to repeat the words or phrases.

Activity 2: Practising routine language in games

* Take the students outside and model and practise new vocabulary.
* Explain and play the Whisper and action game(see [Appendix 6](#Appendix6)).
* Explain and play the ‘Kangaroo says …’ game(see [Appendix 7](#Appendix7)).

Activity 3: Reflection and farewell

* Students reflect on what they have noticed and learnt.
* Continue to add to the word wall of language.
* Farewell students in local language and sign language or gestures. Get students to repeat the farewell word or phrase.

Session 2

Activity 4: Classroom routines using sign language or gestures

* Sit in a yarning circle. Give instructions – for example, ‘Sit!’ – in the local language.
* Ask one student in the circle to greet the person to their right using appropriate sign language or gestures. That person then responds before greeting the person to their right, and so on. Continue around the circle until everyone has had a turn.
* Watch the [classroom routines sign language](https://vimeo.com/414977112) video or a video prepared by the Language Team, or if an Aboriginal member of the Language Team is available to attend this session, they can demonstrate sign language or gestures for the instructions.
* Practise the sign language and/or gestures.

Activity 5: Practising new vocabulary and sign language

* Take the students outside and practise new vocabulary and sign language and/or gestures.
* Explain and play the Gesture game (see [Appendix 8](#Appendix8)).

Activity 6: Goodbye song

* Return to the classroom to watch [‘The Goodbye Song’](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IkNQY-1t830) video.
* As a class – and if possible with an Aboriginal member of the Language Team to assist – begin to create your own goodbye song and appropriate actions. This could include saying goodbye to different groups of people, using vocabulary learnt.
* Continue to add to the word wall of language.

Activity 7: Reflection and farewell

* Students reflect on what they have noticed and learnt.
* Students sing the goodbye song as a farewell.

**Tips:**

* If an Aboriginal member of the Language Team is not available to assist, they may wish to delegate another community speaker or provide advice to the teacher prior to this session.
* Encourage students to use the sign language and gestures as much as they can during their everyday interactions in the classroom and beyond.

Assessment ideas

Pre-assessment

Ask students if they know any greetings, gestures or sign language from Aboriginal languages.

Check if they have ever seen Aboriginal Community members or Australian Sign Language (Auslan) speakers using sign language.

Ongoing assessment

Students begin by mainly observing, listening and showing understanding by following simple instructions and behaving respectfully. Then they progress to answering simple questions, repeating individual words that are modelled several times, contributing occasionally to discussions and showing understanding of respectful behaviours. Finally students will provide more detail in answers, say words without prompting, contribute regularly and thoughtfully to discussions, encourage others to behave respectfully, and show knowledge of key Aboriginal concepts and places discussed.

The teacher can use the table in [Appendix 4](#Appendix4) as a guide when observing students’ interactions in the language; participation in class activities and games; answers to questions; following of instructions; respectful behaviour; respect for language, culture and Country; and reflection on learning.

Resources

Resources used in Session 1

* Whisper and action game (see [Appendix 6](#Appendix6))
* ‘Kangaroo says …’ game (see [Appendix 7](#Appendix7))
* Learning activity 4 words and phrase lists (see [Appendix 3](#Appendix3))

Resources used in Session 2

* ‘Sign Language Video 2’ (classroom routines), Thamarrurr Youth, Vimeo, <https://vimeo.com/414977112> (Wadeye region, Northern Territory)
* Gesture game (see [Appendix 8](#Appendix8))
* ‘Josh Oshlack records “The Goodbye Song” – The Recording Studio’, ABC TV & iview, YouTube, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=IkNQY-1t830](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IkNQY-1t830)

Appendices

Appendix 1: Learning activity 3 words and phrases

**Note:** Prepare the words and phrases lists with the Language Team. Some suggestions have been included, based on the activities, but you can also add additional language that you think is relevant. This additional language may include words and phrases you can use to expose students to more language (without explicit explanation) and gradually build students’ passive understanding.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Learning activity 3, Session 1 words and phrases list** | | |
| **English** | **Local language** | **Sign language or gestures (where relevant)** |
| me/I |  |  |
| you |  |  |
| him/he |  |  |
| her/she |  |  |
| farewell/goodbye |  |  |
| greeting one person |  |  |
| greeting two people |  |  |
| greeting three people |  |  |
| good |  |  |
| bad/not good |  |  |
| yes |  |  |
| no |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Learning activity 3, Session 2 words and phrases list** | | |
| **English** | **Local language** | **Sign language or gestures (where relevant)** |
| kangaroo |  |  |
| possum |  |  |
| leaf |  |  |
| one |  |  |
| two |  |  |
| three |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

Appendix 2: Learning activity 3 assessment grid

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Starting out** | **Progressing towards Level 2** | **By the end of Level 2 (achievement standard extracts)** |
| Students begin to interact with the teaching team to talk about themselves using familiar modelled language and gestures. | With support, students interact with the teaching team to talk about themselves using familiar modelled language and gestures. | … students interact with the teaching team … to talk about themselves ... using familiar modelled language and gestures. |
| Students begin to use modelled questions and responses to participate in guided group activities. | With support, students use modelled questions and responses to participate in guided group activities. | [Students] use … modelled questions and responses to participate in guided group activities … |
| Students begin to understand that messages in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages can be communicated in a number of ways. | Students have some understanding that messages in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages can be communicated in a number of ways. | [Students] understand that messages in Aboriginal [and Torres Strait Islander] languages can be communicated in a number of ways … |
| Students have a basic understanding that different words are used to address and communicate with different people, depending on relationship and situation. | Students recognise that different words are used to address and communicate with different people, depending on relationship and situation. | [Students] know that different words are used to address and communicate with different people, depending on relationship and situation. |

Appendix 3: Learning activity 4 words and phrases

**Note:**

* Prepare the words and phrases list with the Language Team. Some suggestions have been included, based on the activities, but you can also add additional language that you think is relevant. This additional language may include words and phrases you can use to expose students to more language (without explicit explanation) and gradually build students’ passive understanding.
* Confirm the local language word for ‘says’ in the context ‘Kangaroo says ...’ Some Aboriginal languages use an expression for ‘says’ that is not a direct translation, for example ‘Kangaroo like this …’ Many Aboriginal languages do not use a suffix on third person singular subjects (he/she/it).

| **Learning activity 4, Sessions 1 and 2 words and phrases list** | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **English** | **Local language** | **Sign language or gestures (where relevant)** |
| me/I |  |  |
| You |  |  |
| him/he |  |  |
| her/she |  |  |
| farewell/goodbye |  |  |
| greeting one person |  |  |
| greeting two people |  |  |
| greeting three people |  |  |
| good |  |  |
| bad/not good |  |  |
| yes |  |  |
| no |  |  |
| kangaroo |  |  |
| leaf |  |  |
| stand/get up |  |  |
| sit |  |  |
| stop |  |  |
| quiet |  |  |
| speak |  |  |
| go |  |  |
| come |  |  |
| show/point |  |  |
| Kangaroo says |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

Appendix 4: Learning activity 4 assessment grid

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Foundation** | **Progressing to Level 2** | **By the end of Level 2 (achievement standard extracts)** |
| Students begin to interact with the teaching team and respected community members to talk about themselves using familiar modelled language and gestures. | With support, students interact with the teaching team and respected community members to talk about themselves using familiar modelled language and gestures. | … students interact with the teaching team and respected community members to talk about themselves ... using familiar modelled language and gestures. |
| Students begin to use movement and gestures to participate in guided group activities, for example, collaborating to adapt and perform action songs. | With support, students use movement and gestures to participate in guided group activities, for example, collaborating to adapt and perform action songs. | [Students] use movement [and] gestures … to participate in guided group activities, for example, collaborating to adapt and perform action songs. |
| Students begin to interact in familiar classroom exchanges, using routine classroom language, movement, gesture and action, for example when following instructions. | With support, students interact in familiar classroom exchanges, using routine classroom language, movement, gesture and action, for example when following instructions. | [Students] interact in familiar classroom exchanges, using routine classroom language, movement, gesture and action, for example when … following instructions. |
| Students begin to understand that messages in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages can be communicated in a number of ways, such as through song. | Students have some understanding that messages in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages can be communicated in a number of ways, such as through song. | [Students] understand that messages in Aboriginal [and Torres Strait Islander] languages can be communicated in a number of ways, such as … through song … |
| Students have a basic understanding that different words are used to address and communicate with different people, depending on relationship and situation. | Students recognise that different words are used to address and communicate with different people, depending on relationship and situation. | [Students] know that different words are used to address and communicate with different people, depending on relationship and situation. |
| Students understand that new words can be formed from within the language itself and understand the importance of building resources for the language, such as songs. | Students recognise that new words can be formed from within the language itself and with support, work with the community language team to build resources for the language, such as songs. | [Students] recognise that new words can be formed from within the language itself and work with the community language team to build resources for the language, such as … songs. |

Appendix 5: Kangaroo and possum greeting game

**Learning intention:** To practise greeting groups of different numbers

**Playing area:** An inside area

**Equipment (per pair or small group):** Animal greeting board (printed on A3)

Small stones

Three leaves with the numbers 1, 2 and 3 on them (one number per leaf)

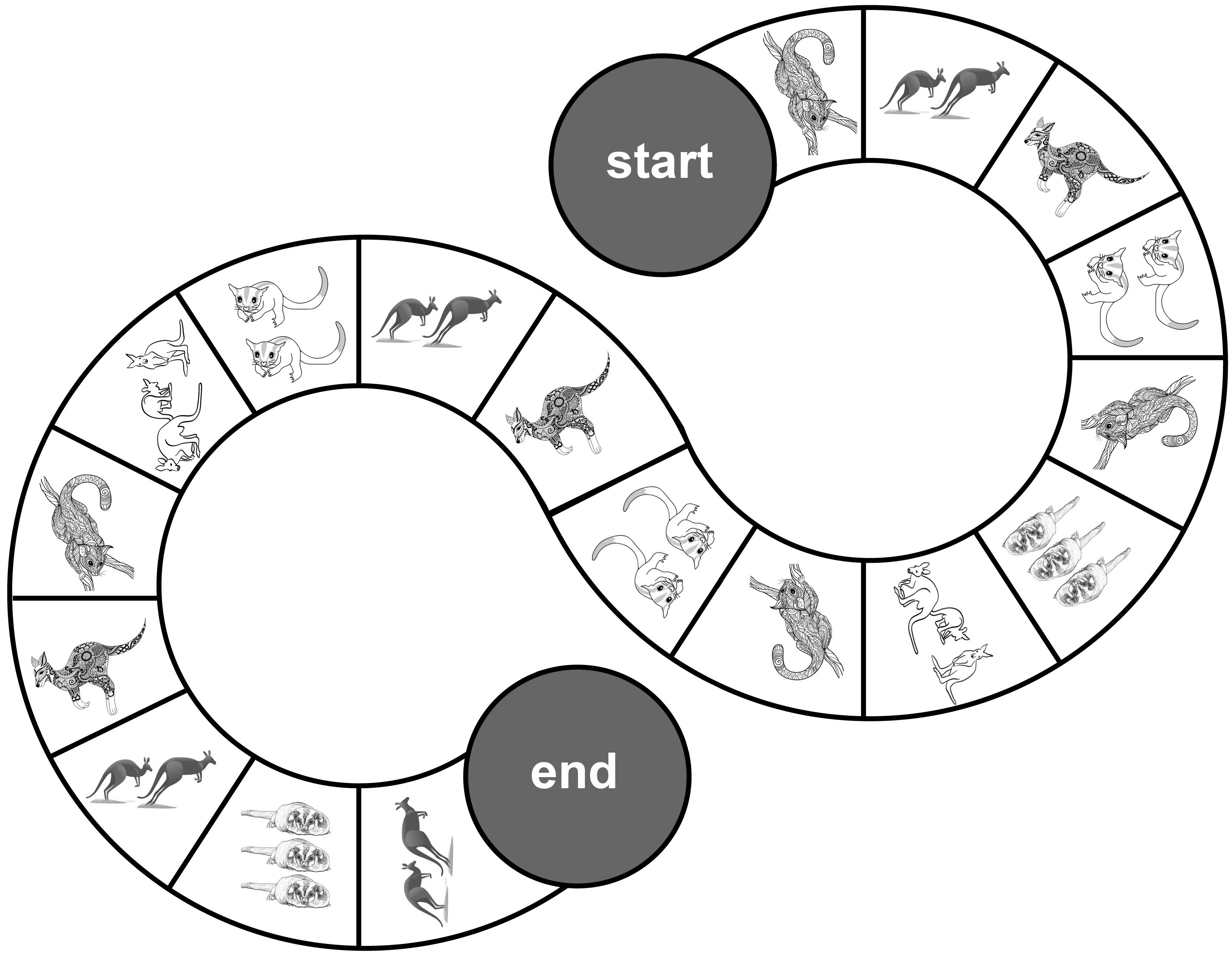
Small bag

**Gameplay and basic rules:**

* Players put their stones on the ‘Start’ symbol.
* The first player pulls a leaf out of the bag and moves that number of places.
* They then greet the animal or animals on that place in local language.
* If they get the greeting wrong, they move back one place. If they get it right, they stay where they are. They return the leaf to the bag.
* The next player has their turn.
* The game finishes when someone reaches the end.

**Extension:** Encourage students who are confident and remember the words for one, two and three to say these aloud when they pull out their leaf.

Kangaroo and possum greeting game board



Appendix 6: Whisper and action game

**Learning intentions:** To listen to and repeat instructions and then act out the instruction

To allow students to practise speaking the local language

**Playing area:** A place where students can sit in a yarning circle

**Equipment:** None

**Gameplay and basic rules:**

* Students sit in a circle.
* The teacher whispers an instruction to one person, and then that person whispers it to the next person in the circle. This continues until the last person is reached.
* The last person then performs that action.

Appendix 7: ‘Kangaroo says …’ game

**Learning intentions:** To listen to and act out instructions in the local language

To allow students to practise listening to the local language

**Playing area:** A place where students can stand with space around them

**Equipment:** Learning activity 4 words and phrase list (especially new instructions)

**Gameplay and basic rules:**

* Students stand in front of the teacher, facing the teacher.
* When the teacher says ‘Kangaroo says …’ and a classroom instruction (all in local language), the students must act out that instruction. If the teacher says an instruction without preceding it with ‘Kangaroo says …’, the students must stay still. (This is similar to the game ‘Simon says …’)

**Tips:**

* Play a practice round, saying the instructions and demonstrating the action and getting students to mirror you.
* To vary the game, omit ‘Kangaroo says …’ Say the instruction and perform the action, but sometimes deliberately perform the wrong action to check who is listening and understanding.
* Any animal name can be substituted for ‘kangaroo’; however, students must be familiarised with any alternative animal name before starting the game.
* Once most students are confident, increase the speed of instructions.
* Students who are confident can lead the game (with or without the teacher prompting).

Appendix 8: Gesture game

**Learning intention:** To learn and practise some different gestures and vocabulary in the local language

**Playing area:** An area where students can stand with space around them

**Equipment:** Learning activity 4 words and phrases list

**Gameplay and basic rules:**

* Students stand in front of the teacher, facing the teacher.
* One student performs a gesture, and the other students race each other to say what it is in the local language.
* When someone guesses the right gesture word, they perform a new gesture, and the game continues.