Famous Aboriginal people, Levels 3–6

Victorian Aboriginal Languages F–10

Sample unit of work

Authorised and published by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority  
Level 7, 2 Lonsdale Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000

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(Reformatted in 2019)

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Famous Aboriginal people, Levels 3–6

**Overview:** Students learn about famous Aboriginal trackers and investigate the techniques used in tracking and bush survival.

**Time allocation:** Approximately 20 hours (guide only).

**Curriculum area:** Victorian Aboriginal Languages

**Levels:** 3–6

**Content descriptions covered:**

* Listen to, read and view different real and imaginative texts, identifying and making simple statements about key elements, characters and events, and interpreting cultural expressions and behaviours [(VCLVC157)](http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCLVC157)
* Expand vocabulary in the language through word-formation processes and recognise and use simple language structures[(VCLVU164)](http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCLVU164)
* Explore connections between identity and cultural values and beliefs and the expression of these connections in Aboriginal languages [(VCLVU171)](http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCLVU171)

**Relevant achievement standard extracts:**

* [Students] present information they have obtained that relate to language, culture, environment and community personalities, using short sentence structures, familiar vocabulary, photos and concrete materials.
* They demonstrate understanding of stories, songs, visual design and performance, for example by….selecting and writing simple modelled statements to describe main characters and events.
* Students identify markers of identity across cultures, and recognize the importance of language, Country/Place and culture to the identity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

| **Activities** | **Fill in language/words used** | **Advice for teachers/language teams** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Daily greeting activity**   * Greet the students in language * Students return the teacher’s greeting * Students greet any guests in language * Students greet each other in language |  | The greeting routine should be used at the beginning of every class.  **Extension**  Where the language is available, students converse briefly in language, enquiring, for example, after each other’s health, describing activities. |
| **Daily revision activity**  Revision is critical to language learning.   * Revise the present tense in simple sentences with a pronoun subject, or another grammatical feature that the students have previously studied. | Language to be revised: | Revision is critical to language learning.  Utilise learned vocabulary and grammar as well as new vocabulary and grammar throughout this unit. |
| * What do trackers do? What sort of signs do Aboriginal trackers look for? Discuss and make notes or find pictures. (See *Aboriginal Trackers* link.) * When did the last Aboriginal Police Tracker retire? Make notes on why he might only have retired when he did. (See *Australia’s Last Aboriginal Police Tracker Retires* link.) * Watch the film clip in which Essie Coffey shows children how to survive in the bush. Discuss the techniques she demonstrates and why knowing them is so important. Why do trackers need these skills? Write short sentences in language using the verb ‘to track’ and known vocabulary, for example, *I track a kangaroo. He tracks a wombat.* (See *My survival as an Aboriginal* link.) | Track (noun):  His track:  Track of a foot:  Track, to:  Water:  Food, vegetable:  Food, meat:  Follow, to:  He follows the tracks: | * [Aboriginal Trackers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aboriginal_tracker) * [Australia’s Last Aboriginal Police Tracker Retires](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-07-03/tracker-barry-port-retires/5569470) * [My survival as an Aboriginal](http://aso.gov.au/titles/documentaries/my-survival-aboriginal/clip2/) (Essie Coffey) * Note that there is no plural marking on nouns. * Explain to the students that there is no definite article (the) or indefinite article (a) in Aboriginal Languages, for example:   Dakin kulinu wilkerr.  Hit man dingo  Man hit dingo  ‘The man hit the dingo.’ |
| * In 1864, the Duff Children were lost in the bush. After nine days Jane (aged 7), Isaac (9) and Frank (4) were found by a Koorie tracker named Dick-a-dick or *Jungunjinanuke,* later known as King Richard in the white community. Write an explanation of why their parents were so surprised when the children were found, using as much language as possible. What skills did the Koorie trackers have that the non-Aboriginal people did not? (See links in resources column) * Teacher to introduce or revise the past tense in the target language. * Read a poem or story about the Duff children and imagine you are one of the children. How do you think the children felt? Use as much language as possible in your answer. Try to say or write whole sentences in language. (See poem in resources column) * In class discuss why Koorie people know their country so well that they can track people and animals when other people can’t. * Do you know someone who can track? If so, perhaps the person might be invited to speak to the class about tracking. * Read [the online story](http://publishing.nla.gov.au/pages/news.do?newsId=126) about the 150th year celebration of tracking the Duff children in Horsham. Why did Horsham celebrate tracking 150 years after the Duff children were found? Report back to the class. | Hungry, to be:  Frightened, to be:  Thirsty, to be:  Die, to:  Cold:  Hot:  Note that ‘to be hungry’ and ‘to die’ are often the same word. | * [Story of young children’s survival in Wimmera bush for nine days endures 150 years on](https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/story-of-young-childrens-survival-in-wimmera-bush-for-nine-days-endures-150-years-on-20140810-101l2y.html) * [Duff children lost for nine days in bush](http://ergo.slv.vic.gov.au/image/duff-children-lost-9-days-bush) * [Jack Kennedy – descendent of Dick-a-Dick](http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2003/06/29/1056825275592.html) * This story is an early example of the trackers and farmers collaborating for a common cause and the need to reconcile Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australia. * [Poem: The Duff Children](http://www.justverse.com/master.html?http://www.justverse.com/the-duff-children.html) * [150th anniversary of the Duff children’s bush ordeal](http://publishing.nla.gov.au/pages/news.do?newsId=126) |
| * Watch the [film clip of Essie Coffey](http://aso.gov.au/titles/documentaries/my-survival-aboriginal/clip1/) teaching children to track. * Students research tracking animals and report their findings back to the class. How do trackers know what sort of animal they are following? * Look for animal tracks in the schoolyard or a nearby park. Can you identify the animal that left the tracks? What features of the track were used to identify the animal? * Alternatively, take photographs of tracks you find after school and present your findings to the class. How do you know which animal made the tracks? If this isn’t possible, find pictures of different animal tracks. * Students prepare a joint presentation on tracking for a specific audience, for example, another class. | Kangaroo:  Wombat:  Dingo: | * [My survival as an Aboriginal](http://aso.gov.au/titles/documentaries/my-survival-aboriginal/clip1/) – media clip of Essie Coffey teaching children how to track * [Tracking animals – how to read animal tracks](http://www.survival.org.au/tracking.php) |
| **Daily farewell activity**   * Farewell the students in language * Students return the teacher’s farewell * Students farewell any guests in language * Students farewell each other in language |  | The farewell routine should be used at the end of every class. |

Assessment opportunities

* Formal and informal assessment of classwork
* Observation of student participation in classroom activities

Sharing

* Ask students to tell their family what they have learnt about Aboriginal trackers.
* Send the language information home to the family.
* Display work in the classroom or elsewhere.