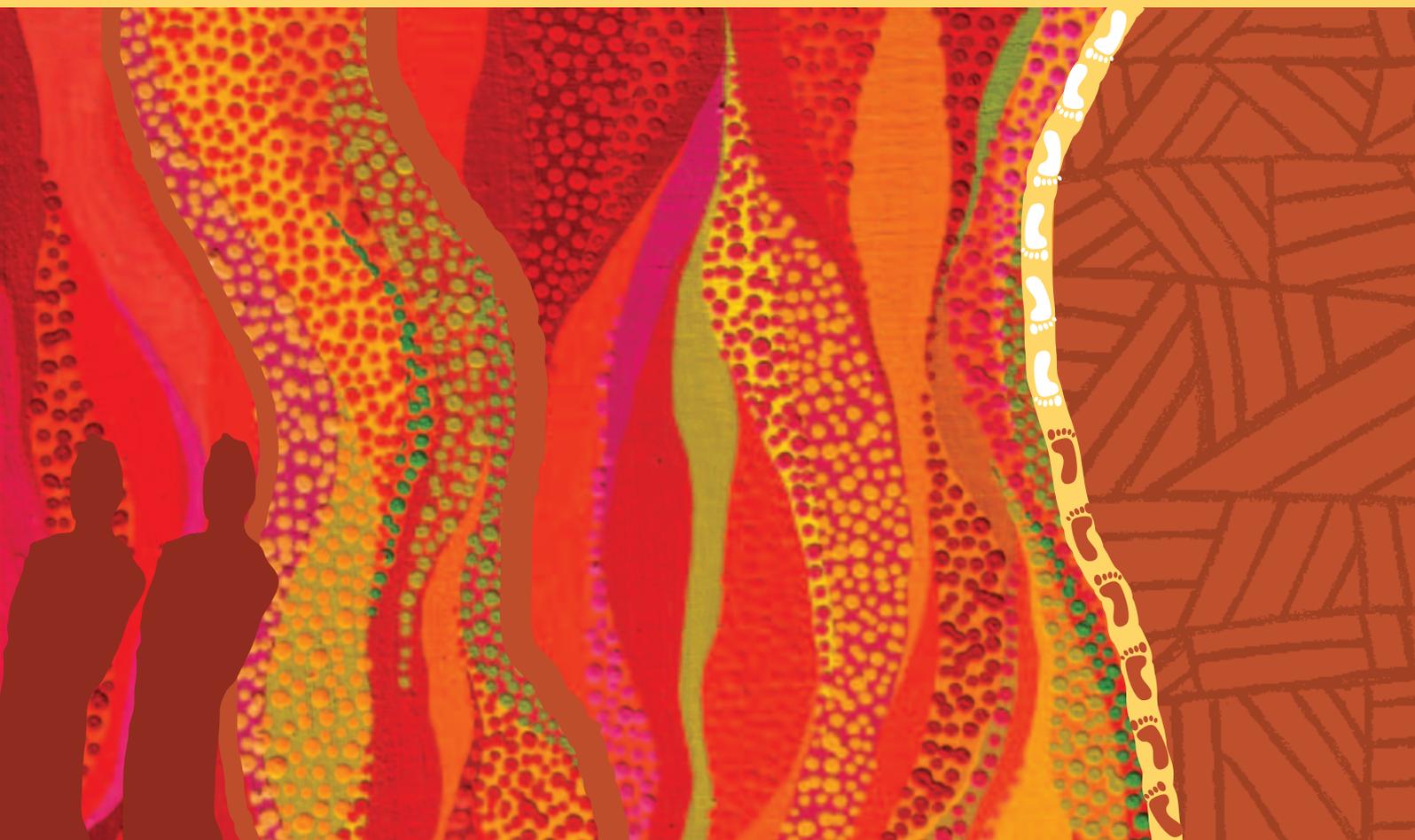




Department of Education
Department of Training
and Workforce Development



Tracks to Two-Way Learning



OUR VIEWS, OUR WAYS



Aboriginal knowledge,
beliefs, today

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Manager Intellectual Property and Copyright

Department of Education

Email: copyright.DCS.CO@det.wa.edu.au

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www.westone.wa.gov.au

MORE INFORMATION

Department of Education, Western Australia
Institute for Professional Learning
Principal Consultant Leadership, Teaching and Support,
EAL/EAD
Tel: 1300 610 801
Email: institute.professional.learning@education.wa.edu.au
Website: www.det.wa.edu.au/professionallearning

Department of Training and Workforce Development
Policy Planning and Research
Senior Literacy Officer
Tel: (08) 6551 5511
Website: www.dtwd.wa.gov.au

Tracks to Two-Way Learning

FOCUS AREA 2

OUR VIEWS, OUR WAYS

Aboriginal knowledge, beliefs, today

Acknowledgements

Project Management and Coordination

Patricia Königsberg
Glenys Collard
Margaret McHugh

Academic Research and Resource Development Team

Dr Judith Rochecouste
Professor Ian Malcolm
Professor Farzad Sharifian
Coral Brockman
Aileen Hawkes
Cheryl Wiltshire
Dr Ellen Grote
Anna Bennetts
Kathrin Dixon
Alison Hill
Anne MacKay

Project Reference Group

Karen Webster
Majella Stevens
Adriano Truscott
Karen Cowie
Jacqui Williams
Dorothy O'Reilly
Allison Heinritz
Corel Gillespie

Strategic Project Support

Kevin O'Keefe
Naomi Ward
Peter Dunnell
Bill Mann
Paul Bridge
Juanita Healy
Rosemary Cahill
Janine Milton

Capacity-Building Two-Way Teams

Bernie Ryder – Roz Tritton
Caelene Bartlett – Zoei Nixon
Charmaine Dershow – Catherine Good (deceased)
Dawn Holland (deceased) – Nola Chromiack
Diane Gray – Sue Kennedy
Elsie Woods – Ros Fleay
Garry Taylor – Jan Ackroyd
Gloria Mc Callum – Karen Cowie
Marion Baumgarten – Michael Harvey
Maxine Williams – Anne Thomason
Nicki Patterson – Carla Richards
Rowena Puertollano – Denise Shillinglaw
Stephanie Armstrong – Jane Salt
Wayne Coles – Moya Glasson

Community Consultation

Allan Mitchell (deceased)
Celina Eggington
Denis Eggington
Dumbartung Aboriginal Corporation
Eva Sahana
Louella Eggington
Mallee Aboriginal Corporation
Robert Cox
Robert Eggington
Sylvia and Don Collard
Professor Ted Wilkes
Parent and Community Engagement Program (PaCE), Shire of Swan

Site-based Two-Way Teams/Educators (and Partnership Schools, 2004-2011)

Basil Kickett – Lisa Ledger (Narrogin Primary School)
Denise Thornton – Taryn Linden (Nulsen Primary School)
Georgina Coomer – Andrea Gadd (Karratha Primary School)
Gina Riley – Nathan Bushby (Yulga Jinna Remote Community School)
Gloria Dann – Bronwyn Mumme (Djidi Djidi Primary School)
Jo Kelly – Aaron Chaplin (South Hedland Primary School)
Joyce Drummond – Eleanor Kruger (Vocational Education and Training)
Libby DeJon – Beth Griffen (Onslow Primary School)
Linda Hutchinson – Susie De Jong (Castletown Primary School)
Lorraine Cherabun – Jacqui Trevenen – Sharon Shandley (Bayulu Remote Community School)
Louise Dalgety – Deb Berryman (Beachlands Primary School)
Marion Cheedy – Alicia Croxford (Roebourne District High School)
Irene Hayes – Merle Ashburton (Onslow Primary School)
Natalie Stream – Kellie Heales (Marble Bar Primary School)
Natasha Ryan – Peta Stokes (Meekaway Aboriginal Kindergarten)
Nola Bell and Irene Gilmarten – Diane Fraser (Rangeway Primary School)
Nora Derschow – Tracey Millington (Pegs Creek Primary School)
Anne Shinkfield (Ngaanyatjarra Lands School)
Claire Smoker (Settlers Primary School)
Erica Bowers (Merriwa Primary School)
Judy De Grauw (Girawheen Senior High School)
Mark Major (Tranby Primary School)
Maxine Tomlin – Jody O'Brien (Vocational Education and Training)
Richard Ludeman (Vocational Education and Training)
Rosemary Reddingius – Rene Reddingius (Leonora Primary School)



Supporting School Principals

Alan Dowsett
(Spencer Park Primary School)
Anne Mead
(Roebourne District High School)
Felicity Dear
(Djidi Djidi Primary School)
Geoff Bayliss
(Belmay Primary School)
Gillian Murgia
(Willagee Primary School)
Graham Butler
(Giltmore College)
Janet Mathews
(South Hedland Primary School)
Jeremy Shephard
(Beachlands Primary School)
Judith Lill
(Marble Bar Primary School)
Justin Grasso
(Pegs Creek Primary School)
Lucina Cross
(Nullagine Remote Community School)
Mark Smythe
(Pegs Creek Primary School)
Maxine Auguston
(Mount Lockyer Primary School)
Mike Devlin
(Challis Early Childhood Education Centre)
Paul Read
(Onslow Primary School)
Pauline Grewar
(Castletown Primary School)
Peter Rigden
(Rangeway Primary School)
Rowan Shinkfield
(Ngaanyatjarra Lands School)
Shane Cumming
(West Northam Primary School)
Stuart Cummings
(Withers Primary School)
Yvonne Messina
(Mullewa District High School)

Project Advisers and Friends

Alana Loo
Albert Pianta
Amanda Biggs
Ania Niedzwiadek
Ann Thomason
Anne Mead
Annette Millar
Dr Anthea Taylor
Antoinette Krakowizer
Ashley Collard
Barb Horan
Cam Rielly
Caro Kay
Carol Curtis
Carol Johnson
Carolyn Couper
Cheryl Ridgeway
Christine Jackson
Christine Reich
Coral Gillespie
Coral Jenkins
Daisy Ward
David Callow
David Knox
Di Rees
Di Tomazos
Donna Bridge
Donna Harts
Edie Wright
Ellen Thompsett
Erica McGuire
Freda Ogilvie
Gavin Morris
Glenda Traynor
Grace Abraham
Heather Elmer
Helen Spiers
Helen Tew
Kylie McLerie
Jackie Barry
Jane Shiels
Jennifer Kniveton
Jenny Evans
Jill Rathbone
Joanne Allan
Joanne Cross
John Burke

Jude Tupman
Judith Duff
Julie Buist
Julie Hillin
Karren Philp
Kate Mason
Katrina Merrells
Ken Molyneux
Kerry Rowe
Kevin Dorizzi
Kirsty Maley
Linda Markovic
Lis Turner
Lisa Edwards
Liz Healy
Lola Jones
Lyall Garlett
Marg Rutter
Mark Bonshore
Melissa Jones
Michelle Nipper
Miranda Hamilton
Nicole Murphy
Norma Furniss
Pam Pollard
Patricia Wood
Penny James
Peta Lawrence
Phillip Nieuwenhuis (deceased)
Robyn Weston
Robyn Strickland
Ross Fuhrman
Shelley McCleary
Simon Forrest
Steve Milton
Steve Wells
Sue Knight
Sue Lysle
Tanya Jones
Tessa Burrows
Tracey Bevan
Tracey Cullen
Tracey Gosling
Vicky Kirk
Warren Grellier
Wayne Coles
Yvette Harrison



Art (front cover): Deborah Bonar

Design: Dessein

THE TRACKS TO TWO-WAY LEARNING PACKAGE



- Includes electronic version on CD



Understanding language and dialect

Our dialects, our lives



Our views, our ways

Aboriginal knowledge, beliefs, today



The grammar of dialect difference

Difference, talking, hearing, understanding



How we shape experience

Yarning, seeing, watching, doing



How we represent our world

*Art, symbols, gestures, opportunity
Manners, reading, knowledge, time limits*



Language and inclusivity

How we include and how we exclude



Making texts work

... in a Two-Way learning environment



From speaking to writing

What's right and what's wrong



How we talk

How we talk, when we can talk



Making a difference for learners

*We can do it like this
Show me what*



Hearin' the voices

*Tell me your story
(includes ten storybooks)*



Toolkit for teaching

What we do with our mob



- Includes three sample workshops

THE TRACKS TO TWO-WAY LEARNING PACKAGE

This Focus Area, together with the other 11 Focus Areas, forms the second part of the *Tracks to Two-Way Learning* package.

Each Focus Area has a title and a descriptor. The Standard Australian English titles and descriptors are set roman, while those for Aboriginal English are set in *italics*.

The Focus Area contains a background reading section and professional learning modules intended to help Two-Way Teams to design and facilitate workshops for their colleagues and other stakeholders. All modules include workshop activities with information and materials for facilitators.

The main structure of the package is shown in the diagram on the left. There are three major parts, including the 12 Focus Areas which form Part 2.

The *Tracks to Two-Way Learning* package has been written for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal educators working together in pairs (Two-Way Teams) to improve the quality of teaching and learning for Aboriginal children and adults.

The advice and involvement of Aboriginal people are critical to bringing about this improvement in education and contribute to making education and training organisations more knowledgeable about and more responsive to the aspirations of the Aboriginal community. For more general information and explanations about the principle of Two-Way, see the 'Introduction' to the *Facilitators Guide*.

It is recommended that Two-Way Teams evaluate their own education or training sites before they use the material provided in any Focus Area. This will enable them to decide which modules are relevant to the staff at their locations. 'Tracking Needs' in the *Facilitators Guide* provides advice on how to evaluate a site.

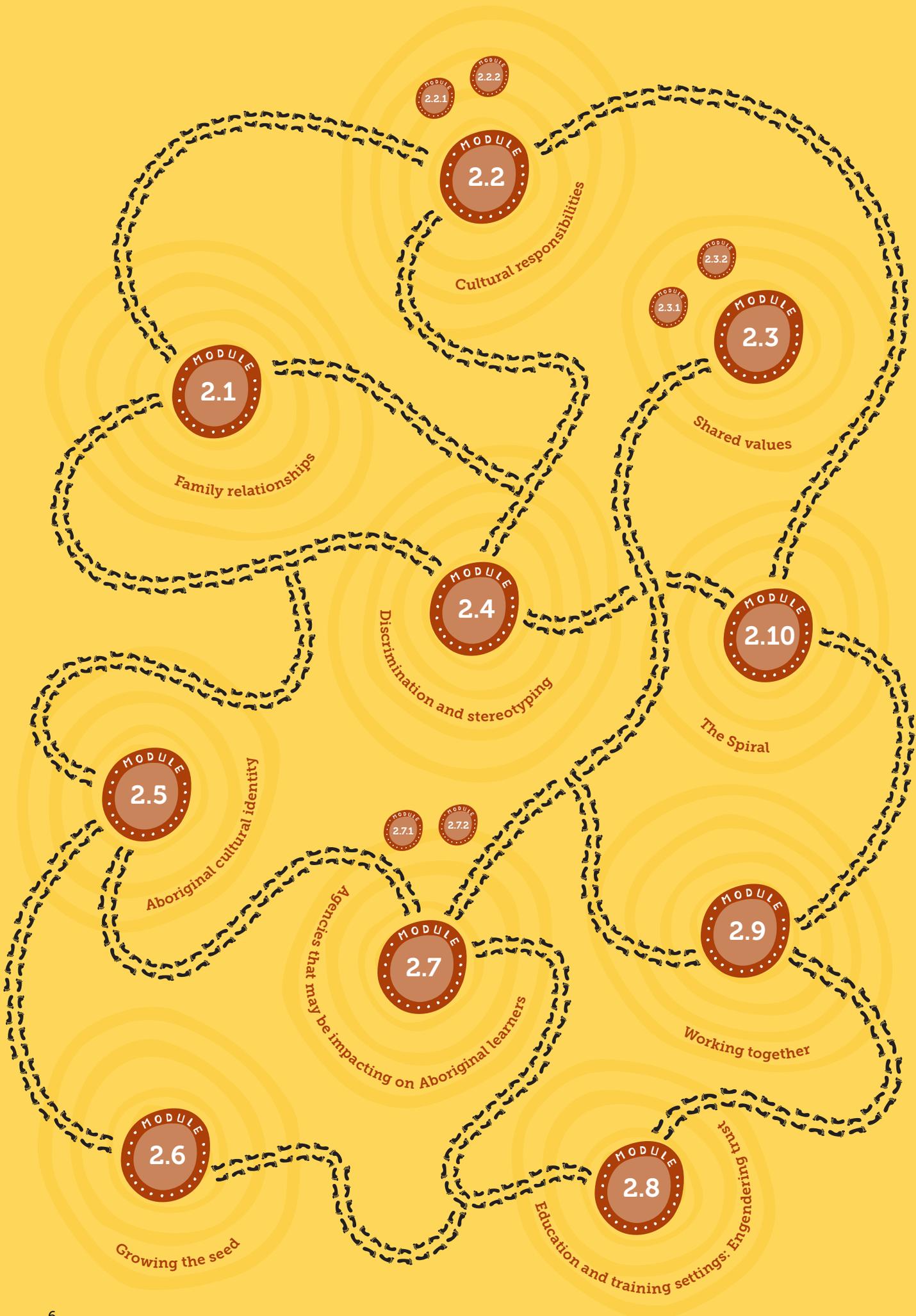
Two-Way Teams are encouraged to select material from across the Focus Areas when designing their professional development workshops.

In summary, to use the material in this learning package effectively it is advisable to:

- work as Two-Way Team
- perform a site evaluation before beginning to organise workshops (refer to 'Tracking Needs' in the *Facilitators Guide*)
- select suitable modules (refer to the outcomes of the site evaluation)
- read the relevant background reading(s)
- mix and match modules from different Focus Areas according to the outcomes of your site evaluation
- be creative and critical; adapt materials to make them appropriate for your location and the participants in your workshop(s)
- if required, use the section 'Developing Organisational Capacity' in the *Facilitators Guide* for more information on the process of organising workshops
- use the *Sample Workshops Guide* for more detailed information about how to plan and facilitate workshops.

The content of this Focus Area is also on CD (attached to the *Facilitators Guide*). It can be used in electronic form and handouts, worksheets and powerpoints can be edited as required (see 'Workshop preparation' in the *Sample Workshops Guide* for more information).







FOCUS AREA 2

OUR VIEWS, OUR WAYS

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BACKGROUND READING

OUR VIEWS, OUR WAYS

ABORIGINAL KNOWLEDGE, BELIEFS, TODAY

The aim of this Focus Area is to raise the awareness of the structure and dynamics of Aboriginal families and communities.

We also look at helping readers to improve their understanding of why some Aboriginal learners behave the way they do and to appreciate the pressures that impact on many Aboriginal learners, their families and members of the community.

It is hoped that by working through this Focus Area, educators will extend their current understandings and, as a result, develop appropriate skills for working together with Aboriginal family and community members.

As Aboriginal people, writing this chapter from the voices of our people over a number of years, we are starting to pave the way to bring in self-determination for learning.

We know that Western Australian education/training sites, like many other organisations that have been created by and for the mainstream population, often struggle to accommodate us and our children, the Aboriginal learners.

Many of our people feel marginalised, unsuccessful and out of place in schools. Many of us associate education/training sites with compulsion and authority. We applaud efforts by educators to draw on and include local linguistic and cultural knowledge of Aboriginal communities when developing curricula, courses and activities.

However, we would like to see this happen more often.

For many Aboriginal learners, Standard Australian English (SAE) is not their first

language, rather Aboriginal English, Kriol or traditional languages are spoken at home (Centre for Community Child Health and Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, 2009).

Many education/training sites struggle to accommodate this diversity, and Aboriginal English is particularly under-recognised, and often not acknowledged.

This continues the cycle of misunderstanding and confusion for Aboriginal learners and contributes to their under-achievement.

It is therefore not surprising that some of our people view school and other education as unimportant. Even those of us that recognise the benefits of a good education may actively avoid education sites, even for such apparently non-threatening reasons as meeting with our children's educators or inquiring about courses.

Working in Two-Way Teams is a unique strategy devised by the ABC of Two-Way





Literacy and Learning project¹. Two-Way Teams help to overcome some of the misunderstandings that can occur due to cultural insensitivity and the lack of acknowledgement of Aboriginal English in education/training settings. Two-Way Teams comprise an Aboriginal and a non-Aboriginal educator who are equal partners when preparing for the learning or joint teaching experience.

Within a school setting, where available, the Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer (AIEO) can form part of this Two-Way Team.

Within other educational settings, learners themselves or other Aboriginal education staff or Elders/carriers of knowledge can be invited to contribute as partners in Two-Way learning or teaching.

The building of Two-Way Teams is not always easy as it requires some cultural, language and teaching expertise and, above all, a joint desire from both parties to work cooperatively in order to implement positive change.

We want this Focus Area to help Two-Way Teams deliver workshops designed to increase non-Aboriginal people's understandings of how we perceive ourselves as a community (or network of communities). This will encourage us to work together to make our education/training sites more attractive, inclusive and useful for Aboriginal (and non-Aboriginal) learners by establishing mutually-beneficial relationships and interactions.

The content of this Focus Area has implications for people working at all levels

of any education/training site. We hope to dispel the assumption that Aboriginal community contact is the sole responsibility of our Aboriginal staff members. Improved relationships between Aboriginal community members and education/training sites are urgently needed and can be everyone's responsibility.

The alienation we often feel in some places of education or training extends beyond school and post-compulsory education/training sites to many other organisations and environments. This alienation contributes to what is often referred to as an educational 'gap' for Aboriginal Australians when compared with non-Aboriginal Australians.

Although we may acknowledge the importance of education, we may not be able to see how to make it useful to us. Some of us may view school as irrelevant, underscored by a sense of hopelessness due to socioeconomic disadvantage resulting from years of oppression since colonisation². Without being able to imagine our future in meaningful careers, it is hard for us to accept the skills and knowledge we are told we will need. The dominance of SAE without an acknowledgement of Aboriginal English in education/training settings fosters this hopelessness.

It is often wrongly assumed that SAE is or will be readily understood by us, especially those of us living in towns or urban areas.

In order for our voices to be clearly heard we have chosen to include a summary of our discussions rather than the usual background paper in the materials for this Focus Area.

1 Based on ongoing Two-Way research since 1998, the ABC of *Two-Way Literacy and Learning* aims to improve literacy outcomes among Aboriginal students by:

- recognising that for many Aboriginal students, their first language or dialect is not Standard Australian English
- increasing inclusive practices whereby cultural and linguistic diversity is conceived as an asset from which all students can benefit
- implementing Two-Way processes in which Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perspectives, understandings, processes and expertise are jointly incorporated into pedagogy and curriculum.

2 Refer to Module 2.4, which includes a comprehensive list of laws and policies that have impacted on Aboriginal self-determination and growth.





It contains some quotes from our extended discussions with our people throughout the State. These quotes are marked in italics and include perceptions of the education systems and frustrations experienced as a result of policies and practices that have been insensitive to us.

It was very important to us, as mostly Nyungar writers, to include the ideas from the Aboriginal people who worked with us all around the State, not just the South-West. We know that in following our traditions and laws, we can only write about our own communities and that we, as Aboriginal people, are very protective of our own 'country'.

As such we can become suspicious of people from outside our country coming in and making proclamations, especially if it is alongside a non-Aboriginal person.

We hope that Aboriginal people who read this know that we each can only ever really speak for ourselves.

We hope that Aboriginal groups from any country will take the information that is most helpful to them and adapt it to make it their own.

For ease of reference, the extracts from the discussion are grouped together under five main headings:

- family relationships
- cultural responsibilities
- shared values
- discrimination and stereotyping
- identity and spirituality, including cultural knowledge and spiritual beliefs.



Dialogue: Our experience as Aboriginal people

'As Aboriginal people, government policies have dominated and shaped us since colonisation. For example, the 1905 Act gave the government ultimate control over almost every aspect of our lives³. Within confusing policies of segregation and assimilation, Aboriginal people were forced off their home lands, banned from city and town centres and forced to live on purpose-built missions and reserves. Conditions in these places were often appalling and while many of our people kept working, frequently the work was unpaid or under-paid resulting in our ancestors struggling to feed our families, much less "get ahead".'

The Aborigines Act (1905) made every Aboriginal child in Western Australia a ward of the State until 16 years of age, which was then extended to 21 years of age in 1936. This meant that the government had more rights over Aboriginal children than their own mothers and fathers. Under policies of assimilation,⁴ between 1905 and the 1970s, it is estimated that as many as one in three Aboriginal children in Western Australia was removed from their parents, their extended family and, subsequently, from their language and culture.

The repercussions of past policies are still being felt today as we find ourselves disadvantaged in terms of health, housing suitability and availability, employment, justice, equity and, of the utmost importance here, educational outcomes. Indeed, until the 1950s, policies of segregation meant that most of our children were banned from attending government schools⁵. Even when this exclusion was phased out, practices that effectively constituted exclusion continued into the 1970s⁶. Prior to the 1970s, where our children were allowed into government schools, assimilation through education was

the official policy⁷. Despite the continual harm to our people⁸ and our culture, many of us remain strong in the knowledge that cultural beliefs and practices will continue to assist us in survival. The following pages will touch on some of those cultural strengths and some of the issues that continue to impact on our families and communities today. All of these issues have implications for education/training practices and our success in the diverse learning contexts.

The areas for discussion include family relationships, cultural responsibilities, shared values, discrimination and stereotyping, and identity and spirituality (including cultural knowledge/spiritual beliefs).

This discussion includes lessons learnt as the result of many years of work by the ABC of Two-Way Literacy and Learning project fostering and working with Two-Way Teams across Western Australia.

Throughout this section, Aboriginal perspectives are reflected in our comments made during the discussions, workshops and consultations that were conducted

3 Aboriginal people could apply for exemption from these controlling legislations. However exemption came at considerable personal and cultural costs. For a detailed list of laws and policies that have affected Aboriginal people, see Module 2.4.

4 Wilson, R. (1997).

5 See Education Act 1893, which included a clause giving parents the power to object to any child attending school who posed a risk to their own child's health and wellbeing. This was used to ban many Aboriginal children from schools.

6 Telethon Institute for Child Health Research (2006).

7 Beresford, Q. and Partington, G. (2003).

8 Wilson, R. (1997).

throughout the State. While we acknowledge that there are many similarities among our different Aboriginal groups across Western Australia, we also know that there are many differences. We encourage all Aboriginal people using these materials to adapt and localise them to their communities and make the changes they see fit so that they can own what is presented.

Meanwhile, we ask non-Aboriginal educators to come on this journey with us to take a brief look into the world of being 'Aboriginal' in modern Australia. Ideally, educators will work through this information in Two-Way Teams.

Family relationships

'Relationships are crucial to Aboriginal people because family is everything and families create our world.'

Most Aboriginal families are large by comparison with non-Aboriginal families. Our immediate family usually extends beyond mum, dad and siblings to include cousins, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, grannies⁹ and even extends to 'brothers' and 'sisters' who are not blood related. An example might be a group of men or women who were raised in the same mission or government institution, such as Wandering Mission, Moore River or Sister Kate's. These people may refer to each other as 'brother' or 'sister', having shared the same experiences, and having been the only family known to each other during that time of their lives.

The relationships within our extended families are complex and very important to us as it is the family that maintains our culture and sense of identity. Everyone has an important part to play, but these rules or 'family lore'¹⁰ are not seen by outsiders looking in. For many of us, the attack on our culture and families by successive governments and church groups over

the years since colonisation has actually fortified our commitment to and belief in the importance of family. As such, our family lore is far more important than any laws or mores that have been imposed on us from the outside.

'To me the positives are about family. No matter what happens family is number one. That's what keeps us strong. We all have something to contribute, to share.'

Our families are part of larger communities, or complex societies within societies. An Aboriginal community is typically made up of a number of family groups. Each family group has strong commonalities with other family groups in that geographical area, having shared a common cultural history. Between many of these groups there is a great deal of mutual respect. These connections go way back to a time before colonisation. The resilience of our Aboriginal families has probably been the most important factor in maintaining our cultural strength and identity. Family units are tried and tested and it is the collective notion of the family that helps in times of crisis.

Implications for our learners

Aboriginal learners often organise themselves into groups according to family relationships. Many won't have friends outside the family. For example, cousins will tend to 'hang around' together. Trying to separate family members or trying to stop them from helping each other with their work or studies is likely to be very upsetting for many Aboriginal learners.

Educators may be unaware of the family connections unless the learners share a surname. It is always helpful for educators to have a good knowledge of the community in which they work. Consulting the Aboriginal staff or youth worker can be a good first step in gaining a greater understanding of

9 The term 'grannies' may refer to either grandparents or grandchildren.

10 Family lore is the law or rules taught and followed within families.

families in your community. But it is also good for non-Aboriginal educators to be known in the community. Visiting the homes of Aboriginal people, where appropriate¹¹, and inviting learners and their families to participate in extracurricular activities, such as sporting groups and youth groups activities, can help to build relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal families.

Cultural responsibilities

'Oh she's a real little ole soul. She bin ere before. She's very special.'

For us, the big events are births and deaths. When a new baby is born the baby may be looked at and given a name by the grandparents, especially by the old (or great) granny. All the children are special but some of them may have a more spiritual tie given to them. It is kind of like being given a place. They all have their place and they all have their responsibilities. They are born into that place and often take their responsibilities to their extended family very seriously.

'A death in the family is something that overrides everything else and affects every member of the immediate family.'

One event that can illustrate the strength of our Aboriginal families is when there is a death in the family. When a death occurs, it is a cultural responsibility for family to be together and support each other, regardless of where in the State that may be or for how long that support is required. Family tradition, such as this, overrides everything and, as mentioned, is more important than any government or non-Aboriginal society rule or law. As our families are so large and as mortality rates among Aboriginal people are two to three times higher than in the wider Australian community¹², deaths in our families are, sadly, quite frequent. The

cumulative effect of a number of deaths in any one family can exert pressure on that family, pressure that may result in lasting trauma, an exacerbation of poverty and related social problems.

'At this stage (times of mourning) time is timeless.'

Because of this pressure and because grief can often bring out the worst in people, after a funeral there may be feuding between families. This is especially the case where there has been an accidental death or suicide. Conflict may also occur at other times. If there is feuding, the extended family may come to town to lend support or, if they are already there for a funeral, they may stay on. Feuding is a word that for many people conjures images of open fighting between families. However, while this does occur, feuding can also mean that other family members step in to ensure that the current disagreement does not get out of hand. Neither party in the disagreement wants police involvement, because many of us mistrust police and there is also a sense that many issues can be settled 'in-house.' Police involvement can often mean removal of our power to control certain situations, and we will not tolerate a loss of face in these situations. Again, in many families exerting this controlling influence in the event of feuding is an important cultural obligation.

Implications for our learners

If there is a death in the family it is likely that we and our children will be away from school, education, training or workplace settings for a number of weeks. Or, if other families have moved into town for the funeral, a number of additional children from that family group may turn up at the local education or training site. Since our families are large, it is likely that many of us will be absent from places of work or study at

11 Although what is appropriate will vary between communities, some general etiquette would be to ensure your visit is known about in advance, eg ask AIEO or another community member to find out if the family would welcome your visit.

12 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2006).



these times and this could be spread across a number of towns or communities. The financial burden of the funeral may result in us being unable to provide the necessary resources for our children to participate fully in education.

On return, after a funeral, our people may still be emotional and feel a great sense of loss. An important cultural belief for many of us is that it is inappropriate to use a deceased person's name. Educators can help by being sensitive to the learners and respecting their community's way of referring to the deceased. For example, if John senior has died, John junior may no longer be referred to as 'John' by the family. Conversely, if there is feuding, children or youth may feel that the education or training site provides respite from a home that has become stressful.

Shared values

The notion of sharing is integral to Aboriginal families. We share food, resources, stories, and anything that encourages a sense of belonging to a group. In the community, we often share food when we know another family is in need. We may share fish we have caught or kangaroo meat from hunting. To us, it is seen as being greedy if we do not share. Our children practise sharing in the classroom, often sharing pencils or other equipment. This can sometimes present problems if there is an expectation that learners will have their *own* equipment, or an expectation that learners shouldn't rely on others. There have even been instances where this has been wrongly interpreted as stealing but many of our children are simply not used to having to ask to use other people's things, as in most of our families many things are shared.

Our societies are collective as opposed to the Western individualistic societies that comprise mainstream Australia. As collective

societies, our cultures place a great deal of value on the older people in our families and community. These people are often referred to as 'Elders'. In the South-West of Australia, Nyungars often refer to Elders as 'oldies', 'ole girl,' or 'ole boy'. These are terms of endearment that may sometimes also be transferred to respected non-Aboriginal people. Most of our children grow up learning to respect older people for their wisdom, their stories, their life experience and the cultural knowledge that they hold.

'We've always been down, so you've got to have a laugh because we can't change it.'

An enduring aspect of Aboriginal culture is our sense of humour. Humour is often culturally based. Like any cultural group, much of our humour is specific to our people and a reflection of values shared by Aboriginal people with similar experiences and cultural backgrounds. People unfamiliar with our daily lives may not share our humour and our jokes may even be deemed politically incorrect. With many Aboriginal cultural groups, the yarn or joke being told is often accompanied by non-verbal communication, which is also often culturally based. There are many yarns specific to Aboriginal cultural groups, and still many more that are shared by Aboriginal people across Australia. In many Aboriginal communities there are well-known humorous yarn-tellers.

During the consultation process to put together these notes, we, as Aboriginal people, discussed the use of words that are regarded as swear words in Standard Australian English (SAE). Swearing seems to be a big issue for most non-Aboriginal people but not so much for many of us. Much of what is defined as swearing by non-Aboriginal people¹³ is just part of our normal everyday conversations and these

13 What is considered swearing in SAE has also changed over the years. For example the words 'bloody' and 'bastard', which were once deemed offensive, are used in programs broadcast during prime time.



'swear' words are used as descriptive language. Consequently, for Aboriginal speakers, such words do not usually have the same 'swearing' connotations as they have for non-Aboriginal speakers. Whilst we are not promoting swearing, we believe that the punishments sometimes imposed on our children for using words that are deemed inappropriate in SAE are unfair and only further exacerbate conflict between community and school. In order to be more accepting of our children's home language, it is important that educators withhold taking immediate offence and work on ascertaining first whether offence was actually intended. Where possible, this should best be done using a Two-Way process with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal input into how the situation should be handled. Without having spent time with our children, the Aboriginal learners, to explicitly and sensitively discuss the use of such words, educators should assume that their effects on non-Aboriginal peers and adults are not known.

Many non-Aboriginal educators can probably recognise the notion of 'shame' in reference to our children. However, our notion of 'shame' does not equate to the SAE notion of 'being ashamed'. This word, for us, holds connotations of 'reverence', 'honour for a special place and for certain people', 'honour for self', and 'strong considerations for the place of self within the family group and community'. 'Shame' can often prevent Aboriginal learners from participating in learning activities. An inability to make eye-contact is the most common sign of 'shame', which is often confused with a lack of self-esteem, or, worse still, a lack of knowledge. Often, when a learner refuses to make eye contact, it is evidence of respecting strong cultural standards. This is more likely to occur in a cultural setting that is different from the one that the learner is used to, such as the prevailing education/training

site. Learners who display 'shame' should be encouraged and supported until they become more comfortable and familiar with the situation. This can be done by talking with them from the side rather than by talking to them face-on from the front or by not putting them in situations where they are required to provide public replies (such as in front of their class and peers).

Implications for our learners

As mentioned previously, the education/training setting and its inherent expectations are unfamiliar to many of our learners and therefore likely to be a frightening place. It is a place that is more rigid and that operates on structures and rules that are often completely different to the ones they are familiar with from home. As it was not until the 1970s that all Aboriginal children were given full rights to education and were widely seen in mainstream schools¹⁴, it is possible that their grandparents or even parents were the first generation in their families to have experienced school. It is vital that educators do not alienate our learners further by shaming them for doing things that, perhaps in a non-Aboriginal setting may indicate naughtiness or even rudeness, but in an Aboriginal setting would just be the way of being. The following suggestions may be helpful to you:

- Trust that, for many Aboriginal learners, a lack of eye-contact is a sign of respect. Therefore refrain from insisting on eye-contact with Aboriginal learners. In time, this pragmatic difference in communication behaviour can be made explicit to all learners.
- It is much better to acknowledge the group, not the individual. Singling out individual learners by asking them to respond to questions in front of their peers, or by asking them to accept public acknowledgments of their achievements,

¹⁴ The Education Act 1893 included a clause giving parents the power to object to any child attending government schools. This was used to ban many Aboriginal children from schools until the 1950s and the effect of this and policies of assimilation through education could be seen in the low numbers of Aboriginal students in state schools until the 1970s.

is likely to cause ‘shame’ and to make them feel very uncomfortable. Educators need to realise and respect that these are not appropriate behaviours in Aboriginal settings and that our learners will need a lot of support so that they can gradually learn how to act comfortably in these situations.

- Aboriginal learners will feel more comfortable when they are able to practise sharing their knowledge and ideas with others they feel close to. Encourage working in groups.
- Reprimanding our learners in front of their peers is likely to cause them distress, which may result in a reluctance to want to come to and attend education or training sites. A good way to deal with disruptive issues in the class is to talk quietly on a one-to-one basis, in a non-threatening way, away from others.
- Refrain from suggesting that education/training site rules and principles (with some obvious exceptions, such as hurting other children) are universal and should be followed everywhere, including in our own homes. Educating our children not to share, for example, is likely to confuse them greatly. A better way to prevent misunderstanding about ‘stealing’ versus ‘sharing’ would be to discuss the concept of ownership and how different people have different ideas about what is ‘yours’ and ‘mine.’

Discrimination and stereotyping

‘The positives tend to be personal, generated by one of our family members, and that’s a real protective thing, because the negatives come from outside.’

Most of us, as Aboriginal people, have felt the effects of racism or discrimination at some point in our lives. Today, many well-meaning Australians try to avoid discrimination by saying that we are all equal. Although such intentions are good, in reality the idea is very illogical. Firstly, equality does not equal ‘sameness’ and there are cultural differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians, some of which are outlined here. But perhaps more importantly, Aboriginal Australians are the most disadvantaged section of Australian society on almost all indicators of health and wellbeing¹⁵. Sometimes the discrimination we experience is not direct or personal; rather, it is embedded in mainstream institutions through policies. A typical example is in the housing industry:

‘I don’t know how many times my kids have tried to get a place to rent. Oh no, none to rent. You know, the same old story. And my daughter, she says to me, “Mum, you go and get a place for me cause you’re fairer¹⁶ than me”.’

Many Aboriginal people have experienced overt racism, such as people calling them derogatory names or writing discriminatory graffiti messages. However, it is often the institutional racism that has the greater impact on us. Institutional racism is when racism is embedded to the point where people do not even realise it as racism; that is, when there is racial disadvantage going on and when it is seen as part and parcel of how things are and are therefore left unchallenged¹⁷. Factors that contribute to this are lack of knowledge among

¹⁵ See Module 2.4, which lists some of the areas in which Aboriginal Australians are disadvantaged.

¹⁶ In other words, ‘your skin is lighter’.

¹⁷ One example in education is when people expect our Aboriginal learners to be incapable of achieving high outcomes so they are not exposed to the same academic rigour of learning.

us about how the justice system works and a lack of knowledge in the legal profession about language differences and conflict between cultural forms of justice versus mainstream justice.

Being patronised is still a common experience for many of us. Non-Aboriginal people are often well-meaning and do not deliberately set out to offend us, but it happens anyway. Often this is because of the language used or a lack of understanding that stems from a lack of interest or opportunities to get to know us.

'You don't know what you don't know.'

Often we say things that may seem harsh because we have to vent our frustration with the system. Sometimes people may feel that we are angry with them when we are just angry at the situation. Regardless of cultural background, it is difficult for people who haven't had the same experiences of powerlessness to relate to the frustrations we feel because *'you don't know what you don't know'*.

'We never let our kids go on school excursions cos it was like we might not see our kids again. So they didn't go, they knew they wouldn't go.'

Non-Aboriginal people often assume that all Aboriginal people have knowledge of non-Aboriginal ways. The reality is that many have very limited understanding, so government laws may seem incomprehensible to us. For example, until 1971, when the Native (Citizenship Rights) Act was repealed, Aboriginal parents who had not signed exemption certificates¹⁸ had very few rights. It was common for our children to be taken from us seemingly on the whims of government welfare officers.

Today, only forty years later, it seems that this has been reversed and parents have a lot of rights, yet the laws still sometimes confuse us. Now if a mum or dad has not designated Aunty, Nan or Pop as 'next of kin' these extended family members may not be allowed to pick the child up from school. This may make no sense to us as the extended family also has cultural obligations to take care of our children when necessary.

As Aboriginal parents, many of us do what we can to prepare our children for the racism that they are likely to experience in their lives. For example, many of us instinctively know that the children need to be desensitised to racism. One way this is done is, in a gentle way, from the day that they are born, we may call our children names that would seem derogatory to many non-Aboriginal people. However, when children are used to hearing such words at home, they are less likely to feel offence or insult when such words are addressed to them by racist people out in the community.

In order to protect them from potential racial violence, we teach our children to always walk with their brothers, sisters and cousins, not to walk alone. Many of our children will therefore never be sent anywhere on their own. They will also walk to and from school together. This responsibility to walk with and look after other family members is usually of the utmost importance to any of our children. Sometimes this is wrongly interpreted as Aboriginal children or youth moving in gangs. However, more likely than not, it is just a reflection of the ways of being of our own collective societies, coupled with the need for our young people to protect themselves.

18 Under the Native Citizenship Rights Act (1944), in order to enjoy the benefits of full citizenship, some Aboriginal people were permitted to sign a citizenship (exemption) certificate but those who did so had to sign away a number of cultural rights, including the ability to interact with extended family and friends and to speak in their own language.



Identity and spirituality

'A sense of belonging to that place.'

There are spiritual and cultural ties to the land where we were born, where our families have lived and worked, where our stories originate from and where our cultural and spiritual futures are ensured. However, to call these ties is something of an understatement. Rather, we feel a connectedness to the whole natural environment, the whole of our country. For many Aboriginal people, the land owns us, the landscape owns us, the colours are part of us. We are connected to the waterholes, the trees, the animals. This connectedness is shown in many of our beliefs and cultural rules. For example, when we hunt, we must never kill any more animals than we need, otherwise we will not have access to any food in the future.

'Identity is how we view the world, how we talk, what we do and how we do it.'

Aboriginal identity has little to do with the colour of skin. Aboriginality is about the things that cannot be seen, such as language, stories, beliefs, values, sense of family and sense of belonging.

It is the sense of family and belonging, cultural history and spirituality that contributes to shaping Aboriginal identity for our current and future generations. The strength of Aboriginal identity lies in the strength of our family beliefs, values and spirituality. Where these have been eroded by Western influence and values are not strong, our children, the Aboriginal learners may be confused about their identity. They may develop a sense of anger or regret that they have been deprived of things that should be natural for them.

'It is important to recognise the ownership of culture/language. You can't learn it from a book.'

For Aboriginal people, time is not conceived in a linear fashion and the present moment and our connectedness to all things are of utmost importance. The past is part of the present and the present shapes the future. However, as we cannot determine the future, we are more likely to focus on the present moment.

Shared experiences and the experiences and yarns passed down through our families related to the unknown or to spiritual events contribute to strengthening our cultural identity. People within the same cultural group will immediately know the meaning of these experiences, and can relate to the stories. Many people can also recognise the family groups or 'country' where these yarns/stories come from. Yarns about spirituality and names for the 'unknown' will vary across the State and the continent but the conceptualisations will be similar. Stories about the 'known' or visible aspects of Aboriginal cultural spirituality are just as important. Some examples are the stories or yarns that express the knowledge related to sacred rocks or sites.

Cultural knowledge/spiritual beliefs

Cultural knowledge is strongly respected by our people throughout Australia and this knowledge is tied in with spiritual beliefs that guide many of our actions and present-day behaviours. Although we all share many common beliefs and understandings, there are also regional differences. For example, in the South-West of Western Australia, there is a range of sayings/beliefs among most older people in the community. These are often told through yarning in stories and they strengthen and maintain identity and guide activities and actions by the younger generations. These stories, although often similar, can also be very different in the different regions. Below are some examples of such Nyungar stories.

The Wagyl or serpent creator: Although called by different names, all groups have the serpent creator in their storylines. Wagyl is one such name. Coming from the Swan River (*Derbarl Yerrigan*), Wagyl made and left fresh waterholes throughout that area for the people, the flora and fauna. Going east, Wagyl went through York (*Balladong*) where it left two big tracks that can still be seen today in the big York Hill. Further east, it went a long way to the centre of Australia before turning back to the south-west. The Nyungar¹⁹ people believe that on its way from the centre of Australia, Wagyl left his mark in many granite landmarks. One of these landmarks is Wave Rock, where Wagyl shaped a wave in the rock by flipping its tail onto the rock before turning to head down to the big waterhole in Albany, leaving several other rock landmarks on its way. There, Nyungars call the Wagyl *Mardjit*. In many regions the serpent creator left different marks. This is how areas were demarcated and is part of the reason why we have connections to our homelands that transcend State and other imposed borderlines. On its journey, Wagyl left babies in the form of serpents that today are known as the carpet snakes. These serpents were left in order to keep the waterholes clean for the inhabitants of the land.

Carpet snakes should never be killed: This is related to attacking the Wagyl spirit. If a snake is on the road, for instance, it should be avoided and not run over. Most Aboriginal families will have their own yarns from their old fullahs about experiences with the Wagyl. For example, killing a carpet snake will make a waterhole dry up. Sometimes there are waterholes that cannot be seen but are there. If a person cannot identify themselves in areas where such waterholes exist, then the water can't come through.

The stars: Stars are there to tell a story and to guide. There are certain stars that come at different times and show the way for people to travel. There are stories about five

sisters, six sisters and seven sisters, just in Western Australia. The stories are similar but the debate about how many sisters there are arises every so often because the carriers of the knowledge were telling it from where they sat. Further north more stars can be seen than in the south. So although the story is very similar about the sisters, the number of sisters changes depending on where the storyteller comes from.

Other country: When you go to another part of your country for the first time, you have to pick up some earth and throw it, while telling the land who you are and what you're doing. You will sleep soundly that night as the area you are in has protectors that will come and check over who is there. The next night you won't sleep much as you will be woken up and 'tormented' but not in a harmful way, but you have to know that. Then they'll have done their job and you can safely travel for the rest of your journey, which you will have sought permission for beforehand.

Min Min light: The Min Min light is not a star and not a car light and it can follow you from a long way away; for example, from the south-west all the way through the desert. Even Slim Dusty has written a song for Aboriginal people called the *Min Min Light*. Maybe if it was not there you could get lost.

Rear vision mirror: Don't look in the rear vision mirror at night as you might see someone you do not want to see. Lots of times you get out of your car, you hear the other door shut and people say 'who have you brought along with you?' and you just respond, 'Oh no, that's right, I only come from down there' (meaning own country). If you had come from somewhere else, another country, this would not be no good.

Firestick: Children love pulling sticks out of the fire and playing with the hot glowing ends. They are warned not to but if they keep doing it after being warned, they will end

19 Nyungar country is the land that extends from Jurien Bay through to Esperance (*Keba Korl*) and Albany (*Kinjarling*).



up wetting the bed and everyone that they are lying with. So nobody wants to lie with them anymore. This is what is told to the younger children; however, we know that the fire sticks can call unwanted spirits and the children will find this out as they grow older.

Stones and artefacts from the land: We, as Aboriginal people, believe that if you pick up stones in an area without permission from the custodian of that land, the land will not be happy and may take something back from you. For example, some people who have taken stones off the land have become very ill – that’s Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. However, if you are given a stone or something from the custodian of the country, then it is OK.

The Djiti Djiti: The Djiti Djiti is the Willy Wagtail bird. We, as Aboriginal people, will advise children in particular never to follow this bird. This is a cheeky little bird that dances around, hoping that it will be followed by someone. If you follow this bird you may find that you wake up somewhere in the bush and you may be sick or hurt. When you see a Djiti Djiti, it is also like a sign or a warning that something is going to happen. It may not be something bad. There is a story in Focus Area 11 about this little bird, which is significant to many cultural beliefs.

Important note

The issues discussed in this section have been approached from a very broad Aboriginal perspective without dealing with or focusing on the diversity of Aboriginal people across Australia.

Different cultural groups may have different interpretations and be affected differently by different issues.

They may also have different solutions for how to deal with problems or issues as they arise.

Readers of this Focus Area and workshop participants are strongly encouraged to apply local knowledge and to use local examples for the workshop tasks related to any issues raised here.

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MODULE 2.1 FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS – OVERVIEW

Learning objectives

This module will help educators to:

- raise awareness of conceptualisations of 'family'
- develop cross-cultural understanding of family relationships, commitments and obligations.

Activity description

In this activity, participants will develop a family tree to compare the complexity of Aboriginal extended families with what is envisaged as 'family' by non-Aboriginal participants.

This activity can be used with learners from all levels so that participants can develop an understanding of each their learners' particular situations and foster cross-cultural understandings.

Facilitators notes

Materials required:

- Powerpoint 1: *The importance of family in Aboriginal society* (provided)
 - Powerpoint 2/Handout: *Nyungar nuclear family* (provided) or make up your own family tree templates
 - Writing materials.
1. Show Powerpoint 1: *The importance of family in Aboriginal society* and a powerpoint slide of an Aboriginal family tree or diagram. (This can be based on Glenys Collard's family diagram [Powerpoint 2] or any other diagram presenters feel comfortable with.)
 2. Provide participants with handouts of Glenys Collard's family diagram or any other family tree or genogram.
 3. Invite participants to construct their own family trees and discuss differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural/family links and obligations.
 4. There are computer programs that help create family trees – useful websites include www.ancestry.com.au and www.myheritage.com. Both have sample family trees that can be 'tried' before purchase.
 5. If time permits, participants may be able to design a family tree template suitable for their learners to use.

MODULE 2.1 FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

– POWERPOINT 1

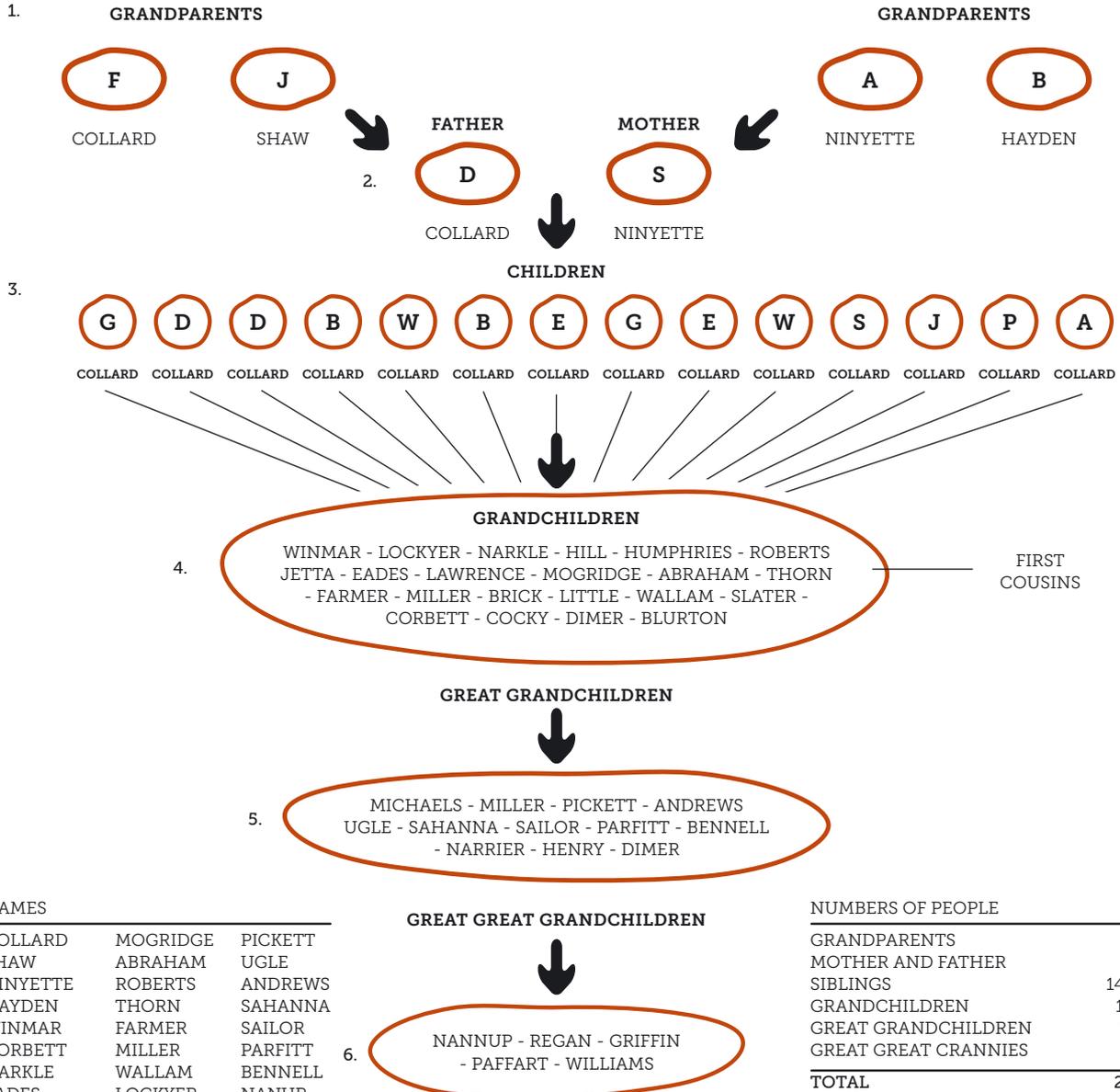
The importance of family in Aboriginal society

- Aboriginal communities are made up of a number of family networks.
- The majority of Aboriginal people are part of wider family networks. Our children learn from a very young age about their aunts and uncles, cousins and how all family members are connected, and the appropriate way to address their relatives.
- By the time our children begin school, they already have an extensive register of relatives and relationships.
- This network may be complex for teachers and/or lecturers who are not familiar with community/family relationships.
- Our families are an essential source of identity and support to immediate and extended family as well as to other family groups in the community. This can include cultural, social, financial and moral support.
- Family networks, which are important to us as Aboriginal people, include past, present and future generations.
- Families ensure that cultural traditions and knowledge are maintained through language, stories, artistic expression and cultural practices that model responsibility and maintain a spiritual connection to land and history.



MODULE 2.1 FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS - POWERPOINT 2/HANDOUT

Nyungar nuclear family



NAMES		
COLLARD	MOGRIDGE	PICKETT
SHAW	ABRAHAM	UGLE
NINYETTE	ROBERTS	ANDREWS
HAYDEN	THORN	SAHANNA
WINMAR	FARMER	SAILOR
CORBETT	MILLER	PARFITT
NARKLE	WALLAM	BENNELL
EADES	LOCKYER	NANUP
JETTA	BRICK	NARRIER
LITTLE	SLATER	HENRY
HILL	LAWRENCE	REGAN
HUMPHRIES		GRIFFIN
COCKY		MILLER
		MICHAELS
TOTAL = 39		

NUMBERS OF PEOPLE	
GRANDPARENTS	4
MOTHER AND FATHER	2
SIBLINGS	14 x 2
GRANDCHILDREN	175
GREAT GRANDCHILDREN	71
GREAT GREAT CRANNIES	6
TOTAL	286

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MODULE 2.2 CULTURAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Module 2.2 presents workshop materials that will enable educators to:

- understand potential cultural responsibilities of their learners
- be aware of and appreciate different cultures and cultural responsibilities.

MODULE 2.2 CULTURAL RESPONSIBILITIES

2.2.1 LEARNERS' CULTURAL RESPONSIBILITIES – OVERVIEW

Learning objectives

This module will help educators to:

- understand and appreciate difference in culture and cultural responsibilities
- understand cultural responsibilities that learners may have.

Activity description (small group discussion)

Participants may consider using this activity with their learners. The focus is on oral/negotiation skills and reading comprehension. The activity can be used with learners in different educational contexts to improve fluency and oral language use.

Facilitators notes

Materials required:

- Handout: *Learners' cultural responsibilities* (provided)
 - Writing materials.
1. Organise participants into pairs or small groups using one of the strategies in Module 12.7.1 *Organising learners into pairs or groups* (or one of your own strategies). If possible, having at least one Aboriginal participant in each group.
 2. Distribute Handout: *Learners' cultural responsibilities* and ask small groups to familiarise themselves with the text and discuss the questions on the Handout.
 3. Debrief the key points at the end of the activity.

MODULE 2.2 CULTURAL RESPONSIBILITIES

2.2.1 LEARNERS' CULTURAL RESPONSIBILITIES – HANDOUT

Learners' cultural responsibilities

Our families and related cultural responsibilities are of the utmost importance to us as Aboriginal people. Births and deaths are our most important events. Where Aboriginal learners experience personal conflict between the demands of family and those of education/training sites, it is most likely that the demands of family or cultural responsibilities will prevail.

Sometimes our children are required by the family to:

- fulfil a duty of care to siblings, grandparents or other family members. This should not be confused with neglect or bad parenting. From a very young age, our children are taught the skills required to look after their younger siblings and to be independent and responsible. This is commonplace in Aboriginal families
- participate in community events that have a direct bearing on the family – this can include visiting a sick relative, attending and participating in activities such as funerals and participating in other specified cultural practices
- move with family or travel to another town or community – again to assist relatives, for funeral attendance, sickness in the family or to attend and help them through a crisis in the family, such as an accidental death.

Note: it is important that the word 'obligation' is a word that we, as Aboriginal people, do not necessarily like, but is probably the closest English word to the Aboriginal concept of this sense of family connectedness. However, please note that it does not have a connotation of 'chore' attached to it. People are not necessarily 'obliged' to fulfil certain roles. It is more that we actually want to be there for each other.

Possible questions for discussion

- Is absenteeism an issue at your education/training site?
- Do you know whether any of these absences are related to the points outlined in the text?
- Discuss how you might find that out and what could be done to better support the learners.



MODULE 2.2 CULTURAL RESPONSIBILITIES

2.2.2 THE CONCEPT OF 'HOME' – OVERVIEW

Learning objectives

This module will help educators to:

- understand and appreciate the differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal concepts of 'home'
- understand the responsibilities that come with the concept of 'home'.

Activity description (think/pair/share activity)

The task itself models a think/pair/share activity that participants might consider using with their learners.

Think/pair/share activities provide a structure for learners when they need to generate ideas. They therefore can be used to compare and relate to different views. They can also be used as pre-reading or pre-writing tasks.

In addition, they can help the educator to find out what learners already know about a topic.

The activity is about understanding and appreciating the differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal homes. The activity can be used with learners in a different educational context to improve cross-cultural understanding.

Facilitators notes

Materials required:

- Worksheet: *The concept of 'home'* (provided)
- Writing materials
- A4 sheets of paper (in case space on worksheets is not enough).

1. Distribute Worksheet: *The concept of 'home'*.
2. Each participant is to write on the worksheet what comes to their mind when they think of 'home'.
3. If possible, organise participants into Two-Way Teams; otherwise, organise participants into pairs using one of the strategies in Module 12.7.1 *Organising learners into pairs or groups* (or one of your own strategies).
4. Invite participants to share their notes with their Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal partners or do a general debrief as Two-Way facilitators, drawing out the Aboriginal understandings. Note any differences.
5. Share these observed differences with the larger group.

MODULE 2.2 CULTURAL RESPONSIBILITIES

2.2.2 THE CONCEPT OF 'HOME' – WORKSHEET

The concept of 'home'

Please write down what comes to your mind when you think of 'home'.





MODULE 2.3 SHARED VALUES

SHARED VALUES

Module 2.3. presents workshop materials that will enable educators to:

- understand and respect different cultural values
- experience how the same words might have different associations in different value systems.



MODULE 2.3 SHARED VALUES

2.3.1 OUR VALUES – OVERVIEW

Learning objective

This module will help educators to:

- raise awareness and appreciation of the values that underlie Aboriginal culture.

Activity description (cloze activity with split dictation)

The activity itself models a cloze activity with split dictation that participants might consider using with their learners. Cloze activities are commonly used for encouraging learners to use the context to make predictions when reading.

It can be used with learners of any level (appropriate texts are included).

Learners benefit from seeking the correct gap-filling information from the surrounding context (a cognitive activity) but also from hearing the content (auditory reinforcement).

Facilitators notes

Materials required:

- Worksheet A: *Our values* (provided)
- Worksheet B: *Our values* (provided)
- Facilitators key: *Our values* (provided)
- Writing materials.

1. Explain to participants the benefits of a cloze activity with split dictation (as described above).
2. If possible, organise participants into Two-Way Teams; otherwise, organise participants into pairs or small groups using one of the strategies in Module 12.7.1 *Organising learners into pairs or groups* (or one of your own strategies).
3. Members of pairs should sit opposite one another and use a barrier (book, handbag, etc) so they cannot see each other's Worksheets.
4. Give each pair a set of the Worksheets (A for Partner A; B for Partner B).
5. Ask participants to read through their own texts individually and try to fill the gaps based on clues in the surrounding text. This will familiarise them with the content.
6. Partners A and B then work together to complete their worksheets by taking turns. Partner A begins by dictating his/her (shaded/complete) sections while Partner B listens and fills in the gaps in his/her version and vice versa.
7. As participants work through their sheets, ask them to note points in the text they would like to discuss further.
8. When participants have finished, elicit questions or issues that have come up during the activity. Refer to the Facilitators key as necessary.

MODULE 2.3 SHARED VALUES

2.3.1 OUR VALUES – WORKSHEET A

Our values

<p>'Family is home and home is family. This is everything: the most important thing to Aboriginal people. If you don't have that, you have nothing.'</p>	<p>The majority of people are part of a wider family network. Our children from a very young age about their aunts and uncles, cousins and all family members are connected, and the way to address their relatives.</p>
<p>We share our things because they are ours. What is mine is in Aboriginal families. Sometimes young Aboriginal people get of stealing at education/training sites when it is just that the of ownership are</p>	<p>The importance of Elders. Many Elders carry authority and require respect, this is a given. Some who are no longer active are still involved and part of the circle so as to ensure they share their stories and can hear, listen and watch.</p>
<p>The importance of humour. We have to laugh at ourselves, sometimes just to keep sane.</p>	<p>The notion of shame to a person's integrity and to how respect fits into a situation.</p>
<p>If an Aboriginal person does not make eye- when asked a question, it should not be as a sign of disrespect. eye-contact for Aboriginal people is of confrontation, for the young ones. Age and place in the hierarchy is to us so younger people will feel particular shame if an older person such as an insists 'look at me'.</p>	<p>Time is circular and this is evident in our story-telling, which is non-linear. Sometimes non-Aboriginal people need to be patient when listening to Aboriginal people talk as a yarn will not follow a direct linear path like Standard Australian English (SAE) stories usually do.</p>
<p>A story must be inclusive of everybody in that event even if to a non-Aboriginal person someone does not seem integral to the story. When one learner tells a story that would normally be told by two or three people together, our learners may give the impression that they are adding seemingly unimportant details, when in fact they are trying to compensate for the fact that others who should be collaborating in telling that story are not allowed to help.</p>	<p>Sometimes educators may be confused because some Aboriginal will seem to have skills in SAE that do not. It may be that these 'skilled' learners have one parent or other who is non-Aboriginal and this is why they are more with SAE language and culture.</p>



MODULE 2.3 SHARED VALUES

2.3.1 OUR VALUES – WORKSHEET B

Our values

<p>'Family is home and home is This is everything: the most important thing to people. If you don't have that, you have nothing.'</p>	<p>The majority of Aboriginal people are part of a wider family network. Our children learn from a very young age about their aunts and uncles, cousins and how all family members are connected, and the appropriate way to address their relatives.</p>
<p>We share our things because they are ours. What is mine is yours in Aboriginal families. Sometimes young Aboriginal people get accused of stealing at education/training sites when it is just that the concepts of ownership is different..</p>	<p>The importance of Elders. Many carry authority and require respect, this is a given. Some who are no longer active are still involved and of the circle so as to ensure they share their stories and can hear,and watch.</p>
<p>The importance of humour. We have to at ourselves, sometimes just to keep sane.</p>	<p>The notion of shame relates to a person's integrity and to how respect fits into a given situation.</p>
<p>If an Aboriginal person does not make eye-contact when asked a question, it should not be interpreted as a sign of disrespect. Direct eye-contact for Aboriginal people is a sign of confrontation, especially for the young ones. Age and place in the hierarchy is important to us so younger people will feel particular shame if an older person such as an educator insists 'look at me'.</p>	<p>Time is circular and this is evident in our story-....., which is non-linear. Sometimes non-Aboriginal people need to be when listening to Aboriginal people talk as a yarn will not follow a linear path like Standard Australian English (SAE) stories usually do.</p>
<p>A story must be inclusive of in that event even if to a non-Aboriginal person someone does not seem integral to the When one learner a story that would normally be told by two or three people together, our may give the impression that they are adding seemingly unimportant details, when in fact they are to compensate for the fact that others who should be collaborating in telling that story are not to help.</p>	<p>Sometimes educators may be confused because some Aboriginal learners will seem to have skills in SAE that others do not. It may be that these 'skilled' learners have one parent or significant other who is non-Aboriginal and this is why they are more familiar with SAE language and culture.</p>



MODULE 2.3 SHARED VALUES

2.3.1 OUR VALUES – FACILITATORS KEY

Our values

<p>Family is home and home is family. This is everything; the most important thing to Aboriginal people. If you don't have that, you have nothing.</p>	<p>The majority of Aboriginal people are part of a wider family network. Our children learn from a very young age about their aunts and uncles, cousins and how all family members are connected, and the appropriate way to address their relatives.</p>
<p>We share our things because they are ours. What is mine is yours in Aboriginal families. Sometimes young Aboriginal people get accused of stealing at education sites when it is just that the concepts of ownership are different.</p>	<p>The importance of Elders. Many Elders carry authority and require respect; this is a given. Some who are no longer active are still involved and part of the circle so as to ensure they share their stories and can hear, listen and watch.</p>
<p>The importance of humour. We have to laugh at ourselves, sometimes just to keep sane.</p>	<p>The notion of shame relates to a person's integrity and to how respect fits into a given situation.</p>
<p>If an Aboriginal person does not make eye-contact when asked a question, it should not be interpreted as a sign of disrespect. Direct eye-contact for Aboriginal people is a sign of confrontation, especially for the young ones. Age and place in the hierarchy is important to us so younger people will feel particular shame if an older person such as an educator insists 'look at me'.</p>	<p>Time is circular and this is evident in our story-telling, which is non-linear. Sometimes non-Aboriginal people need to be patient when listening to Aboriginal people talk as a yarn will not follow a direct linear path like Standard Australian English (SAE) stories usually do.</p>
<p>A story must be inclusive of everybody in that event even if to a non-Aboriginal person someone does not seem integral to the story. When one learner tells a story that would normally be told by two or three people together, our learners may give the impression that they are adding seemingly unimportant details, when in fact they are trying to compensate for the fact that others who should be collaborating in telling that story are not allowed to help.</p>	<p>Sometimes educators may be confused because some Aboriginal learners will seem to have skills in SAE that others do not. It may be that these 'skilled' learners have one parent or significant other who is non-Aboriginal and this is why they are more familiar with SAE language and culture.</p>



MODULE 2.3 SHARED VALUES

2.3.2 CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS – OVERVIEW

Learning objectives

This module will help educators to:

- appreciate how words can evoke different associations, depending on the speaker's value system
- be aware of different values in different cultures.

Activity description (word association activity)

This activity is a word association task that can be used to demonstrate how cultures differ in their values and conceptualisations of the world. This is a three- minute ice-breaker activity to get participants to see and hear different word associations from other participants.

Participants can use this activity with their learners. It is useful for helping them to develop their cross-cultural awareness. The words and their differing associations can be displayed on the walls around the room to remind learners of the differences and to continue to engage their interest in cultural and linguistic differences and commonalities.

Please note:

The words used for a word association task can be replaced by any number of other words but the activity will only be as good as what the audience contributes.

Presenters will need to take the discussion to the level that is right for the participants.

It is good to have local input for this. If community members can participate, they need to be made comfortable and not feel threatened (by being put on the spot). In other words, presenters need to ensure that participants are not made to feel shame.

If the different word associations don't come through the audience, presenters should add their own interpretations.

Facilitators notes

Materials required:

- Worksheet: *Word associations* (provided)
 - Facilitators key: *Word associations* (provided)
 - Writing materials.
1. Using one of the strategies in Module 12.7.1 *Organising learners into pairs or groups* (or one of your own strategies), divide participants into Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groups, with 3-5 people in each group.
 2. Distribute the Worksheet: *Word associations* and explain what the activity involves. Stress the importance of participants writing down the very first thing that comes to mind when reading the words in the list.
 3. Allow the groups time to complete their responses to the list and then ask them to compare their lists with another group from a different (Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal) background.
 4. Debrief as a Two-Way Team using the Facilitators key if necessary.

MODULE 2.3 SHARED VALUES

2.3.2 CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS – WORKSHEET

Word associations

Write down the words that come to mind on reading each word in the list below. Be sure to write down the very first words that you think of.

Do this task individually and then compare your associations with your partner and/or group.

Word	Associations
home	
family	
kangaroo	
crowd	
open	
horse	
fire	



MODULE 2.3 SHARED VALUES

2.3.2 CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS

– FACILITATORS KEY

Word associations

Below are some examples of the associations Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants may provide.

Word	Standard Australian English word associations	Aboriginal English word associations
home	house, address, where mum, dad and their children live	the land, the ground, where the family is, the town, where nan and pop and everyone is, [name of suburb], [name of town], the bush and all the houses of the family
family	mum, dad, the children	nan, pop, all the family, sisters, uncles, aunties, grannies
kangaroo	cute animal with pouch that hops around and eats grass. Emblem of Australia	feed, food, a set of rules, processes of preparation, hunting
crowd	many people together at a place, eg football game, shopping centre, cinema	nuclear family, blood relations (mob, our mob), the closest family members
open	opposite of closed, sincere, frank, open-minded, fresh air, open space	hungry, tired, exhausted, no money, sickly (as in, 'Nyorn, little/old fulla laying there open')
horse	big animal with four legs, trotting, racing, working, competition, breeding, money	the best, deadly, solid, it's awesome, clever, skilled (as in 'Oh brother, you're horse')
fire	heat, warmth, burning, danger, comfort	burning off, medicine, healing, cooking (feed), billy tea, yarning



MODULE 2.4 DISCRIMINATION AND STEREOTYPING – OVERVIEW

Learning objectives

This module will help educators to:

- gain greater awareness of government policy relating to Aboriginal Australians and the implications of these policies
- gain greater awareness of legislation and important events relating to discrimination against Aboriginal people.

Activity description (brainstorm activity)

The activity itself models a brainstorm activity that participants might consider using with their learners. Brainstorm activities can be used as pre-reading or pre-writing tasks to stimulate interest in a topic or generate ideas.

It can also be used to identify learners' existing knowledge about a topic.

The legislation, policy and impacting events timeline and statistics can be used in a number of different ways with learners or workshop participants.

Some suggestions are:

1. Share a sample of legislation, policy and impacting events timeline and/or statistics. Ask learners to share their thoughts and feelings in small groups and feed back their responses.
2. Reviewing a chosen sample of the legislation could be set as homework overnight and learners could report their responses the next morning.
3. Select a particular piece of legislation (for example, the Education Act 1893) and ask learners to brainstorm ways that this may have contributed to:
 - the current social status of Aboriginal in comparison to non-Aboriginal Australians, as reflected in the statistics
 - any challenges they are facing as learners or with their Aboriginal learners.



Facilitators notes

Materials required:

- Handout: *Some relevant legislation, policy and impacting events* (provided)
 - Worksheet: *Relevant legislation, policy and impacting events* (provided)
 - Powerpoint: *Some statistics* (provided)
 - Writing materials and adhesive putty.
1. Organise participants into small groups using one of the strategies in Module 12.7.1 *Organising learners into pairs or groups* (or one of your own).
 2. Distribute the Handout: *Some relevant legislation, policy and impacting events* and the Worksheet to each participant, with each group choosing and working with a different piece of evidence (policy/legislation/event).
 3. Ask participants to brainstorm what would have been some of the unseen implications of the legislation and whether it is possible that any of these effects could still be felt today.
 4. Ask the groups to record their responses on the Worksheets provided.
 5. Use adhesive putty to attach sheets to walls around the room.
 6. Conduct a 'walk around' so participants can view the ideas of other groups.
 7. Follow up by displaying and discussing the Powerpoint: *Some statistics*.

MODULE 2.4 DISCRIMINATION AND STEREOTYPING – HANDOUT

Some relevant legislation, policy and impacting events

The following table includes some of the legislation, policy and important events of Australia's colonial history that have impacted on our self-determination and wellbeing.²⁰

- KEY:**
- Federal
 - WA State (NB: many WA laws also implemented in other States)
 - Other States and Territories (but having implications at a national level)
- bold typeface** = laws *italics* = policies regular font = events

Year	Legislation/ policy/ events	Description
1829	Western Australia colonised ²¹	British colonisation of Western Australia. Governor Stirling establishes the Swan River Colony. Aboriginal welfare becomes the responsibility of the Colonial Secretary.
1893	Education Act of Western Australia (1871) amended²²	Under this act, non-Aboriginal parents have the power to object to any Aboriginal child(ren) attending any school also attended by their children. This provision saw Aboriginal children effectively excluded from schools until the 1950s. Subsequent policies of segregation and assimilation help to ensure that few Aboriginal children attended government schools until the 1970s. ²³
1901	Federation/ Constitution	The Commonwealth Constitution states 'in reckoning the numbers of people... Aboriginal natives shall not be counted'. It also states that the Commonwealth may legislate for any race except Aboriginal people. This leaves the power over Aboriginal affairs with the States. Aboriginal people are excluded from the vote and from enlistment in armed forces, though many Aboriginal people go on to fight in Australia's wars.

20 This table is adapted from the following two sources:
Partnership Acceptance Learning Sharing (2011). *Timeline*. Perth: Department of Indigenous Affairs. Retrieved 21 September 2011 from <http://pals.dia.wa.gov.au/en/Resources/Timeline/>.
Human Rights Commission (2010). *Bringing them Home Education Module*. The Commission. Retrieved 25 October 2010 from www.humanrights.wa.au/education/bringing_them_home.

21 In the early days of the Swan River Colony, schools for Aboriginal children were generally established through the authority of religious groups with some financial support from the government (Mounsey, C.F. (1980). Aboriginal education – a new dawning. In R.M Berndt and C.H. Berndt (eds). *Aborigines of the West: Their Past and Their Present*. Nedlands WA: University of Western Australia Press).

22 Prior to this amendment, no distinction was drawn between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children, so the education environment for Aboriginal people deteriorated as a result of the 1893 amendment (Mounsey, 1980; see above).

23 This varied from district to district and would not have applied to Aboriginal children whose parents were to become exempt from the 1905 Act or were to hold Certificates of Citizenship (see Natives Citizenship Rights Act 1944).



Year	Legislation/ policy/ events	Description
1905	Western Australia Aborigines Act	Rules governing almost all aspects of Aboriginal lives are laid down. These include laws to enable segregation, including the right to declare prohibited areas, the right to prohibit cohabitation and the right to remove Aboriginal people to reserves. The Chief Protector becomes the legal guardian of every Aboriginal and 'half-caste' child under 16 years. The Governor is authorised to make wide-ranging rules, including the regulation of wages and the removal of children from their families. Applications can be made for certificates of exemption from the Act but exemptions can also be revoked under the terms of the Act.
1908	Invalid and Old Age Pension Act	Provides social security for all Australians, apart from Aboriginal people, who are excluded.
1912	Maternity Act	Aboriginal women are excluded from receiving Maternity Allowance.
1928	First regionally-based Aboriginal protest in the south ²⁴	William Harris leads a deputation to protest to the Western Australian Premier over discriminatory laws, conditions in the settlements and the Chief Protector's power over their lives. Chief Protector Neville dismisses objections and sets out to discredit deputation's members.
1934	Moseley Royal Commission	Hears evidence that the Moore River Native Settlement is a 'woeful spectacle' buildings are overcrowded (by at least 50%), buildings and clothing are vermin ridden, no vocational training is provided, diet lacks fresh food, resulting in the health of inmates being seriously affected. Solitary confinement imprisonment of children is barbarous. The Commission rules that it has 'no hope of success' with the children in its care. ²⁵
1936	WA Aborigines Act 1905 amended/ Native Administration Act	Powers of the Chief Protector extended to permit Aboriginal people to be taken into custody without trial or appeal and to prevent them from entering prescribed towns without a permit. All Aboriginal people to remain wards of the State until aged 21.

24 Haebich, A. (1988). *For Their Own Good: Aborigines and Government in the Southwest of Western Australia, 1900-1940*. Nedlands, WA: University of Western Australia Press.

25 The Moore River Settlement was probably of a standard comparable with other government reserves in which Aboriginal people were forced to live, ie most were under-funded and parlous to the health and wellbeing of inhabitants. (see the following references for more information: Haebich, 1988 (see above). Haebich, A. (2000). *Broken Circles: Fragmenting Indigenous Families 1800-2000*. Fremantle, WA: Fremantle Arts Centre Press. Kidd, R. (2000). *Black Lives Government Lies*. Sydney: University of New South Wales Press. Wilson, R. (1997). *Bringing Them Home - Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families*. Sydney: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.



Year	Legislation/ policy/ events	Description
1937	<i>Assimilation Policy</i>	Aboriginal Welfare Conference of Commonwealth and State authorities called by the Federal Government decides that the official policy for Aboriginal people is assimilation. Aboriginal people of mixed descent are to be assimilated into white society (whether by choice or not). Those not living 'tribally' are to be educated and all others are to stay on reserves.
1941	Child Endowment Act (and 1942 amendment)	Federal law for child endowment excludes Aboriginal people. In 1942, there is an amendment to allow payments to the Aborigines Protection Board. It is likely Aboriginal people did not access this money. ²⁶
1944	Citizenship Certificates ²⁷ introduced under Natives Citizenship Rights Act	Aboriginal people can apply for Certificates of Citizenship if they have 'dissolved tribal and native association' two years before the application, have served in the armed forces or are 'otherwise a fit and proper person'. Certificates exempt Aboriginal people from restrictive legislation, thus entitling them to vote, drink alcohol and move freely on the proviso that they do not speak their traditional language and do not consort with others who are not exempt. Magistrates are given the power to approve, suspend and cancel Certificates of Citizenship. The term 'dog-tags' is used by Aboriginal people to refer to the certificates. For many people the renunciation of their traditional lifestyle, culture and language is the only way to overcome poverty, gain work and access education.
1946	Pilbara strike	On May 1, 800 Aboriginal pastoral workers from 27 stations in Western Australia walk off the job for better pay and conditions. This is the first industrial action by Indigenous Australians and predates the famous Wave Hill strike in the Northern Territory by 20 years. The Pilbara strike lasted until 1949, making it the longest strike in Australia's history.
1954	Native Welfare Act	This act does not limit the powers of government to remove children, a practice which continues unabated. However amendments to the <i>Native Welfare Act</i> in 1963 repeal all previous legislation and abolish the Chief Protector's powers to remove children of Aboriginal descent from their biological parents. Nevertheless the removal of Aboriginal children continues through the arbitrary implementation of the broad provisions of the Child Welfare Act of 1947.

26 Senate inquiry into stolen wages found that where benefits and wages were owed to Aboriginal people, they were often diverted to the Aborigines Protection Board or taken by mission administrators, leaving the recipients with either nothing or a small portion of their pay. See Kidd, R. (2000). *Black Lives Government Lies*: Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, for information on stolen wages and Skyring, F. (2006) *Further Submission From the Aboriginal Legal Service to the Senate Inquiry Into Stolen Wages*. Perth: Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia. Retrieved 29 October 2010 from www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/legcon_ctte/completed_inquiries/2004-07/stolen_wages/submissions/sublist.htm.

27 Much of the legislation referred to here did not apply to Aboriginal people who had signed exemption certificates, as these people had the same rights as non-Aboriginal people, albeit in exchange for their cultural rights.



Year	Legislation/ policy/ events	Description
1962	Commonwealth Electoral Act	For the first time, Aboriginal people have the right to enrol to vote in Commonwealth elections. Despite this amendment, it is illegal under Commonwealth legislation to encourage Indigenous people to enrol to vote. Western Australia also extends the State vote to Aboriginal people. ²⁸
1967	National Referendum amends Constitution	Australians confer power on the Commonwealth to make laws for Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people are included in the census for the first time.
1971	Liquor Act repealed	All restrictive measures applying to the use of alcohol by Aboriginal people in the Kimberley and Goldfields are lifted.
1971	Aboriginal (Natives Citizenship Rights) Act repealed	The Natives Citizenship Rights Act (1944) is repealed, which means that all Aboriginal people can act as ordinary citizens, without the requirement of an exemption certificate.
1972	Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authorities Act	Responsibility for Aboriginal health, education, housing and welfare is given to three consultative groups: the Aboriginal Advisory Council, the Aboriginal Lands Trust and the Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee. In 1974, the Commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs takes over under the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act.
1972	Aboriginal Heritage Act	Intended to provide for the preservation of places and objects used by or traditional to the original inhabitants of Australia or their descendents, it covers protection of Aboriginal sites and objects, site clearing procedures and penalties. Establishes the Aboriginal Cultural Materials Committee, a register of Aboriginal sites and defined 'Aboriginal Custodians'.
1975	Racial Discrimination Act 1975	This act makes racial discrimination unlawful in Australia. It aims to ensure that human rights and freedoms are enjoyed in full equality irrespective of race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin or other status.
1976	Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act	This act recognises Aboriginal traditional rights in the form of a grant of statutory freehold title to crown land. Crown land that Aboriginal people have lived on is now able to be granted as Aboriginally-owned land and not crown land. The term 'traditional owners' is coined at this time.

28 Australian Electoral Commission. *Electoral Milestone/Timetetable for Indigenous Australians*. Retrieved 3 November 2010 from http://www.aec.gov.au/Voting/indigenous_vote/indigenous.htm.



Year	Legislation/ policy/ events	Description
1980	Aboriginal Heritage Act (1972) Amended	Premier Sir Charles Court modifies this act in order to enable exploratory oil drilling by American company Amax at Pea Hill, a sacred site at Nookanbah. ²⁹
1987	<i>Aboriginal Employment Development Policy</i>	This policy introduces a number of projects under the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) program that enables communities to replace unemployment benefits with grants for community development.
1989	Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody	The Royal Commission is established to investigate the causes of deaths of Aboriginal people in custody across Australia. The final report, signed on 15 April 1991, makes 339 recommendations, mainly concerned with procedures for persons in custody, liaison with Aboriginal groups, police education and improved accessibility to information. ³⁰ Many of these recommendations are not implemented.
1989	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act (the ATSIC Act)	The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) is established on 5 March 1990. ATSIC follows the National Aboriginal Council (NAC) and is the first nationally-elected quasi government body through which Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders are formally involved in the processes of government affecting their lives. A number of Indigenous programs and organisations fall under the overall umbrella of ATSIC. ATSIC is disbanded in 2005.
1992	Aboriginal Heritage (Marandoo) Act	Premier Dr Carmen Lawrence modifies the Aboriginal Heritage Act (1972) in order to excise Marandoo, enabling Hamersley Iron to mine there. ³¹
1992	Mabo ³² Decision of the High Court of Australia followed by the Commonwealth Native Title Act (1994)	High Court decision in August 1992 recognises for the first time in Australian law that Aboriginal people are the Indigenous people of this country and that the land is significant and integral to their beliefs and cultures. This entitles Aboriginal people to special rights in common law to land called 'Native Title'. The concept of <i>Terra Nullius</i> is rejected as 'legal fiction'. The 1996 Wik decision of the High Court rules that native title can co-exist with pastoral leases.

29 Beresford, Q. (2006). *Rob Riley: An Aboriginal Leader's Quest For Justice*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.

30 Many of the reports from the Royal Commission can be found at www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/IndigLRes/rciadic/.

31 Beresford, 2006 (see above).

32 Eddie 'Koiki' Mabo was the lead plaintiff representing the Meriam people of the eastern group of Torres Strait Islands in their landmark action against the State of Queensland, commonly referred to as 'Mabo'.



Year	Legislation/ policy/ events	Description
1997	National inquiry into the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families	The 'Bringing Them Home' report of the national inquiry into the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families is tabled in Federal Parliament. The report reveals the extent of forced removal policies, which went on for more than 150 years and into the 1980s. The Inquiry makes 54 recommendations on a wide range of issues that are directed at governments, churches and other community groups. Recommendation No 7.a of <i>Bringing Them Home</i> recommends that a National Sorry Day be held each year on 26 May 'to commemorate the history of forcible removals and its effects'.
2006	Little Children are Sacred Report	Northern Territory Government commissions research into allegations of widespread sexual abuse of children in Aboriginal communities. An inquiry is established to find better ways of protecting Aboriginal children. In June 2006, the commission releases the Little Children are Sacred Report, which concludes that sexual abuse of children in Aboriginal communities has reached crisis levels, demanding that it 'be designated as an issue of urgent national significance by both the Australian and Northern Territory governments'.
2007	Northern Territory Emergency Response – The Intervention	<p>Various legislation is passed by both major parties (Labor and Liberal) including suspension of the Racial Discrimination Act, resulting in the removal of the permit system for access to Aboriginal land, quarantining 50% of welfare payments and the abolition of Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP).</p> <p>It enables the government to compulsorily acquire and lease Aboriginal land in return for basic services. Aboriginal children to be taught in English, a language many don't speak, for the first four hours at school and subjected to mandatory health checks.</p> <p>Despite 'The Intervention' being linked (in response) to the 'Little Children are Sacred' report, few of the report's recommendations are adopted by 'The Intervention' and some even consider 'The Intervention' as being inconsistent with the report's content and philosophy.³³ 'The Intervention' is criticised by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission and the United Nations.</p>
2008	Government Apology	On 13 February 2008, the Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, apologises to the Stolen Generations. Both the government and the opposition support the apology and say 'sorry' to Aboriginal people who were taken away from their families from 1900 to the 1970s. The apology has no legal effect on the ability of Aboriginal people to claim compensation.

33 Ring, I.T. and Wenitong, M. (2007) Interventions to halt child abuse in Aboriginal communities. *Medical Journal of Australia*, 187(4), 204-205.



MODULE 2.4 DISCRIMINATION AND STEREOTYPING – WORKSHEET

Relevant legislation, policy and impacting events

- Task:
1. Familiarise yourself with the Handout: *Some relevant legislation, policy and impacting events*.
 2. Choose one legislation/policy/event that you want to work with. Fill in the relevant details below and discuss and answer the questions.

Year	Legislation/ policy/ events	Description

What would have been some of the unseen implications of the legislation/policy/event?

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Are there any effects of this still being felt today?

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MODULE 2.4 DISCRIMINATION AND STEREOTYPING – POWERPOINT

Some statistics

- Aboriginal Australians are much less likely than non-Aboriginal Australians to complete school to Year 12 (23% compared with 58%) and are more likely to leave school at Year 9 or below (31% compared with 9%).³⁴
- Young Aboriginal men are three to four times more likely to commit suicide than young non-Aboriginal men. Young Aboriginal women are five times more likely to commit suicide than young non-Aboriginal women.³⁵
- 14% of people in custody are Aboriginal, while Aboriginal people comprise only 2.3% of our population.³⁶
- Aboriginal adults are 17 times more likely to be incarcerated, while Aboriginal juveniles are 19 times more likely.³⁷ In Western Australia, Aboriginal youth are 51 times more likely to be incarcerated than their non-Aboriginal peers.³⁸
- Because of this high incarceration rate, Aboriginal people make up a disproportionate share of deaths in custody (Commonwealth of Australia, 1991).
- The Royal Commission into Black Deaths in Custody made 339 recommendations. In most States, many of these have not been implemented.³⁹
- Since the Royal Commission, Aboriginal incarceration rates have risen 30% for women and 20% for men nationally.⁴⁰
- Aboriginal people have a mortality rate two to three times that of other Australians.⁴¹

34 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2010). *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People*. ABS cat. no. 4707.0. Canberra: The Bureau.

35 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2008). *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People*. ABS cat. no. 4707.0. Canberra: The Bureau.

36 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2007). *Population Distribution, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australian, 2006*. ABS cat. no. 4705.0. Canberra: The Bureau.

37 Bareja, M. and Charlton K. (2003). *Statistics on Juvenile Detention in Australia: 1981-2002*. Technical and Background Paper No. 5. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.

38 Fernandez, J., Ferrante, A., Loh, N., Maller, M. and Valuri, G. (2004). *Crime and Justice Statistics for Western Australia: 2003*. Perth: Crime Research Centre.

39 WA Deaths in Custody Watch Committee (2009). *The Ward Case and Lessons for the WA Government*. Special Report of a Working Party Submitted to the WA Attorney General by the (WA) Deaths in Custody Watch Committee. Retrieved 29 October 2010 from [http://deathsincustody.org.au/sites/default/files/The Ward Case AG FINAL SUMB 2009.pdf](http://deathsincustody.org.au/sites/default/files/The_Ward_Case_AG_FINAL_SUMB_2009.pdf).

40 *Sydney Morning Herald* (2007). Aboriginal jail rates soar, but incomes rise. Retrieved 26 October 2010 from www.smh.com.au/news/national/aboriginal-jail-rates-soar-but-incomes-rise/2007/05/31/1180205431096.html.

41 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2006). *Indigenous Australians' Mortality*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Retrieved 23 October 2010 from www.aihw.gov.au/mortality-indigenous/.



- Aboriginal Australians die somewhere between 12 and 17 years earlier than non-Aboriginal Australians.⁴²
- The Aboriginal infant mortality rate is three times higher than that of other Australians (15 and 12 per 1000 live births for Indigenous males and females, compared with 5 and 4 per 1000 live births for non-Indigenous males and females). The infant mortality rate for Aboriginal babies is worse than in many developing countries, including Uruguay and Sri Lanka.⁴³
- Many Aboriginal people suffer chronic diseases, such as otitis media and rheumatic heart disease, which are preventable and have been virtually eliminated in the non-Aboriginal population.⁴⁴

42 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2010). *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People*. ABS cat. no. 4707.0. Canberra: The Bureau.

43 Cardinal, N. (2009). *Millennium Development Goal 4: Reducing Child Mortality. The Australian Context*. Millennium Development Goals Conference. Retrieved 2 November 2010 from www.latrobe.edu.au/humansecurity/MDGconf/MDG_Conf_Papers.html.

44 Gruen, R. L. and Yee, T. F.M. (2005) Dreamtime and awakenings: Facing realities of remote area Aboriginal health. *Medical Journal of Australia*, 182 (10), 538-540.



MODULE 2.5 ABORIGINAL CULTURAL IDENTITY – OVERVIEW

Learning objective

This module will help educators to:

- have a greater understanding of the Aboriginal point of view and the Aboriginal cultural identity.

Activity description (text reconstruction)

This activity models a type of text reconstruction that participants might consider using with their learners. This type of text reconstruction fosters the development of skills associated with reading and listening comprehension, negotiation and structuring Standard Australian English (SAE) texts (conceptualisation, categorisation, paragraph organisation and text cohesion).

Text reconstruction activities can be adapted to provide practice at the whole text level, the paragraph level, the sentence level or the word level.

Please note:

This text has been written by the Aboriginal authors of this Focus Area and may not have the cohesive ties that a speaker of SAE would rely on for reconstruction.

Therefore the text provides non-Aboriginal participants with the opportunity to experience Aboriginal English text structure.



Facilitators notes

Materials required:

- Facilitators material: *Understanding our cultural identity* (provided; cut into strips, one set of strips for each pair)
 - Facilitators key/Optional handout: *Understanding our cultural identity* (whole text; provided).
1. If possible, organise participants into Two-Way Teams; otherwise, organise participants into pairs using one of the strategies in Module 12.7.1 *Organising learners into pairs or groups* (or one of your own strategies). Ideally, pairs will include one Aboriginal participant and one non-Aboriginal participant.
 2. Explain to participants that they will be given a text that describes Aboriginal points of view.
 3. Pairs will be given a set of text strips to reconstruct into a complete text.
 4. Once reconstructed, invite pairs to compare their completed texts with others and share similarities and differences in a general discussion.
 5. If required, distribute the Facilitators key/Optional handout: *Understanding our cultural identity* (whole text).

MODULE 2.5 ABORIGINAL CULTURAL IDENTITY – FACILITATORS MATERIAL

Understanding our cultural identity

Understanding cultural identity/Aboriginality includes reflection on self but also about the way we express ourselves, the way we talk and the way we do things. Where many Aboriginal people have felt that they have lost their culture and identity, it may be as simple as not understanding what identity or Aboriginality means.

Aboriginality is from blood, from country, from language, from belonging and from experiences of the past. This is the basis of what forms identity and culture and cannot be separated from living and learning in today's society.

Usually, only Aboriginal people living in the remotest parts of Australia were lucky enough not to have their living and breathing Aboriginal culture challenged too much by the mainstream.

For many of us, our language was taken from us but we adapted our ways of communicating without losing our ways of understanding and seeing things.

In our way, you have to be qualified by having knowledge to pass on but there is no need for a piece of paper to validate this. Most of us are living an Aboriginal way of life with our own traditions in today's setting.

Language is culture and culture is language. For many of us, it is Aboriginal English (and other languages, if we have them at home) that has enabled us to hold on to our cultural understanding, our stories and our lore.

Through our language, we understand where we fit and how far we can move within our cultural boundaries. We need to be strong and keep this knowledge for the benefit of all and of ourselves as the traditional owners of this country and the future of our people.



MODULE 2.5 ABORIGINAL CULTURAL IDENTITY – FACILITATORS KEY/OPTIONAL HANDOUT

Understanding our cultural identity

Understanding cultural identity/Aboriginality includes reflection on self but also about the way we express ourselves, the way we talk and the way we do things. Where many Aboriginal people have felt that they have lost their culture and identity, it may be as simple as not understanding what identity or Aboriginality means.

Aboriginality is from blood, from country, from language, from belonging and from experiences of the past. This is the basis of what forms identity and culture and cannot be separated from living and learning in today's society.

Usually, only Aboriginal people living in the remotest parts of Australia were lucky enough not to have their living and breathing Aboriginal culture challenged too much by the mainstream.

For many of us, our language was taken from us but we adapted our ways of communicating without losing our ways of understanding and seeing things.

In our way, you have to be qualified by having knowledge to pass on but there is no need for a piece of paper to validate this. Most of us are living an Aboriginal way of life with our own traditions in today's setting.

Language is culture and culture is language. For many of us, it is Aboriginal English (and other languages if we have them at home) that has enabled us to hold on to our cultural understanding, our stories and our lore.

Through our language, we understand where we fit and how far we can move within our cultural boundaries. We need to be strong and keep this knowledge for the benefit of all and of ourselves as the traditional owners of this country and the future of our people.



MODULE 2.6 GROWING THE SEED – OVERVIEW

Learning objectives

This module will help educators to:

- broaden their knowledge on how to ensure intercultural understanding
- be able to identify barriers to intercultural understanding
- find ways to create intercultural successes
- appreciate and value the knowledge that learners bring to schools or training sites.

Activity description (discussion)

The diagram in the Powerpoint below represents understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. One circle represents Aboriginal knowledge and world view, the other non-Aboriginal knowledge and world view.

Where the two circles overlap is the convergence of these two world views, or we could call it 'cross-cultural understanding'.

If both circles were to expand to include more understandings of the other, the overlapping section in the diagram would grow like a seed.

This is the purpose of this resource to ensure the growth of the 'seed'.

Facilitators notes

Materials required:

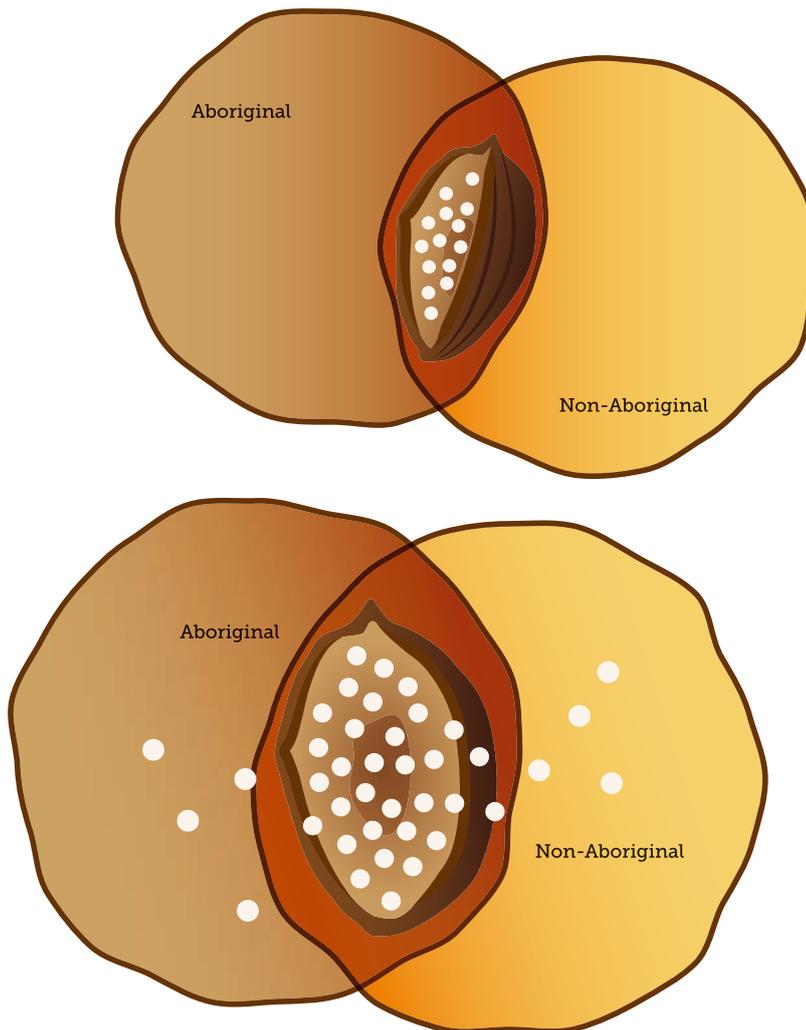
- Powerpoint: *Growing the seed*
- Handout: *Discussion activity*.

1. Organise participants into groups (see Module 12.7.1 for grouping activity).
2. Show and explain the Powerpoint: *Growing the seed*.
3. Distribute Handout: *Discussion activity*. Talk about the seed and how to grow the seed. Ask what some of the barriers are to make the seed grow more generally in our lives. This may include a lack of opportunities to interact, a lack of time to spend with other social contacts or simply fear of the unknown.
4. Now brainstorm how these barriers can be overcome.



MODULE 2.6 GROWING THE SEED – POWERPOINT

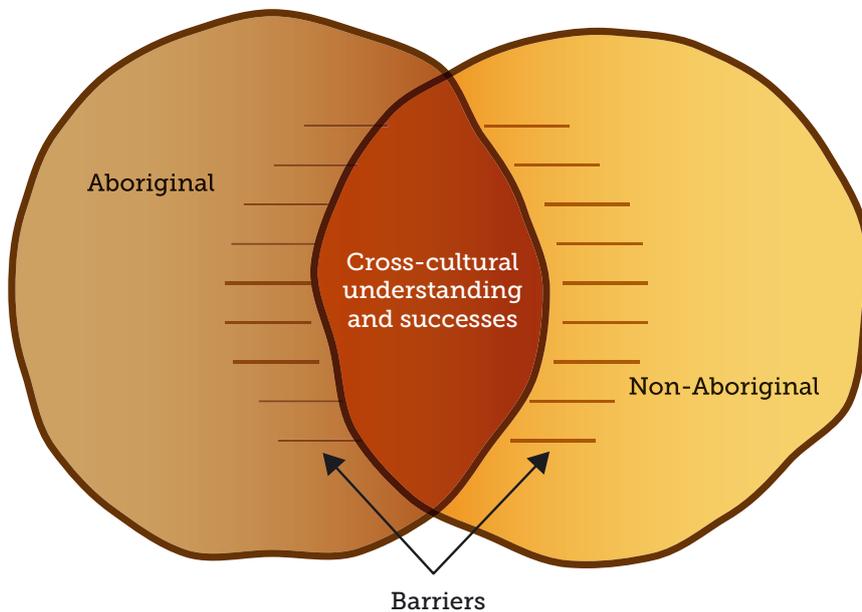
- One circle represents Aboriginal knowledge and world view, the other non-Aboriginal knowledge and world view.
- Where the two circles overlap is the convergence of these two world views, or we could call it 'cross-cultural understanding'. If both circles were to expand to include more understandings of the other, the overlapping section would grow and the diagram would take on the shape of a seed.
- This is the purpose of this resource and many of the modules in this Focus Area: to ensure the growth of the 'seed'.



MODULE 2.6 GROWING THE SEED – HANDOUT

Discussion activity

The diagram below represents understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. One circle represents Aboriginal knowledge and world view, the other non-Aboriginal knowledge and world view. Where the two circles overlap is the convergence of these two world views, or we could call it 'cross-cultural understanding'. If both circles were to expand to include more understandings of the other, the overlapping section would grow and the diagram would take on the shape of a seed. This is the purpose of this resource and many of the modules in this Focus Area: to ensure the growth of the 'seed' of cross-cultural dialogue and mutual understanding.



Discussion questions

- How can we make the seed grow?
- What are some of the barriers to making the seed grow more generally in our lives? These may include:
 - lack of opportunities to interact
 - lack of time to spend with other social contacts
 - simply fear of the unknown.
- Now brainstorm how these barriers can be overcome.



MODULE 2.7 AGENCIES THAT MAY BE IMPACTING ON ABORIGINAL LEARNERS

Module 2.7 presents workshop materials that will enable educators to:

- be aware of learners' possible experiences with and attitudes toward government agencies
- realise that educators are possibly only one of many other agencies impacting on an Aboriginal family
- understand how previous experiences might influence learners' behaviour toward educators.

MODULE 2.7 AGENCIES THAT MAY BE IMPACTING ON ABORIGINAL LEARNERS

2.7.1 DEVELOPING A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING
– OVERVIEW

Learning objectives

This module will help educators to:

- raise awareness of the fact that educators might be seen as part of an outside agency that impacts on families
- understand how previous experiences might influence learners' behaviour toward educators.

Activity description (jigsaw reading/listening activity)

The activity itself models a jigsaw reading/listening activity that participants might consider using with their learners.

Jigsaw reading/listening activities are useful for developing reading, listening and speaking skills as well as note-taking and cooperative learning skills. They can be useful when learners need to be familiar with the content of longer texts and in developing the extraction and explanation of major points.

Facilitators notes

Materials required:

- Handout 1: *Background information* (provided)
 - Handout 2a: *Police and the justice system* (provided)
 - Handout 2b: *Health system* (provided)
 - Handout 2c: *Voluntary organisations* (provided)
 - Optional handout: *Developing a deeper understanding* (provided)
 - Writing materials.
1. Ask participants to form three big groups (a, b and c) with at least one Aboriginal educator in each group, if possible. Group a comes together in one part of the room, Group b in another and so on.
 2. Distribute copies of the three Handouts: Handout 1 to every participant, Handout 2a to members of Group a, Handout 2b to Group b and Handout 2c to Group c. Everyone should have a copy of the background text and a Handout 2a, 2b or 2c (differs for each group) to read, discuss and make notes on.
 3. Members of the respective groups then read, discuss and become experts on the topic contained in their Handouts. Point out that Handout 1: *Background information* is the same for each group but that Handout 2 is different for each group. Participants should be able to explain the content of their individual topic (a, b or c) to others who have not read it when they regroup.
 4. Once the three groups have had enough time to analyse and discuss their topics, disband the big groups and re-form smaller groups of three, with one representative from each group (a, b and c).
 5. Members of these groups take turns in sharing the content of their own texts, beginning with Person a, then Person b and Person c.
 6. Possibly distribute the Optional handout, which contains the texts from the three groups, a, b and c.

MODULE 2.7 AGENCIES THAT MAY BE IMPACTING ON ABORIGINAL LEARNERS

2.7.1 DEVELOPING A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING – HANDOUT 1

Background information

As educators it is important to remember what our role is and to be clear about what can and cannot be provided within that role. While the role might be to educate or train and to facilitate an environment that optimises learning, sometimes outside issues will have considerable impact. Therefore, it is good practice for education/training sites to have policies and guidelines to assist educators to know when they should and should not interfere.

As Aboriginal families are often big and communities are small, everyone knows everyone. We need to be mindful of this when talking about learners and their families. Confidentiality is always important but in Aboriginal communities it is of utmost importance and any breaches of a learner's or community member's confidentiality can really damage an educator's reputation in that community.

For many Aboriginal individuals and families, the number of agencies that have dealings with them at any given time can be overwhelming,⁴⁵ and there are times when education is not even a high priority because of competing demands. These agencies may include various sections of the justice, welfare, health and housing systems or general service provisions systems, such as power and water providers. Dealing with these agencies may be given priority over all the issues that the family may be experiencing, especially during times of loss and trauma.

45 Edmunds, M. (1989). Opinion formation as political process: The public sector, Aborigines and public opinion in a Western Australian town. *Anthropological Forum*, 6 (1), 81-104.



MODULE 2.7 AGENCIES THAT MAY BE IMPACTING ON ABORIGINAL LEARNERS

2.7.1 DEVELOPING A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING – HANDOUT 2A

Police and the justice system

- Aboriginal adults are 17 times more likely than non-Aboriginal adults to be incarcerated. Aboriginal juveniles are 19 times more likely to be incarcerated.⁴⁶ Because of this high incarceration rate, there is a good chance that many Aboriginal learners will have family member(s) in prison or involved in the justice system.
- Such involvement deprives many of the Aboriginal learners of key family members in the home. This has implications for many areas of the lives of our children, the Aboriginal learners. The person incarcerated might have been the 'breadwinner' or the person who supplied the family with food from hunting or fishing, etc. This may then put extra financial strain on the family. The family may therefore need to seek assistance from the government or welfare authorities.
- If a woman is incarcerated, children might have moved to live with another relative for the duration of the sentence. This could mean that they have moved to more 'crowded' homes that are further away from the school, or even in another town/area. In essence, incarceration of any significant member of a family can create a ripple effect that impacts on many more people than the learner and his/her immediate family, and can involve even more agencies impacting on family life.
- It is important to note that there is often more than one significant member of a family, so the removal of one may put pressure on others to fulfil obligations as well as their own. Sometimes this is possible, but often it is not.
- Learners who have family members incarcerated may display anger toward any people in authority, including educators. It is important to remember that this anger may be directed at the authority that the educator represents rather than at a particular educator.
- Learners may have to step in and fulfil other roles for the family at these times and education and training may seem an inconvenience. For example, a learner may be required to look after younger siblings while a parent attends court or is accompanying a juvenile to appear in court.

46 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2007). *Prisoners in Australia*. ABS cat. no. 4517.0. Canberra: The Bureau.
Bareja, M. and Charlton K. (2003). *Statistics on Juvenile Detention in Australia: 1981-2002*. Technical and Background Paper No. 5. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.



MODULE 2.7 AGENCIES THAT MAY BE IMPACTING ON ABORIGINAL LEARNERS

2.7.1 DEVELOPING A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING – HANDOUT 2B

Health system

- Aboriginal learners are also more likely than other learners to be affected by illness and bereavement in the home, and community.⁴⁷
- Illness or bereavement may deprive the learner of key family members in the home. Many of the issues that apply to the justice system apply equally here.
- Sometimes a very ill person will be required to travel to the city (if they are from the country) which means that other key family members may travel with them. This puts a great deal of distance between the family and the ill member of the family. There is extra stress because those at home may not be able to keep abreast of what is happening. This can also cause stress on those family who then provide the living-base for those who have travelled.

This may also increase caring responsibilities on family members.

- Learners are likely to be affected by loss and trauma and may lose interest in education/ training or lack concentration during these times.

⁴⁷ See Module 2.4 for some statistical comparisons between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians in terms of health and justice.



MODULE 2.7 AGENCIES THAT MAY BE IMPACTING ON ABORIGINAL LEARNERS

2.7.1 DEVELOPING A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING – HANDOUT 2C

Voluntary organisations

- In addition to the unpaid work in caring roles resulting from the various circumstances families find themselves in, Aboriginal people have many other commitments to formal volunteer activities.
- For many Aboriginal learners, involvement in sporting organisations is an important part of life. Sport is a great escape from the stresses of modern life as it releases energy that helps get rid of pent-up anger. Involvement in sport can give learners confidence in teamwork; increase their listening skills for further study; provide the skills necessary for preparation and the skills to cope with failure. All of these skills are beneficial in all education.
- For some Aboriginal learners, church and youth group activities have an important place in their lives; others may express their spirituality in different ways.
- Some family members have a significant workload in representing their families, community or other Aboriginal people in general. Occasionally, they are paid for this work but much is voluntary.



MODULE 2.7 AGENCIES THAT MAY BE IMPACTING ON ABORIGINAL LEARNERS

2.7.1 DEVELOPING A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING – OPTIONAL HANDOUT

Developing a deeper understanding

As educators, it is important to remember what our role is and to be clear about what can and cannot be provided within that role. While the role might be to educate or train and to facilitate an environment that optimises learning, sometimes outside issues will have considerable impact. Therefore, it is good practice for education/training sites to have policies and guidelines to assist educators to know when they should and should not interfere.

As Aboriginal families are often big and communities are small, everyone knows everyone. We need to be mindful of this when talking about learners and their families. Confidentiality is always important but in Aboriginal communities it is of utmost importance and any breaches of a learner’s or community member’s confidentiality can really damage an educator’s reputation in that community.

For many Aboriginal individuals and families, the number of agencies that have dealings with them at any given time can be overwhelming,⁴⁸ and there are times when education is not even a high priority because of competing demands. These agencies may include various sections of the justice, the welfare, health and housing systems or general service provisions systems, such as power and water providers. Dealing with these agencies may be given priority over all the issues that the family may be experiencing, especially during times of loss and trauma.

The following are some points for exemplification:

1. Police and the justice system

- Aboriginal adults are 17 times more likely than non-Aboriginal adults to be incarcerated. Aboriginal juveniles are 19 times more likely to be incarcerated.⁴⁹ Because of this high incarceration rate, there is a good chance that many Aboriginal learners will have family member(s) in prison or involved in the justice system.
- Such involvement deprives many of the Aboriginal learners of key family members in the home. This has implications for many areas of the lives of our children, the Aboriginal learners. The person incarcerated might have been the ‘breadwinner’ or the person who supplied the family with food from hunting or fishing, etc. This may then put extra financial strain on the family. The family may therefore need to seek assistance from the government or welfare authorities.

48 Edmunds, M. (1989). Opinion formation as political process: The public sector, Aborigines and public opinion in a Western Australian town. *Anthropological Forum*, 6 (1), 81-104.

49 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2007). *Prisoners in Australia*. ABS cat. no. 4517.0. Canberra: The Bureau.
Bareja, M. and Charlton K. (2003). *Statistics on Juvenile Detention in Australia: 1981-2002*. Technical and Background Paper No. 5. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.



- If a woman is incarcerated, children might have moved to live with another relative for the duration of the sentence. This could mean that they have moved to more 'crowded' homes that are further away from the school, or even in another town/area. In essence, incarceration of any significant member of a family can create a ripple effect on many more people than the learner and his/her immediate family, and can involve even more agencies impacting on family life.
- It is important to note that there is often more than one significant member of a family, so the removal of one may put pressure on others to fulfil obligations as well as their own. Sometimes this is possible, but often it is not.
- Learners who have family members incarcerated may display anger toward people in authority, including educators. It is important to remember that this anger may be directed at the authority that the educator represents, rather than at a particular educator.
- Learners may have to step in and fulfil other roles for the family at these times and education and training may seem an inconvenience. For example, a learner may be required to look after younger siblings while a parent attends court or is accompanying a juvenile to appear in court.

2. Health system

- Aboriginal learners are also more likely than other learners to be affected by illness and bereavement in the home, and community.⁵⁰
- Illness or bereavement may deprive the learner of key family members in the home. Many of the issues that apply to the justice system apply equally here.
- Sometimes a very ill person will be required to travel to the city (if they are from the country) which means that other key family members may travel with them. This puts a great deal of distance between the family and the ill member of the family. There is extra stress because those at home may not be able to keep abreast of what is happening. This can also cause stress on those family who then provide the living-base for those who have travelled. This may also increase caring responsibilities on family members.
- Learners are likely to be affected by loss and trauma and may lose interest in education/training or lack concentration during these times.

3. Voluntary organisations

In addition to the unpaid work in caring roles resulting from the above, Aboriginal people have many other commitments to formal volunteer activities.

- For many Aboriginal learners, involvement in sporting organisations is an important part of life. Sport is a great escape from the stresses of modern life as it releases energy that helps get rid of pent-up anger. Involvement in sport can give learners confidence in teamwork; increase their listening skills for further study; provide the skills necessary for preparation and the skills to cope with failure. All of these skills are beneficial in all education.
- For some Aboriginal learners, church and youth group activities have an important place in their lives; others may express their spirituality in different ways.
- Some family members will have a significant workload in representing their families, community or other Aboriginal people in general. Occasionally, they are paid for this work but much is voluntary.

⁵⁰ See Module 2.4 for some statistical comparisons between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians in terms of health and justice.



MODULE 2.7 AGENCIES THAT MAY BE IMPACTING ON ABORIGINAL LEARNERS

2.7.2 IMPACTS ON ONE HOUSEHOLD – OVERVIEW

Learning objective

This module will help educators to:

- educate non-Aboriginal participants as to the range of agencies that learners may have encountered before or during their education.

Activity description (reflection and discussion)

In this activity participants are asked to reflect on and discuss their past experience of the situations that their learners have faced and that have involved the listed agencies.

Participants might also have experienced the intervention of these and other agencies.

Please note:

Facilitators need to ensure that Aboriginal perspectives on the impact of agencies on the family need to be explained through discussion (either in small groups or at the whole group level).

Facilitators notes

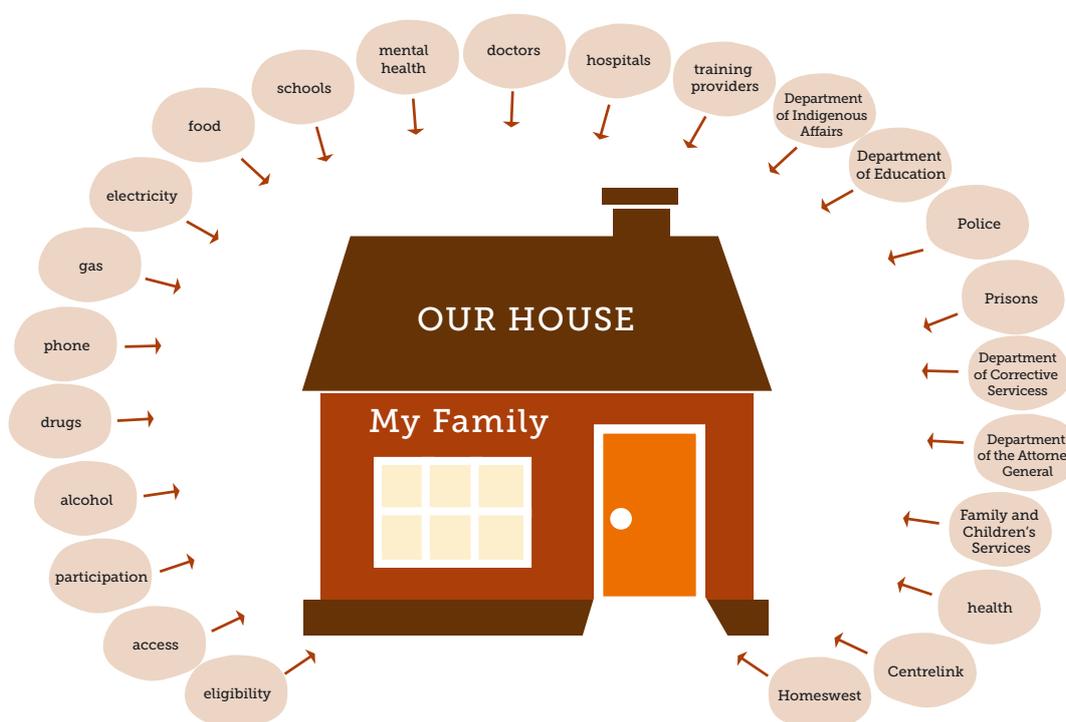
Materials required:

- Handout: *The impact of outside agencies and factors on one household* (provided).
1. Organise participants into groups as above, with at least one Aboriginal educator in each group if possible.
 2. Using the Handout: *The impact of outside agencies and factors on one household* as a cue, ask participants to reflect on past experiences where any of these agencies (or others that they know of) have impacted on learners and/or their families and whether these have affected the learners' attendance or achievement.
 3. Discuss difficult situations that have arisen, what reactions have resulted and any strategies that have been put in place to handle similar situations in the future.

MODULE 2.7 AGENCIES THAT MAY BE IMPACTING ON ABORIGINAL LEARNERS

2.7.2 IMPACTS ON ONE HOUSEHOLD – HANDOUT

The impact of outside agencies and factors on one household



1. Reflect on past experiences in which any of these factors and agencies (or others that you know of) have impacted on learners and/or their families. Did these affect the learners' attendance or achievement?
2. Discuss difficult situations that have arisen and the reactions that have resulted. Discuss any strategies that have been put in place to handle similar situations in the future.



MODULE 2.8 EDUCATION AND TRAINING SETTINGS: ENGENDERING TRUST – OVERVIEW

Learning objectives

This module will help educators to:

- understand the importance of establishing Two-Way processes within the education/training site
- raise awareness of and establish an Aboriginal education policy
- determine what individual teachers or educators can do to engender trust.

Activity description (jigsaw reading/listening activity)

The activity itself models a jigsaw reading/listening activity that participants might consider using with their learners.

Jigsaw reading/listening activities are useful in developing reading, listening and speaking skills as well as note-taking and cooperative learning skills.

They can be useful when learners need to be familiar with the content of longer texts and to develop skills in the extraction and explanation of major points.



Facilitators notes

Materials required:

- Handout 1: *Suggestions for a Two-Way setting* (provided)
 - Handout 2: *How can educators support their learners?* (provided)
 - Handout 3: *An example of an Aboriginal Education Policy* (provided)
 - Powerpoint: *Six principles* (provided).
1. Introduce the jigsaw activity as a way of engendering trust in education and training settings.
 2. Go around the room assigning participants to Groups 1, 2 and 3. Participants assigned to Group 1 come together in one part of the room, and so on.
 3. Distribute copies of Handout 1 to Group 1, Handout 2 to Group 2 and Handout 3 to Group 3. Everyone should have a copy of a text to read, discuss and make notes on.
 4. Members of the respective groups then read and discuss their texts and become experts on them. They should be able to explain the contents of the texts to others (who have not read them) when they regroup.
 5. Disband the groups and re-form smaller groups of three, including representatives from Groups 1, 2 and 3.
 6. Members of these groups take turns in explaining the content of their own texts, beginning with Person 1, then Person 2 and Person 3.
 7. Participants return to their original groups and the facilitators show the Powerpoint: *Six principles*.
 8. Groups choose one principle of the Dubbo policy and are invited to discuss how this principle can be put into practice, how it is similar to or different from current practice in Western Australia and what some barriers to implementing the principle in the participants' educational contexts would be.

MODULE 2.8 EDUCATION AND TRAINING SETTINGS: ENGENDERING TRUST – HANDOUT 1

Suggestions for a Two-Way setting

Before 1967, most Aboriginal people had limited access to education.⁵¹ A few were privileged to attend mainstream schools, while most were trained only to fulfil unskilled labouring jobs, such as domestic services and/or farm work.

Many of our Aboriginal people who lived through that era are today’s community elders. It is of vital importance that we do not allow history to be repeated. We know that opportunities for learning exist, and it is up to all of us to facilitate a positive learning environment for our Aboriginal children, the Aboriginal learners.

It may be a problem for Aboriginal learners and communities if the education/training site is *monocultural* (one-way).

In order to guard against this, educators can attempt:

- to accept the language learners bring the school; to value it and celebrate it and to expand on it when learning Standard Australian English (SAE)
- to be interested in learning about this country’s unwritten history and Aboriginal cultures
- not to assume that Aboriginal learners can’t learn or are not interested
- to understand non-conformity with monocultural interaction patterns (ie communicating in SAE)
- to include Aboriginal history and culture in their lesson plans
- to understand that Aboriginal learners often have different needs. The common belief that ‘we are all equal’ sounds good but is not supported by the facts (Module 2.4).

Notes:

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51 It was not until the 1967 referendum, in which responsibility for Aboriginal affairs was shifted from the States to the Commonwealth that specific Aboriginal education policy was written and positive changes began to occur.



MODULE 2.8 EDUCATION AND TRAINING SETTINGS: ENGENDERING TRUST – POWERPOINT

Six principles

An Aboriginal Education Policy developed by Dubbo South High School⁵³ was based on the following six principles:

- The provision of adequate and appropriate resourcing to enable Aboriginal students to achieve education outcomes comparable with the rest of the school population.
- All policies that affect the schooling of Aboriginal students will be negotiated with the Aboriginal community in active partnership with the school.
- Aboriginal students are entitled to high quality, culturally appropriate education and training programs as a foundation for lifelong learning.
- All students are entitled to learn about Aboriginal Australia, understanding that Aboriginal communities are the custodians of knowledge about their own cultures and history.
- Aboriginal students are entitled to feel safe and secure in expressing and developing their own identity as Indigenous people within Dubbo South High School.
- All students are entitled to participate in a system that is free of racism and prejudice.

Discussion questions

Choose one principle from the six principles above and discuss:

- how this principle can be put into practice
- how it is similar to or different from current practice in Western Australia
- what some barriers to implementing the principle in your educational context would be.

53 Beresford, Q. and Partington, G. (eds)(2003). *Reform and Resistance in Aboriginal Education*. Nedlands, WA: University of Western Australia Press, 276.



MODULE 2.9 WORKING TOGETHER – OVERVIEW

Learning objectives

This module will help educators to:

- understand the range of creative skills available to Aboriginal learners to express themselves
- promote the inclusion of community, including role models and multi-media, in the enrichment of learners' educational experience.

Activity description

Drawing on information in the Handout: *Working together*, participants are invited to discuss and plan an event that will bring together community and educators at the education or training site. A template (worksheet) is provided to assist in the planning process.

Facilitators notes

Materials required:

- Handout: *Working together* (provided)
 - Worksheet: *Event planner* (provided)
1. Organise participants into groups, ensuring that there are Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal members in each group.
 2. Distribute the Handout: *Working together* for background reading as well as the Worksheet: *Event planner* and give instructions on the task. Demonstrate the use of the event planner.
 3. Ask participants to display their event planners on the wall and invite others to review the plans displayed.



MODULE 2.9 WORKING TOGETHER – HANDOUT

Working together

1. Modes of communication that may be more appropriate to Aboriginal learners:

- exploring and encouraging multi-modal expression by Aboriginal people, eg group work, yarn telling
- developing and acknowledging resources drawing on Aboriginal creative expression (with due recognition of issues of cultural ownership and copyright)
- enabling community members to have a sense of ownership over their cultural contributions in learning materials
- promoting learners' creative expression such as:
 - artistic expression through painting (on art paper, canvas, wood, ceramics)
 - etching
 - carving (wood, emu eggs)
 - sketching
 - making artefacts
 - sand drawings
 - Aboriginal dance
 - Aboriginal music (both traditional and contemporary music from Aboriginal artists such as Yothu Yindi, Christine Anu, Jessica Mauboy, Archie Roach, Troy Cassar-Daly and the Pigram Brothers)
 - Aboriginal storytelling
 - teaching/learning about Aboriginal writers, poets, playwrights and music
 - Aboriginal film (Many examples can be found on NITV. However some of the more notable and/or worthy include *Rabbit Proof Fence*, *September*, *Ten Canoes*, *Bran Nue Dae* and *Sampson and Delilah*.)

2. Involvement of community members in the education/training site:

- encouraging contributions to the school/college newsletter or to a special newsletter for Aboriginal parents, eg promoting upcoming cultural events, personal achievements such as sporting wins integrated with important school news
- planning events that will help to integrate different cultures into the school/college
- advertising these events, relevant for all learners and staff, through pigeonhole mail-outs, leaflets or school notice boards
- allowing for the fact that the school is the learners' second learning place and may contradict home learning and cause confusion for Aboriginal learners.



3. Planning task:

Discuss and plan an event for your education/training site that could celebrate different cultures and potentially get parents and other community members involved.

Some examples include:

- Organise a cross-cultural food and culture day where different nationalities bring food and information, including artefacts about their home countries. Be aware that, largely due to damaging past policies of assimilation, many Aboriginal people may not feel they want to share on such a day. (Perhaps they might not want to share any more because they have had enough taken already – some people will need time and an opportunity to develop trust.) To make a point of encouraging them may induce shame. If this is the case, it may be best to start with Aboriginal staff who can help celebrate Aboriginal culture on that day. If learners enjoy the experience and tell their families about it, perhaps next time their families may feel like joining in.
- Arrange a day in the bush where learners (including family/community) can become the educators.
- Jointly develop a Two-Way logo for the education/training site.
- Send learners out to their families for a fact-finding mission where family elders recount and share stories from the past. This is a good way to promote differing views of history.

Discuss in your groups:

- How feasible/helpful would these events be in the respective learning environments?
- If it is difficult to imagine a way to get such events happening, a good starting point would be to talk to the Aboriginal staff and find out what their interests are: they may be a valuable source of cultural knowledge and creativity. With senior learners, a bottom-up approach could be jointly explored, eg an Aboriginal art exhibition.



MODULE 2.9 WORKING TOGETHER – WORKSHEET

Event planner

.....
(name of education/training site)

Proposed event	
Date (when)	
Venue (where)	
Invitations (who to invite, how to invite, who writes and sends out invitations)	
Focus (food/cooking, learners' artwork, bush walk, culture, film)	
Responsibilities (who organises displays, food, venue, etc) (who meets and greets on the day; who welcomes, introduces community, etc)	
Resources (food, travel, parking, display stands, chairs, tables, bbqs, entertainment, etc)	



MODULE 2.10 THE SPIRAL – OVERVIEW

Learning objectives

This module will help educators to:

- understand that an Aboriginal world view is very different to an Anglo Australian world view
- understand that Aboriginal concepts, for example the concept of time (relation between past and present) are very different to Anglo Australian concepts.

Activity description

In this activity, participants will discuss their differing world views and concepts and how misunderstanding of these concepts impacts on the ability to relate to each other.

Facilitators notes

Materials required:

- Handout: *The Spiral* (provided)
- Powerpoint 1: *The Spiral* (provided)
- Powerpoint 2: *Discussion questions* (provided)
- Writing materials.

1. In preparation to this activity, read the text on the Handout out loud in your Two-Way Team and discuss your understanding of it.
2. Organise the room into discussion groups using a strategy from Module 12.7.1 or one of your own.
3. Show Powerpoint 1: *The Spiral*. Read the whole text on the Handout out loud to participants. Include pauses in between sections to give participants time to reflect on what they have heard.
4. Circulate the Handout: *The Spiral*. In their small groups, ask participants to share their thoughts about the idea of the Spiral and what it represents. How can they relate to it?

Extension of the activity:

5. Show Powerpoint 2: *Discussion questions*. Ask groups to discuss the questions.
6. Ask a representative from each group to summarise the discussions for the whole group.

(continued on next page)



Facilitators notes (continued)

Further information on the Spiral can be found in the following resources:

Malcolm, I. G., Haig, Y, Königsberg, P., Rochecouste, J., Collard, G., Hill, A. and Cahill, R. (1999) *Towards More User-Friendly Education for Speakers of Aboriginal English*. Perth: Edith Cowan University and Education Department of Western Australia, on pages 81, 82.

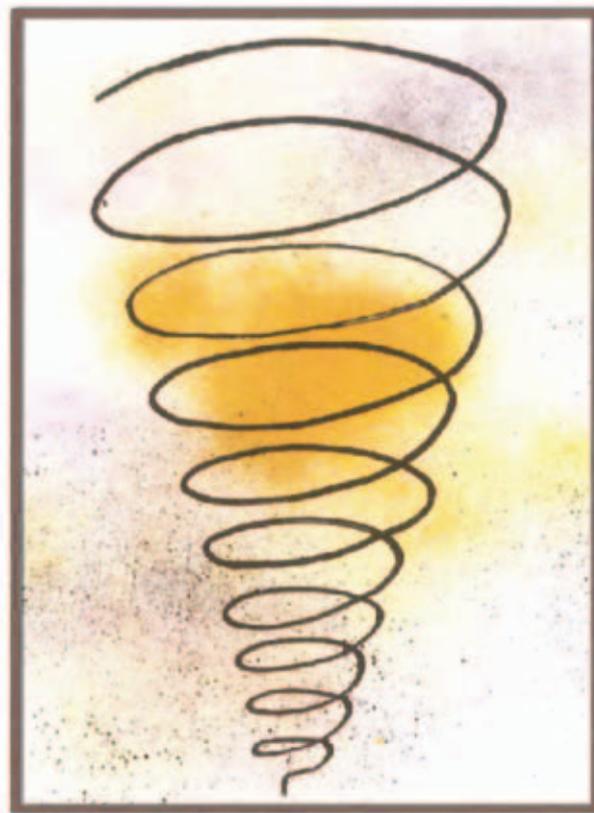
Malcolm, I. G, Haig, Y., Königsberg, P., Rochecouste, J., Collard, G., Hill, A. and Cahill, R. (1999). *Two-Way English*. Perth: Education Department of Western Australia and Edith Cowan University, on page 28.

Königsberg, P. and Collard, G. (eds)(2002). *Ways of Being, Ways of Talk*. [Kit]. Perth: Education Department of Western Australia, on pages 41, 125 and in the film *Two-Way Learning and Two Kinds of Power*.

MODULE 2.10 THE SPIRAL – HANDOUT

The Spiral

Glenys Collard developed the idea of the Spiral to describe her experience as a Nyungar woman living in contemporary Western society. The image and the idea have been discussed in numbers of ABC⁵⁴ workshops across Western Australia and Glenys' view is shared by many Aboriginal people across the state.



54 The *ABC of Two-Way Literacy and Learning* supports bidialectal education in Western Australia and is based on:
A for acceptance of Aboriginal English
B for bridging to Standard Australian English
C for cultivating Aboriginal ways of approaching experience and knowledge.



This is what the Spiral means to Glenys:

The Spiral is an image that is at the centre of my thinking. For me, it is so central that it has the importance of a symbol.

Whenever I want to talk about or try to describe an aspect of life for an Aboriginal person, I find myself using the symbol of the Spiral.

These are some of the things the Spiral means to me:

it has a centre and a periphery

it looks like a tornado – it generates movement

its centre is still and the outside is in motion

it is circular

it is a pattern that repeats

it has three dimensions

it contains space (it holds people, relationships and events in place)

It provides a contrast to symbols used by wadjellas. Wadjella symbols often use straight lines and right angles. Take time. In the white person's world time is linear. In my head and in my culture, time is circular, it has the shape of the Spiral; past and present exist equally and simultaneously. I do not think about the future stretching out ahead of me. The future is now - contained inside the Spiral, made up of past and present.

If I want to use the shape of the Spiral to describe how I experience myself as a member of a family, I think of myself as standing at the bottom and centre of the Spiral. I am inside it. All my family members (past and present) are all around me in the walls and energy of the Spiral. At the bottom are the closest family members, but the connections broaden out. They go out through time and space. They go back (inwards) to my ancestors and they go out to the extended family currently living throughout the South West, in the Kimberley, and all over... .

Sometimes I want to use the shape and the movement in the Spiral to think about language. I believe Aboriginal English has kept all the information and all the breadth and depth for many of our people, all around.

(Glenys Collard, 2009 in collaboration with Margaret McHugh)

Examples of this connection to the past, which exists in any living culture, are the storybooks in Focus Area 11. These stories were written today but are deeply rooted in the past. In our society today, Aboriginal English is the connection to the past, it is the carrier of Aboriginal culture and identity.

The Spiral represents the unique aspects of Aboriginal culture. The Spiral is timeless and endless, it's today, yesterday and all the way back to the creator who is still here now through the ngarma (fresh waterholes). The Spiral shows that yesterday is today and that time is elastic, it contracts and expands.



The Spiral is knowledge, the stories, Aboriginal people, identity, it is events, it is living and breathing. It holds the stories including why the rain is angry, or crying. It's a willy-willy⁵⁵, within the big wirli wirli⁵⁶, all these things are happening.

Unlike the linear historical lines that may be used to conceptualise western history and cultural development, the Spiral is ongoing and continuous. There are no cut-off points or marked periods of time such as centuries or eras.

Some people may have lost their way a bit through the years but the Spiral keeps Aboriginal culture going, it's circular and encompassing. The Spiral is death and conception – when somebody goes there is always somebody conceived.

The Spiral represents the past being the present. The present will shape the tomorrow.

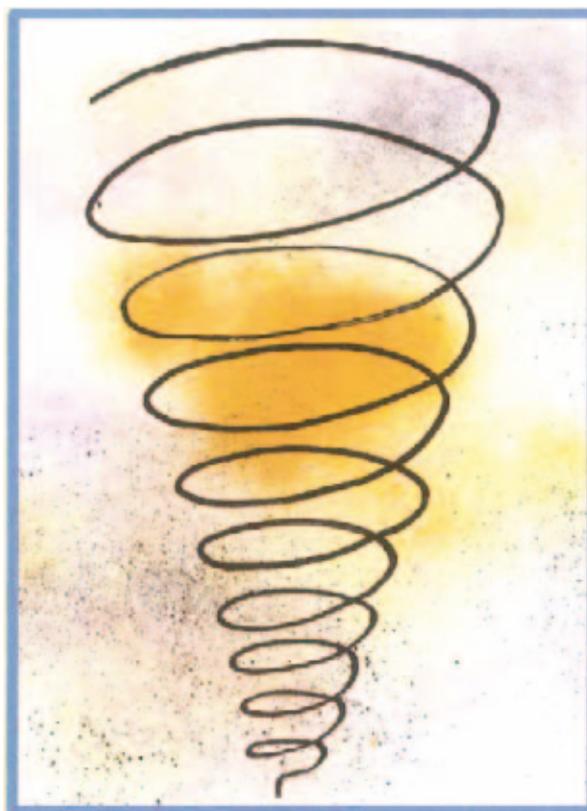
55 The Macquarie Dictionary (1991) defines willy-willy as a spiralling wind collecting dust and refuse or a cyclonic storm (Possibly sourced from Yindjibandi Aboriginal language).

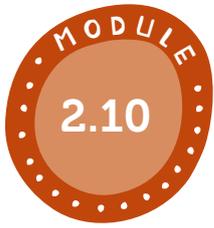
56 The Aboriginal English word for willy-willy.



MODULE 2.10 THE SPIRAL – POWERPOINT 1

The Spiral





MODULE 2.10 THE SPIRAL – POWERPOINT 2

Discussion questions

1. In what way is the past manifested in present-day relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people?
2. In what modern or contemporary ways do Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people embody their past?
3. If the Spiral represents an Aboriginal world view, how could a non-Aboriginal Anglo-Australian world view be represented?
4. How do these two differing approaches to all aspects of culture result in misunderstanding and, ultimately, affect reconciliation today?



MODULE 2.10 THE SPIRAL – FACILITATORS KEY

Possible responses to discussion questions

Give these examples to the group only if they cannot come up with anything themselves.

In what way is the past manifested in present-day relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people?

Examples:

- Aboriginal fear of non-Aboriginal authority and institutions
- Aboriginal mistrust of non-Aboriginal people's intentions
- Aboriginal invisibility to many non-Aboriginal people (in the past, Aboriginal people were banned from cities and removed to missions; now they are over-represented in prisons and, although others may be visible, they still often feel excluded from their own country)
- non-Aboriginal stereotyping of Aboriginal people (in terms of Aboriginal behaviour, values, intellect, knowledge, etc).

In what modern or contemporary ways do Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people embody their past?

Examples:

- Many Aboriginal people still hunt but today they use guns. Many Aboriginal people are still nomadic, but they use their cars to move around and visit their families and communities.
- Trauma of violence and removal from homelands and families is embodied in Aboriginal people reliving trauma in their modern lives.
- Unpaid Aboriginal labour (stolen wages) and denial of rural assistance and bank loans to buy property and farms has, in some cases, led to the relative wealth of some non-Aboriginal Australians when compared with Aboriginal Australians.

If the Spiral represents an Aboriginal world view, how could a non-Aboriginal Anglo-Australian world view be represented?

Example:

- Where time and stories and history for Aboriginal people are circular like the Spiral, Western culture is more linear and direct, like an arrow (timeline).

How do these two differing approaches to all aspects of culture result in misunderstanding and, ultimately, affect reconciliation today?

Examples:

- different views of history and its impact on today
- acceptance by non-Aboriginal people that Australia's history did not begin in 1788
- failure of many non-Aboriginal people to support a National Apology and the concept of redress for past wrongs.





Tracks to Two-Way Learning

This Focus Area booklet is one of a series of 12 that forms Part 2 of the *Tracks to Two-Way Learning* package.



Understanding language and dialect
Our dialects, our lives



Our views, our ways
Aboriginal knowledge, beliefs, today



The grammar of dialect difference
Difference, talking, hearing, understanding



How we shape experience
Yarning, seeing, watching, doing



How we represent our world
*Art, symbols, gestures, opportunity
Manners, reading, knowledge, time limits*



Language and inclusivity
How we include and how we exclude



Making texts work
... in a Two-Way learning environment



From speaking to writing
What's right and what's wrong



How we talk
How we talk, when we can talk



Making a difference for learners
*We can do it like this
Show me what*



Hearin' the voices
*Tell me your story
(includes ten storybooks)*



Toolkit for teaching
What we do with our mob