

# Connecting to Country

## An informational resource guide for educators

Resources to support schools  
and teachers in understanding  
and educating students about  
Aboriginal and Torres Strait  
Islander culture.



# Acknowledgment

anzuk Education acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, to the Elders past, present, and emerging.



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## Document Purpose

*As people within anzuk, we want to strengthen, encourage & support relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, organisations, communities and the broader Australian community.*

*Our aim/goal is to share to educators, schools & our internal staff; the knowledge, resources & understanding of the importance & significance of national reconciliation, and to encourage and empower conversations & actions.*

*We have the ability to have a lasting impact in the classroom, to help foster and embed respect for the world's longest surviving cultures and communities, in the students of Australia today.*

# Map of Indigenous Australia

It is important that teaching about Indigenous Australia includes content about the land the school, centre or office is located on.

Take the time to research your local area.

Click on a location on the map to discover more about the local indigenous nations.

To find out what land you're on click [HERE](#)

**Wurundjeri: Melbourne**

**Boon Wurrung: Dandenong**

**Wathaurong: Geelong**

**Ngunnawal: Canberra**

**Eora: Sydney**

**Yuggera: Brisbane**

*Disclaimer: This map attempts to represent Aboriginal names of cities in settler-colonial Australia. This map is not intended to be exact. We recognise and acknowledge that there are likely additional or alternative names used for these places.*



# Indigenous Nations

## Wurundjeri Country: Melbourne

The Wurundjeri are an Aboriginal Australian nation who populate the Birrarung (Yarra River) Valley area now known as Melbourne.

The "Wurundjeri" are the people who occupy one tribal territory, while "Woiwurrung" is the language group shared by the other tribal territory groups and clans within the Woiwurrung territory.

The Wurundjeri People take their name from the Woiwurrung language word 'wurun' meaning the Manna Gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*) which is common along 'Birrarung' (Yarra River), and 'djeri', the grub which is found in or near the tree. Wurundjeri are the 'Witchetty Grub People' and our Ancestors have lived on this land for millennia.

**For information please visit their official website:**

<https://www.wurundjeri.com.au/>

## Boon Wurrung Country: Dandenong

The Boon Wurrung Foundation represents the traditional people and custodians of the lands from the Werribee River to Wilson Promontory. For thousands of years the Boonwurrung were actively involved in the Greater Kulin Nation and together walked this land.

The history of the Boonwurrung people dates back many thousands of years. Port Phillip Bay was then a large flat plain where the Boonwurrung hunted kangaroos and cultivated their yam daisy.

**For information please visit their official website:**

<http://www.boonwurrung.org/about-us/>

Click [here](#) for an introduction to Boon Wurrung language.

## Wadawurrung/Wathaurong Country: Geelong

The name Wathaurong (Wadda-Warrung) is a recognised tribe (community) which consisted of some 25 clans (family groups) that forms part of the Kulin Nation of Aboriginal people.

The traditional boundaries of the Wathaurong people span the coastline from the Werribee River to Lorne peninsula and traverse inland in a north westerly direction towards Ballarat. Please click [here](#) for a map of the Wathaurong cultural boundaries.

The Wathaurong people have lived within these regions for more than 25,000 years. Today, many Wadawurrung people maintain a strong sense of cultural pride and belonging. Remnants of daily life of the Wadawurrung people include shell middens, fish traps, artefact scatters, stone quarries, scar trees, stone arrangements and burial sites. Importantly, Geelong has one of the largest numbers of registered Aboriginal sites in the State.

The first European settlers arrived in Geelong in 1836 and the rapid colonisation that followed saw the local population decimated. Disease, violence, forced removal from their lands, and assimilation policies saw the loss of people, language, traditions and culture.

**For information please visit their official website:**

<https://www.wurundjeri.com.au/>



# Indigenous Nations



## **Ngunnawal Country: Canberra**

The Ngunnawal nation (or Ngunawal, as it is spelt by some) extends from Canberra up to Goulburn. 'Canberra' is a Ngunnawal word meaning "meeting place" and historically, the valley that modern Canberra sits within was a meeting place for many neighbouring First Nations groups including Yuin, Wiradjuri, Gundungurra and Ngarigo.

Ngunnawal country and that they have lived here for more than 21 000 years. This is arguably one of the longest periods of continual habitation anywhere on earth. The Ngunnawal people have developed a way of living and managing the natural resources of the land which has enabled this phenomenon.

Click [here](#) to download the informational guide:

*Understanding the land through the eyes of the Ngunnawal People - A Natural Resource Management Program for ACT schools.*

## **Eora Country: Sydney**

There are about 29 clan groups of the Sydney metropolitan area referred to collectively as the Eora Nation. The 'Eora people' was the name given to the coastal Aboriginal peoples around Sydney. 'Eora' means 'here' or 'from this place'. The original Aboriginal inhabitants of the City of Sydney local area are the Gadigal people. The territory of the Gadi (gal) people stretched along the southern side of Port Jackson (Sydney Harbour) from South Head to around what is now known as Petersham. Their southern boundary is the area that now forms the Alexandra canal and Cooks River.

Barani is an Aboriginal word of the Sydney language that means 'yesterday'. The [Barani website](#) provides histories of people, places and events in the City of Sydney local government area that are associated with the histories of Sydney's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

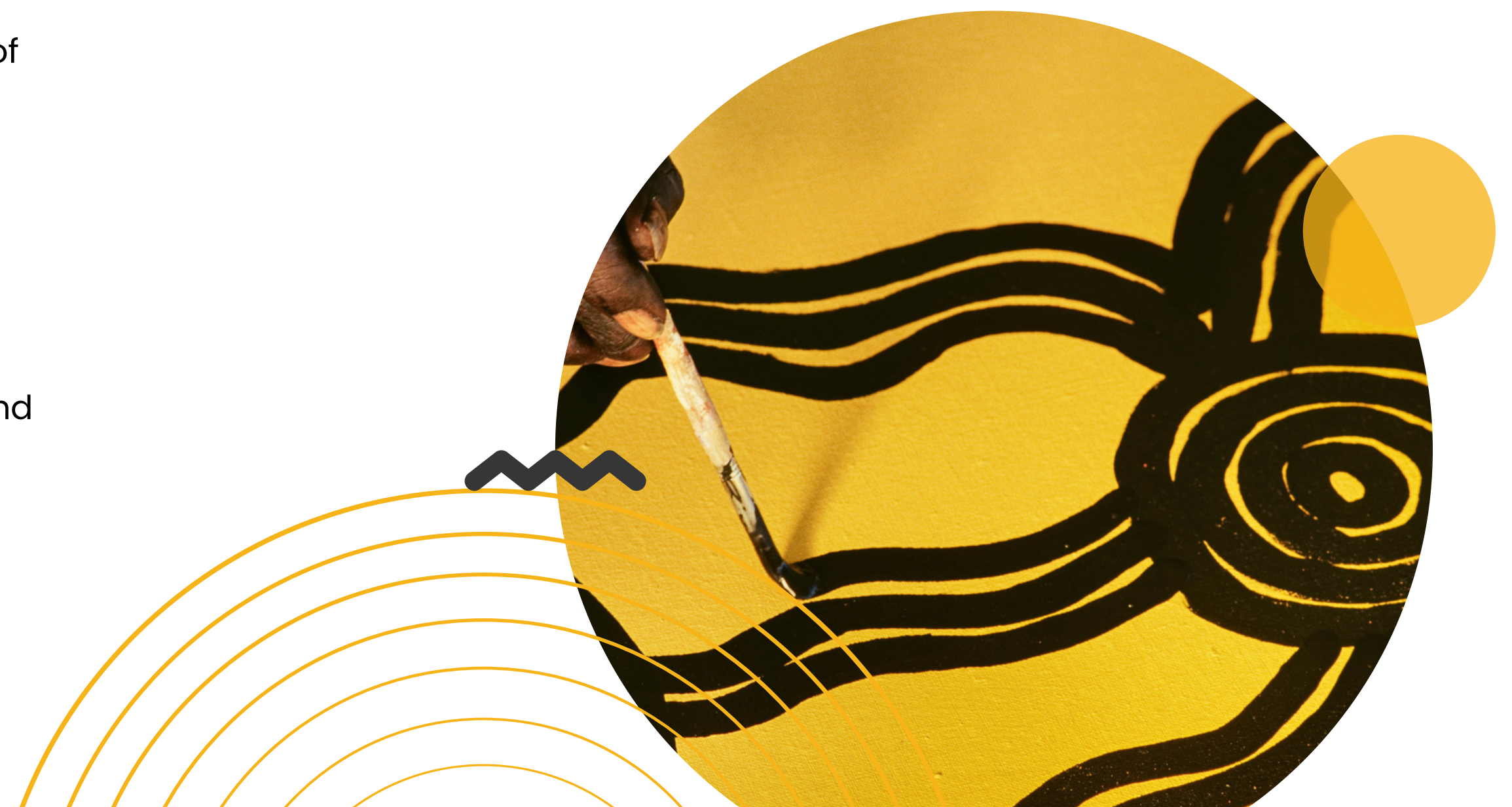
## **Yuggera Country: Brisbane**

The traditional name of Brisbane is Meeanjin - the place of the blue water lilies. The Turrbal and Jagera peoples have lived in this area for more than 32,000 years and their ancestors go back more than 60,000 years. The Turrbal and Jagera people speak Yuggera.

On May 13, 1998 the Turrbal people lodged a claim for native title of the Meeanjin area starting at the North Pine River and extending down to the Logan River and inland as far as Moggil. In 1999, the application was accepted. This was an incredible moment in history, it was the first native title claim over an Australian city. The title challenged the regular belief that native title and customary law only exists in the outback and remote communities. Customary law is a set of beliefs, customs and practices that come from Indigenous peoples dreamtime stories and ancestors, it continues to be a hugely important part of Indigenous culture and society today.

For information please visit the Turrbal official website:

<https://www.turrbal.com.au/>



# Local Community & Charity Groups

## Koorie Youth Council (KYC)

KYC is the representative body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in Victoria. By hosting events like the annual Koorie Youth Summit, The Youth Council bring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people together to amplify our voices for social change.



- Join their state-wide network of deadly young people and supporters here. By signing up, you'll receive updates from KYC, events, and opportunities to connect.

For information please visit their official website: <https://korieyouthcouncil.org.au/>

## ANTaR Victoria

ANTaR Victoria is a grassroots organisation campaigning for justice in solidarity with Australia's First Peoples.

- Get involved and support ANTaR [here](#)
- Shop Products [here](#)

For information please visit their official website: <https://antarvictoria.org.au/>



## KARI Aboriginal Support Services

Established in 1999, KARI has supported the Aboriginal community by delivering quality programming and services.

After 17 years of successful operations, the KARI Board of Directors understood the outcomes for our community could be further achieved by increased collaboration between Government, Corporate Australia, the non-Indigenous community and Aboriginal Australia

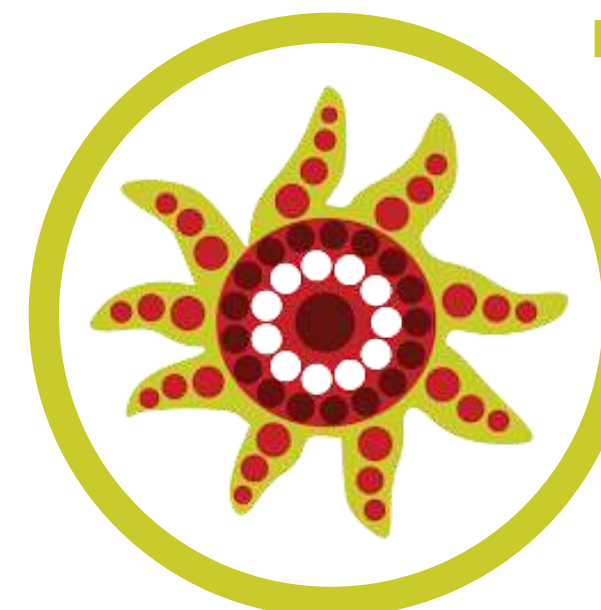
For information please visit their official website: <https://www.kari.org.au/>



## Kurbingui Youth and Family Development

Kurbingui Youth and Family Development is a Not-For-Profit (NFP) Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation providing Family, Community, Cultural, Education, Training and Social Wellbeing Services across the Greater Brisbane, Moreton Bay and Southeast Regions.

For information please visit their official website: <https://www.kurbingui.org.au/>



## Deadly Science

Deadly Science aim is to provide STEM resources, science books and early reading material to remote schools in Australia.

- Get involved and donate [here](#)
- Shop products [here](#)

For information please visit their official website: <https://deadlyscience.org.au/>



## Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS)

VALS plays an important role in providing referrals, advice/information, duty work or case work assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the State of Victoria. Solicitors at VALS specialise in one of three areas of law, being Criminal Law, Family Law and Civil Law.

- Make a donation [here](#)
- Get involved by following on [Facebook](#)

For information please visit their official website: <https://www.vals.org.au/>



# Indigenous Businesses to Support



## Supply Nation

This is Australia's leading database of verified Indigenous businesses. If your school or centre is after catering, stationary, office supplies or even services like facilities management or education and training.

- Browse Supply Nation's Indigenous business database [here](https://supplynation.org.au/)

For information please visit their official website:

<https://supplynation.org.au/>

## Clothing The Gap

Clothing The Gap is a Victorian Aboriginal owned social enterprise and fashion label with 100% of the profits supporting Aboriginal health and education programs. The brand name is a play on words from "Closing the Gap" which is the Australian Government health initiative to help close the life expectancy gap between Aboriginal people and non-Indigenous Australians.

- Shop and support Clothing the Gap products [here](https://www.clothingthegaps.com.au/pages/shop)

For information please visit their official website:

<https://www.clothingthegaps.com.au/pages/shop>



## Blak Business

Bringing together information, knowledge and resources to facilitate broader learning and discussion about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander topics.

- You will find resources and information on a range of topics to guide your learning [here](https://www.instagram.com/blakbusiness/)

For information please visit their official Instagram page:

<https://www.instagram.com/blakbusiness/>



## Victorian Aboriginal Business Directory

The Victorian Aboriginal Business Directory supports improved procurement outcomes for Aboriginal businesses. It strengthens connections between government departments/agencies and Victoria's diverse Aboriginal business suppliers by promoting local Aboriginal business supply chains and Aboriginal business development.

- Browse the Victorian Aboriginal Business Directory [here](https://directory.business.vic.gov.au/aboriginal/home)

For information please visit their official website:

<https://directory.business.vic.gov.au/aboriginal/home>



# Teaching Resources

## Narragunnawali Curriculum Resources

Use the Narragunnawali suite of early learning, primary and secondary curriculum resources to promote reconciliation and to strengthen children and students' knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions.

The resources can be used as they are or adapted to suit the local community context.

Learn more: [www.narragunnawali.org.au/curriculum-resources](http://www.narragunnawali.org.au/curriculum-resources)

## Aboriginal Education Activities

Aboriginal Education Activities have been developed by VAEAI to support children and families who are staying home during the spread of coronavirus. We have developed these activities with the Aboriginal community in mind and want to encourage connection to culture through educational activities that can be done at home using household materials.

Here you can access a variety of creative activities that are connected to culture in various ways through physical activities, art, written activities, play-based activities, and more!

Learn more: [www.vaeai.org.au/aboriginal-education-activities/](http://www.vaeai.org.au/aboriginal-education-activities/)

## Deadly Story Educational Resources

A range of deadly education resources about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history. This includes resources on important issues including The Stolen Generation and Racism in Australia.

Learn more: [www.australianstogether.org.au/education/curriculum-resources/](http://www.australianstogether.org.au/education/curriculum-resources/)

## Australians Together Curriculum Resources

Comprehensive lesson and unit plans to help you teach the Australian Curriculum including lesson and unit plans covering core learning areas from Foundation to Y10, researched and written to make your planning easier.

Learn more: [www.australianstogether.org.au/education/curriculum-resources/](http://www.australianstogether.org.au/education/curriculum-resources/)

## Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture

Teachers must follow protocols for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. These are known as the Koorie Cross-Curricular Protocols. The protocols seek to protect the integrity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural expressions in a way in which all Australians can engage respectfully and feel connected to this identity.

Learn more: [www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/multicultural/Pages/koorieculture.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/multicultural/Pages/koorieculture.aspx)





# Online Educator PD

## Exploring 'Culture' for Teachers Australians Together

1 hour video presentation on ways to approach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in the classroom .

- Learn the five key ideas everyone who calls Australia home should know about.
- Discover an activity you can use in the classroom to help your students understand their own cultures & the cultures of others
- See how this content has impacted other teachers and helped make a difference to their teaching practice

**Price: \$49 or \$29.00 for Pre-service teachers**

**Find out more here:**

**[www.learning.australianstogether.org.au/courses/exploring-culture](http://www.learning.australianstogether.org.au/courses/exploring-culture)**

## CUST: Online Information Series VAEAI

VAEAI, in partnership with the Department of Education and Training, has prioritised providing professional learning through the Community Understanding and Safety Training initiative (CUST), to all school-based staff, from teachers, to administration and grounds staff in every government school throughout the state.

CUST is designed to be an introduction to ongoing learning and engagement with Aboriginal perspectives throughout the curriculum through meaningful collaboration between local Aboriginal communities and schools.

- This information has been broken up into 4 videos available for free on the VAEAI website.

**Start watching here: [www.vaeai.org.au/community-understanding-safety-training-online-information-session/](http://www.vaeai.org.au/community-understanding-safety-training-online-information-session/)**

## How to Engage Students in Indigenous Studies Crackerjack Education

This module is comprised of an introduction and three units. Each unit is designed to take approximately 100 minutes, plus assessment activities, for a total of 5 Professional Development hours.

You will require a Crackerjack Education subscription to access the complete Indigenous Knowledge Circle Training module.

**Get started here:**

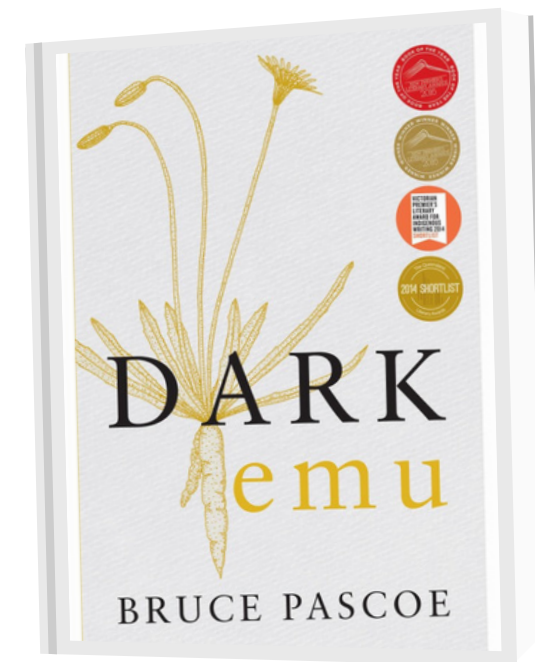
**[www.crackerjackeducation.com.au/professional-development/](http://www.crackerjackeducation.com.au/professional-development/)**



# Further Resources

## Books

**Dark Emu (2014)**  
Bruce Pascoe



**Sand Talk - How Indigenous Thinking Can Save the World (2019)**  
Tyson Yunkaporta



**Marcia Langton: Welcome to Country  
A Travel Guide to Indigenous (2019)**  
Marcia Langton

**Loving Country: A Guide to Sacred (2020)**  
Bruce Pascoe & Vicky Shukuroglou

## Guides

## Podcasts

Word Up with Daniel Browning

Indigipreneur with Dean Foley

Skyentists with Kristen Banks

Educator Yarns with Jessica Staines



## Documentaries & TV

### This Place

Across Australia, places are known for their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander names. But what do they mean? Indigenous communities share the stories behind place names of their country.  
<https://iview.abc.net.au/show/this-place>



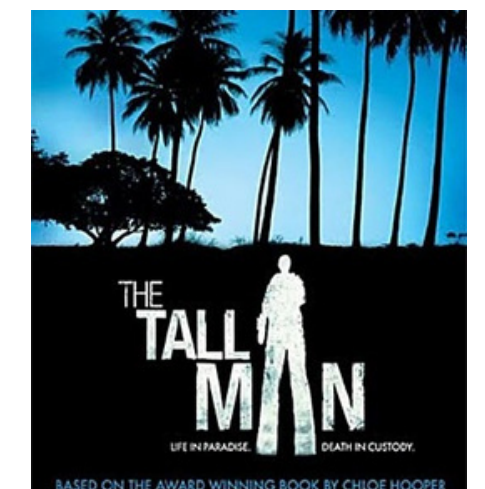
### This Place: Artist Series

Six Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists from the National Gallery of Australia share their connection to country, how it inspires their art and identity, and take us to the places across Australia where their artmaking begins.  
<https://iview.abc.net.au/show/this-place-artist-series>



### The Tall Man (2011)

An Australian documentary film directed by Tony Krawitz. It is about the death of Cameron "Mulrunji" Doomadgee in police custody on Great Palm Island, Palm Islands, Queensland on 19 November 2004.  
<https://www.sbs.com.au/movies/video/317032003576/The-Tall-Man>



### Rabbit-Proof Fence (2002)

Based on the Doris Pilkington Garimara novel, it was one of the first films to really tackle the history of the Stolen Generation of young Aboriginal children. Here, two young sisters escape and follow the 2400km wire fencing all the way back to their ancestral home.  
<https://www.sbs.com.au/ondemand/watch/84673091819>

