

Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives

in Home Economics

Transcript of video

This video is available from www.qsa.qld.edu.au/29541.html

Robyn Gooley

Home Economics teacher

Getting started

Coming into a new school it is important to maybe start somewhere where you are comfortable, so looking at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander food is a starting point.

You then need to bring in those Indigenous processes as ways of working. That gives you a strong holistic view of how to embed and how to use those perspectives in your teaching strategies.

Processes

We've got ways of working in the Home Economics program, so what that means is actually bringing in Indigenous processes. There are a multitude of those available to you, it's what best suits you — and what best suits me is how it works for me, in the classroom.

It's important that you actually communicate with the local community, because they may have others that may assist you in your processes.

For new people starting out on their journey it's really important that you investigate for yourself, with your community members, with your whole school and find out what is happening in the school. But also then just take yourself to an example of the eight ways of learning, which is just a simple way of developing those skills in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective.

Making connections

Asking the local community about resources available to you, whether they have got different cooking skills for different areas, or even if they have different ingredients that you can access ... that's really important, just to establish yourself in the community, and ask the community members about those processes and protocols of what you can and can't use as well.

Protocols

It is really important that you actually meet with your community education officer. If you don't have one of those, ask the administration if there is anybody else in the school that's actually got Aboriginal heritage in the school. I found Uncle Pat. He supported me, and assisted me, and also guided me in the correct ways in which I should approach the students in this area.

After making connections with the community education officer, or someone like Uncle Pat, I'd actually ask them to get me, to introduce me to community members or parents that have Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students in the school. That way I can check my curriculum with them, make sure that the programs I am doing are culturally correct for the area.

We always communicate with our students. I do it in a yarning circle, that's a circle where you get the students together, they feel comfortable, they are on the same level as you, and you have a conversation. And that conversation is a structured conversation where students — every student participates in that conversation; and no one feels threatened in that circle. It is a really important way of knowing your students but also knowing what knowledge they have and what they can impart on the other students in that circle. Because the other students will learn from listening to their peers as much as they learn from you.

Reflecting

The best part of embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander processes in my programs and using the content about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander foods has been the most amazing feedback from students, unexpected results, but perfect outcomes.