



TEACHER GUIDE
Y6 ENGLISH

Rich expression: bringing together Indigenous languages and Standard Australian English

Warning – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers and students are advised that this curriculum resource may contain images, voices or names of deceased people.

Y6 ENGLISH

Rich expression: bringing together Indigenous languages and Standard Australian English

Australian Curriculum Link

English/Year 6/Language/Language variation and change/[ACELA1515](#)

English/Year 6/Language/Phonics and word knowledge/[ACELA1526](#)

Australian Curriculum Content Description

ACELA1515: Understand that different social and geographical dialects or accents are used in Australia in addition to Standard Australian English.

ACELA1526: Understand how to use knowledge of known words, word origins including some Latin and Greek roots, base words, prefixes, suffixes, letter patterns and spelling generalisations to spell new words including technical words.

Australian Curriculum Elaboration

ACELA1515: Recognising that there are more than 150 Aboriginal languages and two Torres Strait Islander languages and that they relate to geographic areas in Australia.

ACELA1515: Recognising that all languages and dialects are of equal value, although we use different ones in different contexts, for example the use of Standard Australian English, Aboriginal English and forms of Creole used by some Torres Strait Islander groups and some of Australia's near neighbours.

ACELA1526: Learning about words from other languages, for example 'umbrella' comes from the Italian word ombrello, and the word for 'yabby' is derived from the Aboriginal word 'yabij'.

Essential question

How are a variety of words and variety in languages valuable in understanding and expressing who we are and where we are?

Australians Together Learning Framework

Tells Australia's narrative through the lens of 5 Key Ideas that inform teachers and students about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives.



The Wound

Injustice from the impact of colonisation

Students will recognise the pain and disadvantage many First Nations people experience, that started at colonisation and continues today.



Our History

A past that shapes our story as a nation

Students will critically engage with Australia's stories and understand the impact our history continues to have on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and all who call Australia home.



Why Me?

What's it got to do with me?

Students will explore why Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures are relevant to them today.



Our Cultures

Everyone has culture. Know about your culture and value the cultures of others

Students will learn more about their own culture and identity, and gain a better understanding of, and respect for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.



My Response

Steps we can take to build a brighter future

Students will gain an understanding that a brighter future is possible for all Australians, but to get there we each need to play our part.

Glossary

Terms that may need to be introduced to students prior to teaching the resource:

colonisers: invading forces that take control of a populated country; the invaded country is called a 'colony'. The British began the colonisation of Australia in 1788.

common: shared.

Country: the lands where Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander communities have always lived.

deny; be denied: to not allow someone to have something; to not be allowed to have something.

First Nations people: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

missions: places where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were forced to live to learn European culture, religion and the English language.

mother tongue: the language first learnt by a person; first language.

orthography: the art of writing words with the proper letters, according to accepted usage; correct spelling.

revitalise: to introduce new vigour, life and strength into something.

syntax: the patterns for arranging words and phrases into sentences.

	Teacher guidance	Ideas for student activities
<p>Introduction</p>	<p><i>Before beginning the study, it's important to ask students to access their prior knowledge about the topic with an introductory question or activity.</i></p> <p>Student handout content</p> <p>Variety within the English language The English language has developed over many thousands of years and in many places around the world. Languages change and develop according to the context: who you are, where you are, and what's happened or is happening there.</p> <p>The words we use (vocabulary), the order we put those words in (grammar and syntax) and how we say those words (accent) help us to know who we are and where we are.</p> <p>Useful resources The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies' <i>AIATSIS map of Indigenous Australia</i>, enables students to explore more than 150 Aboriginal languages and two Torres Strait Islander languages and how they relate to geographic areas in Australia: https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/articles/aiatsis-map-indigenous-australia</p> <p>Students can listen to audio recordings of Indigenous languages through the interactive, <i>Gambay – first languages map</i>, by First Languages Australia: https://gambay.com.au/map/</p> <p>The <i>See, think, wonder</i> thinking routine guides students through a process that encourages inquisitive thinking. A detailed teacher guide can be found on this website by Project Zero, a research centre at the Harvard Graduate School of Education: https://pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/See%20Think%20Wonder_2.pdf</p>	<p>Home survey and discussion Before beginning the class work, have students discuss the questions below with people at home. Gather all answers and share findings as a class.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What words are used in your home that are different to other homes? • What makes these words special? • What words do people in your state use that are different to other places? • What's the strangest looking English word you can find? What looks strange about it? • How do you speak differently when you're at school compared to at home? How might people speak differently in a courtroom? <p>Mapping reflection Present students first with the AIATSIS map and then the recordings on the Gambay map website. Ask students to share their thoughts using the <i>See, think, wonder</i> routine from Harvard's Project Zero (2019).</p>
 <p>Our History</p>	<p><i>There are many stories that make up Australia's history. It's important to use resources that include perspectives and voices of First Nations people, such as those contained in this resource.</i></p> <p>Student handout content</p> <p>Variety of Indigenous languages For thousands of years, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations have spoken more than 250 different languages throughout the land we now call Australia. These Indigenous languages have been passed from generation to generation. Bruce Pascoe (2014) estimates these languages to be 40 000 to 60 000 years old, but even at 10 000 years old they would be older than most other world languages.</p> <p>There are many variations of both English and Indigenous languages in Australia. When Australia was colonised, just a couple of hundred years ago, on top of the many languages spoken, there were also 600 dialects (Bradley 2018). Dialects are different versions of a language. In general, people speaking different dialects can be understood by one another (AIATSIS 2020b). An example is Yanyuwa, one of the only Indigenous languages we know that has separate dialects for men and women (Bradley 2018).</p>	<p>Variety of Indigenous languages graffiti map Read the Our History section 'Variety of Indigenous languages' in the student handout. Draw a basic outline of Australia. Find keywords in the text that show the variety of languages in Australia. Graffiti the keywords from the text using colourful fonts over this map background.</p> <p>A variety of words reading Read the Our History section 'A variety of words' in the student handout for background information.</p> <p>Model drawing a 'tree diagram' (hierarchy chart) on the board that starts with a word at the top, which is then broken down into more specific synonyms of that word underneath.</p>

	Teacher guidance	Ideas for student activities
	<p>Creole languages are a special type of language that develops as a result of two peoples with different languages needing a common language to communicate, for example, when trading. In Australia, they are the merging of the Indigenous languages of the area with English. Kriol is found in the Northern Territory and Creole is found in the Torres Strait Islands.</p> <p>Aboriginal English is another variety of English in Australia that is different to Standard English because it contains words from local ancestral languages and may have different grammatical features (AIATSIS 2020a).</p> <p>A variety of words</p> <p>Words are created everyday as new ideas are discovered that need naming. Different cultures have different knowledge and ideas, so sometimes when translating there's not an exact match between two languages. For example, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures have a special connection to the land, that is, both spiritual and for living. Immense detail about land can be found in Indigenous languages. For example, the seafaring Yanyuwa people from the Gulf of Carpentaria, Northern Territory, have a word for sunbeams shining through the water; a word for the shadows of clouds passing over the water's surface; and 27 different words for 'dugong', a marine animal that's an Indigenous food source (Bradley 2018). Dr John Bradley, a non-Indigenous man who's learnt Yanyuwa, describes learning the language as learning "a different way of seeing the world" (Bradley 2018).</p> <p>Useful resources</p> <p>Students can read the following two poems and analyse the language/s used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Calbunyas initiation' by Kaitlyn Wellington: https://redroomcompany.org/poem/kaitlen-wellington/calbunyas-initiation/ • 'Losing a language' by WS Merwin: https://merwinconservancy.org/2013/12/losing-a-language/ <p>Possible further exploration of poetry in language: https://redroomcompany.org/poems/?project=poetry-first-languages</p>	<p>You could use one of these examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • kick (the football) – punt, torp, drop-kick. • rain (for farmers) – drizzle, shower, downpour. <p>Class discussion</p> <p>Would someone with a different background know all these specific words? Why would one group of people have more specific words for something than other groups? You could use these for the examples above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why? <i>Football</i> is an important pastime to some people and they need to know what kind of kick to do. • Why? <i>Rain</i> is the difference between a good harvest and a profit, or a bad harvest and a loss of thousands of dollars. <p>Ask students to draw their own tree diagrams giving synonyms of a word they know about in detail.</p> <p>Poetry analysis</p> <p>Break into pairs to study a poem. Half the pairs study 'Losing a language' (via link or see p.12), while the other half study 'Calbunyas initiation' (via link).</p> <p>When students have answered the questions on the next page, all the students who studied 'Losing a language' stand as an inner circle facing out. All the students who studied 'Calbunyas invitation' stand as an outer circle facing in. The outer circle student shares with the matching inner circle student, then a bell rings and the inner circle student moves to the left. The inner circle student shares their learning with the outer student. The bell rings then inner student moves to the left. Continue taking turns and moving so that each student has practise explaining their own findings well and understands the learning from the other poem.</p>

	Teacher guidance	Ideas for student activities
		<p>'Losing a language' by WS Merwin (1988) In his poem, Merwin describes what's 'lost' when a language disappears and how it can affect someone with that language background. Students should answer these questions after they have read the poem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the old and the young? "... the young have fewer words many of the things the words were about no longer exist ..." • What do you think about? "... the noun for standing in mist by a haunted tree ...", or "... the verb for I ..."? • Is it "... better to say everything differently ..."? • Where's here in the line "... where nothing that is here is known...?" • What feelings might the author have when he says: "... when there is a voice at the door it is foreign ..." and "... everywhere instead of a name there is a lie ..."? <p>"Losing a Language" by W.S. Merwin, first published in <i>The rain in the trees</i>. Copyright © 1988 by W.S. Merwin, used by permission of The Wylie Agency LLC.</p> <p>'Calbunyas initiation' by Kaitlyn Wellington (2019) This poem introduces the importance of learning language/s. Ask students to think about the following ideas when they've read the poem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice the creole nature of this poem. • Notice the Gumea Dharawal words. • Use the context of the words to understand what they mean. • Who do you think 'calbunya' might be? • What are the big ideas that language connects to (the bush, family)?



The Wound

Teacher guidance

The story of our nation's past is hard to face but it's important; it's left a wound that can be seen in the inequality between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous Australians. Help students understand how this wound continues to have an impact today.

Student handout content

Denied the right to speak

Many **First Nations people** were removed from **Country** and forced to live at **missions**. Many children were taken from their families and have become known as 'the Stolen Generations'. The stories from people who lived in the missions show us the way the authorities would forcefully control the lives of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Languages, cultures and visits with family were often forbidden because the government was teaching the children European ways. Speaking only English was a big part of breaking connection to Indigenous knowledge, cultures and way of life. Jeanie Bell, a Jagera and Dulingbara woman, explains in an excerpt from the National Museum Australia's interview, *Language and identity* (2010):

John Harms: And were there penalties for speaking (Indigenous) language?

Jeanie Bell: Well, that's what we were told. I guess the one that I've heard people mainly say is that they would have their mouth washed out with soap or they were sent to the dormitories or they were locked up in darkrooms and punished. They were punished for a lot of things. And quite often they were also punished by older Aboriginal people who had taken on the roles of helping to grow these children up. My mother always talked about a boiling pot on a fire outside the dormitory where an old lady who didn't have any legs sat, and she was always threatening to throw them in the pot – like those kinds of stories. Oral history is wonderful in many ways, but quite often it does get changed along the way, so we have to be careful with that.

Impact of colonisation

When **colonisers** came to Australia, 275 languages and 600 dialects were spoken. Now, only 20 languages are considered strong (Bradley 2018). This has happened for many, many indigenous peoples around the world. In 2019, the United Nations (UN) found that 40 percent of the world's estimated 6700 languages were in danger of disappearing – the majority belonging to indigenous people (Department of Economic and Social Affairs and Social Inclusion 2019). The UN believes all languages are of value and so declared 2019 the International Year of Indigenous Languages to raise awareness and promote action to preserve, support and promote Indigenous languages.

Useful resources

Australians Together's, *Losing home – Iris' story*, introduces the viewer to one woman's experience of Cherbourg mission. It gives us a picture into the way the authorities would forcefully control the lives of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (03:16): <https://australianstogether.org.au/discover/the-wound/intergenerational-trauma/>

Ideas for student activities

Denied the right to speak

Note: discussions about punishments could be triggering for some students.

Discuss

Ask students: have you heard stories about punishments from your parents or grandparents?

View

Watch Iris speak about her family's experience at Cherbourg mission (03:16). Answer these questions:

- How were the authorities controlling people's lives?
- How did this affect Iris' family members?

Read

Read 'Denied the right to speak' in the student handout, which includes an excerpt from an interview with Jeanie Bell. Ask:

- How did people try to stop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people speaking their languages?
- Could the old lady have thrown them in the boiling pot?
- Why would older Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people not let their children speak languages (many older people may have stopped using languages out of fear for the safety of their children)?

Actions table

Read 'Impact of colonisation' in the student handout. Discuss how people are working to revitalise Indigenous languages. Lots of people in lots of different roles are taking action.

Hand out the 'Actions table' (see p.14). Fill in the Action #1 column together from the handout information:

- Describe actions people take or have taken to revitalise Indigenous languages, or to **deny** the right to speak language.

	Teacher guidance	Ideas for student activities
	<p>'Actions table' resources</p> <p>In the ABC's Behind the news video clip, <i>Local languages</i>, primary school students talk about learning Yindjibarndi and the clip explains how locals are taking action to revitalise the language (03:49): https://www.abc.net.au/btn/classroom/local-languages/10531462</p> <p>This Behind the news video clip, <i>Indigenous language lessons</i>, includes a personal narrative about the disruption of languages, why languages are important and how the school and the town of Broome are taking action. Broome is aiming to become the first bilingual town in Australia by teaching all kids Yawuru, one of the local Indigenous languages. Even the town's street signs are now in both Yawuru and English (03:47): https://www.abc.net.au/btn/classroom/indigenous-language-lessons/10524770</p> <p>'Bigger than school stuff' is a poem/oral history by Declan Furber Gillick. It's a message to a young person about language being taken away or being covered up by shame. Strong feelings connected to loss of language are identified as well as connection to Country: https://redroomcompany.org/poem/declan-furber-gillick/bigger-than-school-stuff/</p> <p>The full version of 'Bigger than school stuff' (including the Indigenous language) is also available to download, but please note it includes the use of a profane word in the context of a student interaction. It's a very powerful piece based on student interactions around languages at school. It's well worth a read as a class because students will relate to it. This story follows an author's note about the importance of seeing this piece as a work in progress, evolving with the journey of the author: https://redroomcompany.org/media/uploads/bigger_than_school_stuff_declan_furber_gillick_red_room_poetry_guwayu_for_all_times_2020.pdf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify who is taking or has taken the action. • List facts and details about the action. • Hypothesise the feelings and thoughts of the people involved. • Justify your opinion about the action. <p>Students fill in Action #2 and Action #3 after the next activity.</p> <p>Students view ABC's Behind the news video clips or read the poem 'Bigger than school stuff' by Declan Furber Gillick.</p> <p>Students are also encouraged to think about knowledge from earlier learning tasks to fill in Action #2 and Action #3 in the table.</p> <p>Action bingo</p> <p>Complete the 'Action bingo' (see p.15) as a whole class as the unit progresses. Display the bingo chart and, as students notice people taking positive action to revitalise Indigenous languages, mark off the box. Celebrate when you complete a line. As the unit draws to a close, students may like to brainstorm possible actions for those unmarked.</p>
 <p>Our Cultures</p>	<p><i>Help students connect with and acknowledge the importance of culture and examine the living cultures of First Nations Peoples, which have adapted and survived since colonisation.</i></p> <p>Student handout content</p> <p>Letters and letter patterns to represent sounds</p> <p>I are some distinctive sounds in many Indigenous languages that are unusual or used differently in the English language. For example, ng is a common sound at the end of Standard Australian English words. It's also common at the start of many words in many Indigenous languages. Think about the position of the tongue when saying it in the word 'sing'; that's the position of the tongue for this sound when used at the start of words like Ngarrindjeri, a First Nation and Indigenous language in South Australia (Raven 2018).</p> <p>Across Australia, there are many initiatives that are taking place to record Indigenous languages that have been passed on by word-of-mouth for thousands of generations. One example of this is the Yolju languages from north-east Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory. The words in Yolju languages include</p>	<p>Mother tongue playlist inquiry</p> <p>As a class watch the video <i>A bicultural future for Leonora Aboriginal languages</i> (03:41).</p> <p>Split into pairs or threes. Watch one or two more videos (student choice) from the Mother tongue YouTube playlist to find out answers to the questions below. Share with the class.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some of the Indigenous words used? • Which language/s do the words come from? • Which Indigenous nation do they come from? <i>Tip:</i> check the AIATSIS map. • How do the words from Indigenous languages relate to Country (geographic areas)?

	Teacher guidance	Ideas for student activities
	<p>immense, rich knowledge of shellfish because it is such an important part of the people's livelihood. Dr Bentley James (2016), and his team, have collaborated with seven language groups across the region to produce a book called <i>Maypal, mayali' ga wänja: shellfish, meaning & place, a Yolŋu bilingual identification guide to shellfish of North East Arnhem Land</i>. The team used the accepted orthography of the area and a bilingual alphabet based on the English alphabet order, while keeping the distinctive sounds of Yolŋu languages grouped together (James 2018). Can you spot the letter patterns for the distinctive sounds of the Yolŋu languages?</p> <p>Bilingual alphabetical order: a ä b d ḍ dh dj e g l k ll m n ṅ nh ny ŋ o p r r r t t t th t j u w y</p> <p>Useful resources</p> <p>ABC Indigenous has produced a playlist of videos from a project called 'Mother tongue', which explores Indigenous languages around Australia. Students should initially watch the video <i>A bicultural future for Leonora Aboriginal languages</i>, which is part of this series (03:41): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6yhqaWdYfxg&list=PLmWe-V9tacwHqfIBPvZMThlaYH6gH2u0</p> <p>Baker Boy is a hip-hop artist and Young Australian of the Year recipient. He raps in Yolngu Matha as well as English and in 2019 produced a popular and thought-provoking song and music video called 'Meditjin' (03:11): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=myKF9mxAJ70</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the words match English words? There may be more than one word for an English word or there may be no English word that fits that idea. • Why is language important to people? <p>Research: where can I find Indigenous languages?</p> <p>Split the class into groups to research one of the following topics and then share their information with the class.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Songs: Baker Boy (e.g. 'Meditjin'), Yothu Yindi, Shelley Morris and performances at the Deadly Awards. • Media: NITV channel. • Books: school library search. • Place names: online search. • Animal names: online search. <p>Brainstorm a list of inquiry questions with the class that might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you feel when watching/reading information being communicated in language? • What are some distinctive sounds and common letter patterns? • What are the common topics talked about in Indigenous language and why? <p>Create your own language part 1: the creation</p> <p>Explain to students that they're going to create language for Year 6s in their school and that they're going to need to think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What groups of words do Year 6 students need? • How will they share the language? • What letter patterns will you use to represent the sounds in your language? <p>Read 'Letters and letter patterns to represent sounds' in the student handout to guide thinking about orthography for the new language.</p>

	Teacher guidance	Ideas for student activities
		<p>Ask students to create tree diagrams (hierarchy charts) for words in the new language that have a number of synonyms with specific meanings. For example, 'talking in class':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>hiiat</i> = discussion • <i>jiibulc</i> = calling out (when not OK) • <i>jiilurc</i> = calling out (when it's OK and you don't get into trouble!) • <i>piljurc</i> = talking when it is silent time <p>Students may like to create books, posters, language lessons for their new language.</p> <p>Guest speaker</p> <p>If you have a relationship with a local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language speaker, invite them to come in and share language. Be sure to remunerate for their time.</p>
 <p>Why Me?</p>	<p><i>Help students understand that because they call Australia home this relates to them. Explore what's happening, or has happened, around your local area that's relevant to this topic.</i></p> <p>Language</p> <p>The language/s we speak expresses our identity; who we are. Knowing and expressing who we are helps our wellbeing, while having this restricted or misunderstood is detrimental to both personal and community wellbeing. The variety of words we gain from different languages allows us to understand and express more fully who we are and where we are.</p>	<p>Create your own language part 2 : the dilemma Reflection</p> <p>How did you feel when you were creating your own language (e.g. powerful, important, excited)?</p> <p>Dilemma</p> <p>School leadership have sent us a letter about the Year 6 language we created and have said we can't use the words we've created. This school only uses Standard Australian English.</p> <p>Approach the dilemma using the 'Actions table' as a guide.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe actions people have taken to deny the right to speak language. • Identify who has taken the action. • List facts and details about the action. • Hypothesise the feelings and thoughts of the people involved. • Justify your opinion about the action.

	Teacher guidance	Ideas for student activities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finally, consider what action you might take in response to a letter like this. • Variety provides meaning reflection. <p>Paint two pictures of a place you know well. One picture you may only use the primary colours and standard 2D shapes. The other you can use a variety of colours and include a variety of detailed shapes.</p> <p>Write a sentence about how variety improved your picture and how this is similar to variety in the English language.</p>
 <p>My Response</p>	<p><i>Help students critically and creatively process and demonstrate their learning on this topic by exploring meaningful ways to respond. Ask students to come up with their own ideas about what they can do.</i></p> <p>Student handout content</p> <p>Personal response Indigenous languages are rich in meaning of Country and give different ways of seeing the world. Let's value and revitalise Indigenous languages by taking some of these actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add some words from a local language to your vocabulary. • Watch NITV and listen to the use of the many languages of this land we call Australia. • When on holiday, find out how to say the name of the land you're staying on and how to say hello in the local language. • Listen to <i>Little yarns</i> by ABC Indigenous with a younger sibling or friend to hear stories from first languages all over Australia. • Find out the meanings of the placenames in your area and see if they are from Indigenous languages. <p>Useful resources <i>Little yarns</i> is a 3–5-minute podcast designed for pre-schoolers to learn about the diverse Indigenous languages, stories and Countries of this land: https://www.abc.net.au/kidslisten/little-yarns/</p>	<p>Response assessment menu</p> <p>Research and respond Find out some of the Indigenous languages in your area. Brainstorm ways to show you value and would like to share languages in your community; for example, signs for placenames in Indigenous languages.</p> <p>Persuasive language Write a persuasive piece to argue 'Indigenous languages need to be celebrated and revitalised'.</p> <p>Environmental thinking Describe connections between the knowledge of Indigenous languages and looking after the land in Australia.</p>
<p>References</p>	<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) 2020a, <i>Aboriginal English</i>, AIATSIS, Canberra, viewed 31 August 2020, https://collection.aiatsis.gov.au/austlang/language/p4</p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) 2020b, <i>About AUSTLANG</i>, AIATSIS, Canberra, viewed 31 August 2020, https://collection.aiatsis.gov.au/austlang/about</p>	

	Teacher guidance	Ideas for student activities
	<p>Bradley J 2018, 'Saving language – the power of ancient Indigenous oral traditions', <i>LENS</i>, Monash University, viewed 31 August 2020, https://lens.monash.edu/@politics-society/2018/11/15/1364032/saving-language-the-power-of-ancient-indigenous-oral-traditions. © 2017 Monash University CC BY-NC-ND 4.0</p> <p>James, B 2016, <i>Maypal, mayali' ga wänja: shellfish, meaning & place. A Yolŋu bilingual identification guide to shellfish of North East Arnhem Land</i>, NAILSMA Ltd, Tien Wha Press, Sydney.</p> <p>James, B 2018, 'Shellfish, meaning and place', <i>Dr Bentley James: the value of cultural difference</i>, blog, viewed 31 August 2020, https://drbentleyjames.wordpress.com/2018/09/04/shellfish-meaning-place/</p> <p>National Museum Australia 2010, <i>Language and identity</i>, interview by J Harms of J Bell, Weekend of ideas, Canberra, viewed 31 August 2020, https://www.nma.gov.au/audio/weekend-of-ideas/language-and-identity.</p> <p>Merwin, WS 1988, 'Losing a language', in <i>The rain in the trees</i>, Alfred A Knopf, US, viewed 31 August 2020, https://merwinconservancy.org/2013/12/losing-a-language/. Copyright © 1988 by W.S. Merwin, used by permission of The Wylie Agency LLC</p> <p>Pascoe, B 2014, <i>Dark emu</i>, Magabala Books, Broome.</p> <p>Department of Economic and Social Affairs and Social Inclusion 2019, <i>2019 international year of Indigenous languages</i>, United Nations, viewed 31 August 2020, https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/2019/01/2019-international-year-of-indigenous-languages/</p> <p>Raven, T 2018, <i>What is it like to be Aboriginal?</i>, TEDxUWA, viewed 31 August 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9y1T3JfzRGE</p> <p>Project Zero 2019, <i>See, think, wonder thinking routine</i>, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Massachusetts US, viewed 31 August 2020, https://pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/See%20Think%20Wonder_2.pdf, © 2019 President and Fellows of Harvard College and Project Zero, CC-BY-NC-ND</p> <p>Wellington, K 2019, 'Calbuynas invitation', Red Room Poetry, NSW, viewed 29 September 2020, https://redroomcompany.org/poem/kaitlen-wellington/calbunyas-initiation/</p>	

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Losing a Language

by W.S. Merwin

A breath leaves the sentences and does not come back
yet the old still remember something that they could say

but they know now that such things are no longer believed
and the young have fewer words

many of the things the words were about
no longer exist

the noun for standing in mist by a haunted tree
the verb for I

the children will not repeat
the phrases their parents speak

somebody has persuaded them
that it is better to say everything differently

so that they can be admired somewhere
farther and farther away

where nothing that is here is known
we have little to say to each other

we are wrong and dark
in the eyes of the new owners

the radio is incomprehensible
the day is glass

when there is a voice at the door it is foreign
everywhere instead of a name there is a lie

nobody has seen it happening
nobody remembers

this is what the words were made
to prophesy

here are the extinct feathers
here is the rain we saw

"Losing a Language" by W.S. Merwin, first published in *The rain in the trees*.

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Actions table

Name:.....

	Action #1	Action #2	Action #3
Describe actions people take or have taken: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To revitalise Indigenous language.• To deny the right to speak language.			
Identify who is taking or has taken the action.			
List facts and details about the action.			
Hypothesise the feelings and thoughts of the people involved.			
Justify your opinion about the action.			

Action bingo

Can your class find ways that all these different people have taken or are taking action to *revitalise* Indigenous languages?

Mark the box when you've found an example. Blanks can be filled in with your own examples.

Musician	Tour guide	Visual artist	Historian	Grandmother	
Author		Older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people		News reporter	Actor
	School teacher	Student	Videographer	Tourist	Child
Sign designer	Town councillor		Politician	Poet	Animal scientist