



EPISODE 8

Where's Aaron?



Educators

The learning documents for each episode are a spring-board for engaging with and embedding Indigenous perspectives and pedagogies in early childhood environments. The following ideas have been developed to engage educators and children in diverse ways. The intention to provide a starting point and educators are encouraged to:

- Engage with local and broader Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities to learn from and with their communities.
- Engage with local and broader Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities to build authentic relationships.
- Consider the transitions that take place in children's lives every day and our role as educators to work with children and families to support them during this time. The moments of transition can be big events such as the transition from early childhood into Primary school, coming from home into Kinder every day or from one learning experience to another in the early learning environment.
- Consider the spaces in your indoor and outdoor environments and the possibilities of the key ideas of Indigenous knowledge and culture and how these can build on current understandings and create new learning opportunities with children, families and community.
- Engage with your local community to grow a language that shares and respects the voices of Indigenous peoples, their knowledge and their cultures.

EYLF Belonging, Being and Becoming

| LEARNING OUTCOMES | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| Children have a strong sense of identity | Children are connected with and contribute to their world | Children have a strong sense of wellbeing | Children are confident and involved learners | Children are effective communicators |
| <p>1.1 Children feel safe, secure, and supported</p> <p>1.2 Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency</p> <p>1.3 Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities</p> <p>1.4 Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect</p> | <p>2.1 Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation</p> <p>2.2 Children respond to diversity with respect</p> <p>2.3 Children become aware of fairness</p> <p>2.4 Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment</p> | <p>3.1 Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing</p> <p>3.2 Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing</p> | <p>4.1 Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity</p> <p>4.2 Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, enquiry, experimentation, hypothesizing, researching and investigating</p> <p>4.3 Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another</p> <p>4.4 Children resources their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials</p> | <p>5.1 Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes</p> <p>5.2 Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts</p> <p>5.3 Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media</p> <p>5.4 Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work</p> <p>5.5 Children use information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking</p> |

Synopsis

Aaron the class mascot is missing...and Little J fears he's lost in the desert.

Little J's desert adventure with class mascot Aaron the footy doll is a great success. But next morning, Aaron is missing. It seems Little J has lost Aaron. Will Uncle Mick be able to safely rescue Aaron?



What do we see happening for Little J during his transition to school?

In this episode we see Little J becoming aware of, and familiar with, the routines in school. His family is engaged and comfortable in the school environment as we see Nanna visiting school and confidently conversing with the teacher and the teacher respectfully listening to the issues that Nana is sharing with her.

Programmatic elements integral to high quality transition programs:

1. Broad focus on child development that prioritises capacity to learn over specific knowledge
2. Targeted approach to building children familiarity and relationships with school
3. Family engagement and involvement throughout the transition process. (pg4, SNAICC, 2014)

WORKING WITH ABORIGINAL WORLDVIEWS, KNOWLEDGES AND COMMUNITIES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

| Indigenous knowledge and culture | Early Years Learning Curriculum through inquiry projects | Community |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elders, families, friends and children are all important in caring for themselves and each other • Elders, families and children are knowledge holders • Classrooms can be indoor environments and outdoor on Country • Astronomy of Country • Animals of Country • Plants of Country • Take only what you need and always leave some behind when gathering resources from Country • Being out in Country is good for our well-being • Indigenous languages and communities are unique and diverse | <p>Using the list of Indigenous knowledge and culture, or through the construction with children, families and communities, engage with the key points to create an early years learning curriculum through inquiry projects.</p> | <p>We would like you to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elders, families and children are knowledge holders • Engaging with our community to hear their stories of Country • Engaging with community members to share in their stories of their life experiences • Engaging with surrounding and broader communities' stories |

EARLY YEARS LEARNING CURRICULUM: INDOOR & OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTS

The suggested learning experiences can be in both the indoor and outdoor learning environments.

- Provide open ended materials, as selected with and by the children in their play, for creativity and exploration of their current and new understandings of their encounters with the world around them and the stories shared in the Little J and Big Cuz series.
- Create or co-create a small imaginative play space, with materials selected with and by the children, for the exploration of their encounters with the world around them and the stories shared in the series.
- Provide a dramatic play space, with materials as selected with and by the children, for their exploration of their current and new understandings of their encounters with the world around them and the stories shared in the Little J and Big Cuz series.
- Create or co-create a space that shares the key learning experiences or interests arising from the viewing of a particular episode. For this episode it could be providing an 'interest table' with information about owls, the moon and other astronomical events, and occupations in the local and broader community.
- Invite children into intentional conversations to explore the key learning experiences or interests arising from the viewing of a specific episode. For this episode it could be a discussion about:
 - tracking animals on Country and what do we know about Country?
 - whether animal tracks make patterns in Country. How do animals move?

- how we can be safe on Country.
 - exploring natural materials, including conversations about their attributes and suitability for jewellery making.
 - caring for Country and only taking what is needed and leaving some behind.
 - These conversations can also be extended to become inquiry projects.
- Provide a small collection of assorted gum leaves and pods to explore and wonder about in a space for resting, mindfulness and relaxation.
 - Provide animal tracks for children to explore in a tray full of sand. Invite the children to draw the tracks using their fingers, a stick, or other objects. This creative experience can be extended by adding paints, crayons and other markers for children to create their own symbols or prints.
 - Collect natural materials from Country and add them to the art space for children to explore in their own creative responses. You can use fibres of assorted colours and lengths, sticks of different sizes and shapes.
 - Teach necklace making using everyday upcycled or recycled materials.
 - Invite a local Indigenous and Non-Indigenous jewellery maker to share their knowledge and skills of necklace making.
 - Walk on Country to see what could be used as potential materials to make items of assorted uses. (Example: look at different leaves, barks, sticks, branches of trees and plants in the local environment.)
 - Attend a local gallery to view different Indigenous art forms with a focus on jewellery making.
 - Read: *Bartja and Mayila* (2013) by Sue Atkinson and Annette Sax, and provide suggested learning experiences from the teacher notes in the book.
 - Walk on Country and in the local learning environment, identifying spaces for climbing up and down or for lifting or lowering items. Provide pulleys and levers for children to use in their play.
 - Provide an evening incursion with local Indigenous community to share in culture so that children and their families can attend together.

Picture books

The following picture books extend and build on the Indigenous knowledge and culture within the Little J and Big Cuz episode and series:

- Atkinson, S. & Sax, A. (2013). *Bartja and Mayila*. Melbourne, Vic. : Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages
- Houston, B. (2011). *Staircase to the Moon*. Broome Western Australia : Magabala Books

Web links

The following web links extend and build on the Indigenous knowledge and culture within the Little J and Big Cuz episode and series:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LzFYFutiwoA>, *Through Our Eyes - Dhinawan 'Emu' In The Sky with Ben Flick*. (2014) : Local Land Services Western Region. Ben Flick, an Aboriginal man from the Kamilaroi language group of north-western NSW, explains a creation story passed down to him regarding 'the emu in the sky'. Astronomy is used to identify the correct time of the year to collect emu eggs. This documentary is one of nineteen that comprises the Through Our Eyes series featuring Aboriginal Elders and knowledge-holders from the Ngemba, Kamilaroi and Euahlayi language groups in north-western NSW (Brewarrina, Walgett and Lightning Ridge) describing the land management practices and social, spiritual and cultural knowledge that enabled their people to care for the country for tens of thousands of years.

ADDITIONAL TEACHER RESOURCES

The following list of teacher resources can be used to guide and build on the pedagogy and curriculum within the learning experiences and the Indigenous knowledge and culture.

- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Resource Portal*. Kids Matter: <https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/atsi-resources/search>
- Atkinson, S. 12(3) *Indigenous Pedagogies in Early Years Education and Care Settings in Victoria - A story of Indigenous self determination*: education.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/1338416/Members_Briefing_Papers_A_Collection_2014.pdf
- Boodjar, N. {various picture books}: <http://noongarboodjar.com.au/publications/books/>
- Crook, S. (2004). *Improvise Innovative Play Experiences for Children Under Eight*. Croydon : Victoria Tertiary Press
- Crook, S. & Farmer, B. (2002). *Just Imagine Creative Play Experiences for Children Under Six*. Croydon : Victoria Tertiary Press
- *Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) Fact Sheets*. SNAICC Resource. (2012). SNAICC: <http://www.supportingcarers.snaicc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/02896.pdf>
- *8 Priorities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Families*. (June 2011). SNAICC: <http://www.snaicc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/02761.pdf>

- *Facilitating Cultural Competence with Children*. FKA Children's Services: http://fka.org.au/cms_uploads/docs/tip-sheet-facilitating-cultural-competence-with-children-final-0516.pdf
- Farmer, R. & Fasoli, L. (2011). *You're in new country, Advice for non-Indigenous mentor's trainers and teachers*. Dubbo & online : Charles Sturt University: http://eprints.batchelor.edu.au/27771/Farmer_%26_Fasoli_2011__You%27re_in_new_country.pdf
- Fasoli, Lyn, Wunungmurra, Alison, Ecenarro, V and Fleet, A (2010) *Playing as becoming: Sharing Australian Aboriginal Voices on Play*. In: *Play in Early Childhood Education: Learning in Diverse Contexts*. Oxford University Press, Sydney. <http://eprints.batchelor.edu.au/235/>
- Fler, M. & Raban, B. (2007). *Early Childhood Literacy and Numeracy: Building Good Practice* : Canberra Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
- Fler, M. (2015). *Science for Children*. Port Melbourne, Vic. : Cambridge University Press
- *Foundations for Success: Guideline for extending and Enriching Learning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children in the Kindergarten Year*. (2013) : Queensland. Dept of Education, Training and Employment
- *Journey to big school*. (2014). Victoria : SNAICC
- Lee-Hammond, L. and Jackson-Barrett, E. (2013) *Aboriginal children's participation and engagement in Bush School*. In: Knight, S., (ed.) *International Perspectives on Forest School*. SAGE Publications Ltd, London, England.
- Martin, K. (2005). *Childhood, Relatedness and Lifelihood: Aboriginal Ways of Being, Knowing and Doing*. in J Phillips & J Lampert (Eds) *Introductory Indigenous Studies in Education: the Importance of Knowing*. Sydney, NSW: Pearson Education.
- Martin, Karen L (2017) *Voices and Visions: Aboriginal Early Childhood Education in Australia*: Pademelon Press, Mt Victoria New South Wales
- Mason-White, H. (2014). *Journey to Big School: Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's transition to primary school*. North Fitzroy, Vic. : SNAICC: <http://www.snaicc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/03316.pdf>
- Notley, W. *Aunty Wendy's Mob CD: Happy to be me* (with the accompanying Teaching Guide and Big Book)
- Nyernila – *Listen Continuously: Aboriginal Creation Stories of Victoria*, Creative Victoria and the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages (VACL): http://archive.creative.vic.gov.au/Projects_Initiatives/Indigenous_Arts_Initiatives/Nyernila_%E2%80%93_Listen_Continuously_Aboriginal_Creation_Stories_of_Victoria
- Queensland Dept of Education, Training and Employment, <http://www.foundationsforsuccess.qld.edu.au/sites/ffs/files/resources/foundations-for-success.pdf>
- Scarlet, Dr R. R. (Ed.). (2016). *The Anti-Bias Approach in Early Childhood*, [3rd ed.]. Sydney N.S.W. : Multiverse Publishing
- *Supporting Transition to School for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children: What it means and what works*. (2013). SNAICC: <http://www.snaicc.org.au/supporting-transition-to-school-for-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-children-2013-report/>
- *Talking Up Our Strengths*. (2009) : SNAICC and Innovative Resources, SNAICC: <https://innovativeresources.org/resources/card-sets/talking-up-our-strengths/>
- *Teaching Resources* : Magabala Books: <https://www.magabala.com/resources>
- Young, T & Elliot, S. (2003). *Just Investigate Science and Technology Experiences for Young Children*. Croydon, Vic. : Tertiary Press
- Yulunga: Traditional Indigenous Games. (2009). Canberra : Australian Sports Commission: http://www.ausport.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/376139/SP_31864_TIG_resource_K-3.pdf
- Yulunga: Traditional Indigenous Games Resource Package. (2009). Canberra : Australian Sports Commission: <http://www.healthinonet.ecu.edu.au/key-resources/promotion-resources?lid=18559>

REFERENCES

- *Belonging, being and becoming: The early years learning framework for Australia*. (2009). Canberra, ACT: Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments [DEEWR], Commonwealth of Australia <https://www.education.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework>
- *Journey to big school*. (2014). Victoria : SNAICC <http://www.snaicc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/03316.pdf>

