

Example 3: *Learning from Les' bush tucker garden*

Many people think that only Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in remote areas have a relation to Country. But the video *Learning from Les' bush tucker garden* shows how Indigenous people living in the city also have strong relationships with Country. You can use this video to design a sequence of lessons for your school garden or even for learning from Country. Use the video to teach children about how animals, plants and the seasons are all connected.

VIDEO: *LEARNING FROM LES' BUSH TUCKER GARDEN*

- Learning and Teaching on Darug Country (2015), *Learning from Les' bush tucker garden*
<<http://learndarug.com/2015/11/26/learning-from-les-bush-tucker-garden>>

Here are some questions that you could ask your students after watching the video:

Totems

- What is a totem?
- What are Les's totems?
- Where is Les's Country?

Connection to Country

- How does the acacia tell us what is happening to the animals and plants on Country?
- How is everything connected?
- How might this concept of *connection to Country* be taught?
- What are the many uses for the acacia?

Plants

- What are the uses for *dianella longifolia* (lily)?

Summary

- List the foods and water available from plants to assist human survival in the bush. (Hint: there are at least 5 answers relating to lomandra, native raspberry bush, bottle brush and acacia.)

Take-home points

- If you talk about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the past tense, this will create the impression in the minds of children that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples only lived in the past.
- Keep it local! Design lessons that include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from your local community.
- *Country* is a 'driver' for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It is also an important concept in the Australian Curriculum: Geography and History.
- Students relate to a school-based garden in different ways. This can range from being in a place to sit surrounded by nature to being around colour (flowers and leaves), using the garden to learn about growing food, connecting with their culture in an Aboriginal bush tucker garden or simply seeing beauty.
- Learning from Country is learning how everything is connected and how humans are part of those connections, not separate from them.

Questions and activities

- 1 Consider the meaning of Australian Professional Standard 2.4. What does the concept of *reconciliation* actually mean? Think about your own relationships. What happens when you argue? How do you move on from an argument?
- 2 Following on from Question 1, design an activity for your students that will help to mend the relation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Australia. (Students must be included in the activity.)
- 3 How is the concept of *Country* taught in the Australian Curriculum: Humanities and Social Sciences? See ACARA (2020) <www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/download>.
- 4 Find out how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are connected to Country in your local area. Define those connections.
- 5 How might a greater connection to Country engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in school? For example, think about what a sense of *belonging* can do for a child. (Hint: refer to Australian Curriculum: Geography <www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/download>.)
- 6 Depending on where you teach, what is the best method of connecting your students to the local Country and its people?