

Jajoo Warrngara
The Culture Classroom

Module 1
Embedding First Nations Perspectives – professional and personal accountabilities

SharingStories Foundation acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and to Elders both past and present.

First Nations Perspectives: Professional Learning for Victorian Teachers with Jajoo Warrngara

You made it!

Thank you for being here, for taking the time to step out of the classroom to reflect on and refresh your teaching practice through this Professional Learning program. These modules aim to build your confidence and strengthen your practice, supporting you to authentically embed First Nations perspectives into your classroom teaching and learning.

REFLECTIVE WORKSHOP
Module One: Please choose one workshop only:
19 November 3.30pm &
19 November 6.30pm

How this course works

Each module is designed to move from theory to practical application, using the **Jajoo Warrngara** educational platform as the key resource. The activities in each module reflect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pedagogies, explored more deeply in Module Three: First Nations Pedagogies and Frameworks. These pedagogies will be used throughout as you trial resources, reflect on your experience, and adapt or create your own learning experiences.

You'll work through each module at your own pace. Completing it ahead of each reflective workshop will allow you to get the most out of your time with the First Nations educator leading that session.

Module One: Embedding First Nations Perspectives – professional and personal accountabilities

Outcomes:

Understand embedding First Nations perspectives as both a professional and personal responsibility as a Victorian educator — and reflect where you are on this journey. Let us introduce you to SharingStories Foundation and the Jajoo Warrngara educational platform, as you learn about the communities behind the resources you'll use throughout this course.

Learnings from this module

- Who is SharingStories Foundation and what is Jajoo Warrngara: The Culture Classroom?
- Why embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives?
- What determines our professional and personal accountabilities as educators?

Reflection tools

Journal Assign a dedicated notebook for this professional learning — a place for personal reflections. Record any questions or insights from the course, or from your teaching practice, that you'd like to bring to the workshops.

KWL Chart You may wish to use the **KWL Chart** (What I Know ~ What I Wonder~ What I Learned) as a framework for your learning throughout. You can download a copy **here** or simply use the framework for your journal reflections. We'll indicate where we think it might be useful.

Suggested completion times

The following timeframes are a guide only to give you a sense of the time to complete each element of this module.

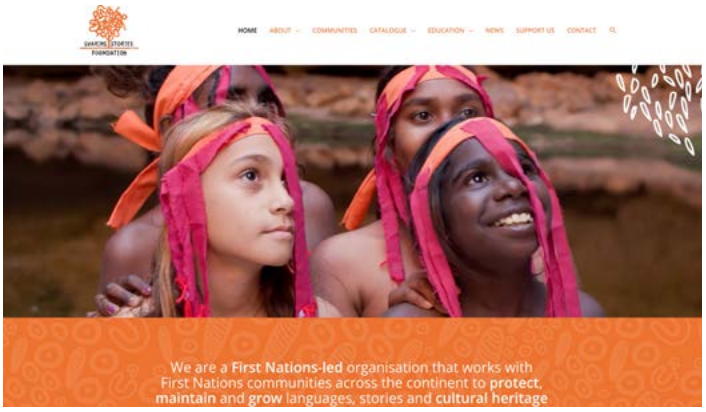
- **Part 1: 30 minutes**
- **Part 2: 90 minutes**
- **Part 3: 60 minutes**
- **Part 4: 30 minutes**

1. Exploration of digital learning platforms and resources

Following are the online learning platforms and resources you'll be using throughout this professional learning.

About SharingStories Foundation

SharingStories Foundation is a First Nations led organisation that collaborates with First Nations communities to protect, maintain and grow languages, stories and cultural heritage. Since 2012, we have used art, new media and technology to record, interpret and share cultural knowledge.



Explore

Visit the SharingStories Foundation **website** and take a look around. Open the **Communities** tab. Here you'll find a map of Australia with portals to the places we've worked and the communities we've collaborated with to create the resources we'll share in this course.

Choose a community you know, have heard of, or are curious about. Read about the community and explore the work they have created with the SharingStories Foundation.

Many of the communities will also have a link to Educational Resources. Click on these links and see where they take you!



About Jajoo Warrngara: The Culture Classroom

Our digital education platform provides curriculum-aligned resources and ready-to-use lessons focused around the videos, multi-touch bilingual interactive books and discovery maps created by SharingStories Foundation with each community. Lessons are co-created with and approved by First Nations communities, with protocols provided by Traditional Owners to guide you in how to deliver these lessons with confidence and care.



Listen

If you haven't done so already, **Listen** to Nyikina Elder Annie Nayina Milgin explain the meaning of jajoo warrngara and learn from others involved about how and why the platform was created and what opportunities it offers to educators.

Explore

Sign in to **Jajoo Warrngara** with the login details we've sent you. Go to Lessons, then use the filters or search to find a unit or lesson that applies to your teaching level and subjects. Once you open the lesson, you'll see all the content belonging to this unit.

To access this content, click on 'Access Unit' (orange tab on the right).



Acknowledgement

You'll notice that each unit begins with an Acknowledgement of Country, honouring the Country these lessons come from and the Elders, past and present, connected to it. Also acknowledged at the outset are the communities who have generously shared their stories, knowledge and guidance in developing this unit.

Whose Country do you live and work on? Are Welcomes to Country and Acknowledgements of Country practised in your classroom or in your school?

Watch

There are a number of lessons and resources on Jajoo Warrngara that will enable you to explore both the Acknowledgement and Welcome to Country more deeply with your students. You may like to watch the short (3 min) animation **Tanderrum** where Jaara Senior Custodian Uncle Rick Nelson shares the welcoming practices and protocols from his Country known as a Tanderrum Ceremony.

Protocols

Each unit also comes with Protocols, provided by the community who co-created the resources, to guide how knowledge and stories are shared. What is it about the Protocols that support you to share cultural knowledge with your students?

Essential Questions

Now, select Lessons. In Lesson One of your selected unit, you'll see a list of essential questions. These questions thread through the whole lesson and can work as both a starting point and an end point for class discussion. (Note that all lessons also come as printable PDFs.)

Journal

What do you notice about how the Jajoo Warrngara resources were created? How does this compare with teaching resources you've used previously? Note any differences in your journal, and reflect on what matters to you as an educator about how content is developed.

Koorie Culture Map

Embedded in Jajoo Warrngara is the **Koorie Culture Map**, an interactive map of animations, films, language and stories connected to the culturally significant places across Victoria shared by our community partners. The map was created by SharingStories Foundation with the Koorie Heritage Trust and the Bangerang, Gunaikurnai, Gunditjmara, Jaara, Wamba Wamba and Wurundjeri communities.

- We'll explore this layered map in more depth throughout the course, along with its curriculum-aligned activities.
- For now, from the language groups represented, identify which is nearest to your school in what we now call Victoria?



2. Why embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives?

In Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan 2016-2026, the Victorian Government sets out the following shared vision for Victoria:

Victoria will be a state where the rich and thriving culture, knowledge and experience of First Nations peoples are celebrated by all Victorians; where our universal service systems are inclusive, responsive and respectful of Koorie people at every stage of their learning and development journey; and where every Koorie person achieves their potential, succeeds in life, and feels strong in their cultural identity.

When we speak of perspectives we are talking about ways of thinking and knowing, shaped by both our individual and cultural identities. But how do we teach perspectives we may not have encountered ourselves, or don't yet fully understand? How do we integrate these knowledges and perspectives meaningfully into our teaching, rather than as add-ons?

We all bring our own ways of seeing the world to school — teachers and students, First Nations and non-First Nations alike. Bridging these different ways of knowing isn't something we work out alone. It calls for listening to, and being guided by, First Nations knowledge holders, communities and protocols. It also calls us to be brave in asking questions and to be open to learning.

Bringing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and perspectives into everyday teaching is increasingly recognised as important — for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, as well as for all students**.**

Why do you think it's important to use the plural when referring to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 'perspectives'?

Journal

Write a personal response to the following:

- What is the value of embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students?
- What is the value of embedding these perspectives for all students?
- How does embedding throughout the whole school environment promote First Nations student success?

Read

Download a copy of the **Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan 2016-2026**. This guiding document, developed by the Victorian Department of Education with the Victorian Koorie community, is the Victorian Government's strategy to improve education for First Nations learners. It also aims to benefit non-First Nations learners by ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content and perspectives are embedded in education experiences.

Other useful references include:

- **ACARA** — **Understand this cross-curriculum priority**
- **VCAA** — **Learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures**
- **VAEAI** — **Protocols for Koorie Education in Victorian Primary and Secondary Schools**
- **Narragunnawali** Reconciliation Australia
- **DET Victoria** — **Professional Practice Note 19: 'Koorie Cultural Inclusion**

Reflect

Choose any one of the documents above. You may even think of an example from your classroom experience where the value of embedding became apparent to you. Reflect on your personal responses to the questions you considered above. How have the readings changed or shaped your understanding? Return to the KWL Chart. Have there been any further learnings for you personally?

Keep your notes for the workshop discussion.

Your school policies and practices

What guidelines, if any, are you aware of that support First Nations perspectives becoming part of your school's everyday philosophy and practice? Does your school have a policy in place? Does your school have a relationship with the local Koorie community?

If you're unsure about any of these questions, who could you ask — a colleague, your school's Koorie Education Coordinator, or someone in your school leadership?

Reflect

If you locate any guidelines, how do they match with what you see practised day to day? Is there a gap and, if so, why do you think that is so? Whose job do you think it is to close it? Identify one thing you could find out, ask about, or act on this week in relation to embedding First Nations perspectives.

3. Professional and Personal accountability

Now that you've considered the value of embedding these First Nations perspectives, let's reflect on what determines your accountability, both professional and personal, to actually do this work.

Professional accountability — standards and compliance

Some of this responsibility is foundational to being a registered teacher in Victoria.

Professionalism

AITSL's Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Focus Areas 1.4 and 2.4) underpin VIT registration, so embedding these perspectives is tied to your ability to remain a registered teacher.

Curriculum content

The Victorian Curriculum F–10's cross-curriculum priority sets out what you're required to plan and teach. Child Safe Standard 1 is a compulsory minimum for school registration in Victoria. This standard explicitly names culturally safe environments for Aboriginal children as part of that requirement.

Do you believe these formal requirements are enough on their own? Why or why not?

Curriculum mapping and compliance

All lessons in **Jajoo Warrngara: The Culture Classroom** have been mapped to the Australian Curriculum. Lessons co-created with Victorian First Nations communities have now been mapped to the Victorian Curriculum and support you to meet the standards set by AITSL's Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

Jajoo Warrngara Activity: curriculum mapping

We briefly explored Jajoo Warrngara at the start of this module, and learned how to locate resources and navigate the Koorie Culture Map. Did you notice that each unit identifies the learning areas and Cross-Curriculum Priorities that apply?

Take a closer look at **Jajoo Warrngara Koorie Culture Map: Gunditjmara #2**. This activity sheet lets students explore Gunditjmara place names and discover how language can teach us about Country.

Identify the key learning areas in this lesson and note the Cross-Curriculum Priorities and codes.

Personal accountability — beyond compliance

Personal accountability shifts the conversation from compliance to choice: what kind of educator do you wish to be? Approaching the professional requirements with curiosity and care might open up new pathways and possibilities while achieving compliance.

To do this work requires humility, to see ourselves and our own position in society. But doing this also enables us to see how other people's personal histories may have influenced the outcomes (work-related, economic, social, political) they've experienced in their lives.

Just as you bring your own perspectives to the classroom, you also bring your values, past experiences, core beliefs and assumptions. This is completely natural but also worth exploring how this is reflected in the way your classroom looks, sounds and feels like to each of your students.

As you begin this work, you may meet a range of attitudes and perceptions about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories, languages and cultures from students and colleagues, family and friends, not all positive, that could be useful to prepare for.

Self-reflection

Using AITSL's **Indigenous Cultural Responsiveness Self-reflection Tool** (about 30 minutes), reflect on your own perspectives, assumptions, attitudes and beliefs and how these may impact your teaching practice and learner outcomes. It's not for sharing — it's for understanding what you bring to your teaching practice.

How might these perspectives influence your teaching practice as well as your school's policies?

Reflect

Reflect on how you got to where you are today. Who and what shaped your perspectives? What do you remember learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, stories and culture as a child? Were there any pivotal experiences that shaped how you saw things?

Journal

Create a simple mudmap of your life from what you've remembered above, with consideration to memories, turning points, questions you may have had and where they led you. If you're an artist, you might like to explore this visually — but straight rules and stick figures are also fine! Make sure you map yourself to the present time.

Where are you now — in your understanding, your learning, in your teaching practice?

Why does this work matter to you — personally, and as an educator?

Now, return to the questions you considered earlier: Do you believe these formal requirements are enough on their own? Why or why not?' What do you believe is needed to do this work?

4. Learnings

Reflect

Use the **KWL chart** to help capture what you felt you knew at the start of this module, what you still want to know, and what you've learned, using the three key learnings as prompts.

- Who is SharingStories Foundation and what is Jajoo Warrngara?
- Why embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives?
- What determines our professional and personal accountability as educators?

Journal

Return to your journal to look ahead:

- What steps can I take to bring First Nations perspectives into my teaching practice?
- What role might I play in embedding these perspectives in the whole school environment and community?
- What do I need, as a teacher, to do this job well?

Set an intention

- Set an overall learning goal, or a daily / weekly practice you'd like to commit to.

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SHARING STORIES FOUNDATION

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VICTORIA
State Government
Department of Education