

Localising Indigenous Australian Resources

Localising your resources and connecting with your local Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander communities are requirements in most educational settings (and for most professional standards) around Australia. However, doing this can often be quite daunting for those educators who are neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander. Below are some insights to help you in making this task less time consuming and overwhelming.

What are the benefits of localising Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander resources?

Every time you localise Indigenous resources and lessons in your classroom, you are building a stronger Australia. Not only does it create an environment of inclusiveness for all Australians through learning about the history of your region, it ensures that the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander children in your setting feel valued and proud.

By consistently localising, you are building a wonderful bridge between you, your school or organisation, and local Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander communities. You are also establishing a stronger Australian identity for those children who are not Indigenous. You will be teaching the children in your class or setting that this country has an outstanding ancient history and, as people living in Australia now, it belongs to every single person. Localising makes the task of teaching about Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander

knowledge and traditions much easier, because localisation builds a culturally safe framework for you and others to work within.

Localising resources and connecting with communities

The first step to localising any resource is to know who your region's Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language groups are (the traditional owners).

Here are some softer introductory strategies for non-Indigenous people to feel more prepared and confident before going to meet with their local Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander communities.

- Like any important meeting, you will need to feel prepared. You can achieve this by researching and have some knowledge about the group you are meeting with.
- An important player to assist you in this task is your local shire council. Your local council should have a website with some pre-contact history information (including who the traditional owners are). It should also list employees, such as multicultural officers, who liaise with the local Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander communities quite regularly.
- It is common for the Elders and managers of the local Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander communities to be on council reference groups, or to attend and present Welcome to Country or Acknowledgment of Country ceremonies.