



The Australian Journal of **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

This article was originally published in printed form. The journal began in 1973 and was titled *The Aboriginal Child at School*. In 1996 the journal was transformed to an internationally peer-reviewed publication and renamed *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*.

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7. Initiative is being developed. Several children recently approached me - through a teacher aide - to set up a guitar class for them. They requested that their teacher be the teacher aide they had contacted me through. We have 39 children currently learning guitar, all of them non-Aboriginal. The onus is now on me to supply the necessary instruments, as I am certain that this class will be highly successful.
8. It was thought initially that Aboriginal aides could not be used in the secondary section. This argument has been readily refuted through the work of Miss Raelene Hudson at this school. Her efforts with special groups, duplication, special testing, correlation of results etc., is a credit to her.



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THE GRAYLANDS TEACHERS' COLLEGE STUDY

Perth, W.A.

At an In-Service Course for Teachers of Aboriginal children held in Perth in February 1973, Mr. D. Ibbotson reported on the study being conducted by his College. In this study, teachers in the State were asked to provide information relating to their pupils, on

- (a) *general difficulties and problems of language, behaviour, attendance, organisation, parental support (or lack of it).*
- (b) *problems, interest and successful ways and means in curriculum areas of Spoken English, Written English, Mathematics.*

Teachers were also asked to comment on curriculum areas of greatest and least success.

Analyses of the data are still proceeding. When the analyses are completed, Dr. Makin will make these available in an article in the Journal. However, at the February Course Mr. Ibbotson was able to give details of the responses to the pilot questionnaire of teachers from two regions - Kimberley and North West.

With Graylands Teachers' College permission, I have selected some of the information for presentation in this issue.

In line with our policy of aiding the exchange of successful ideas and practices, I believe teachers throughout Australia will be particularly interested in the survey results on interest areas and successful ways and means in various curriculum areas.

SPOKEN ENGLISH

(a) Interests

1. Their own environment and community events. What they do, their homes, family, camp life, station life.
2. Colour or black and white photos or slides of any aspect of 1 (above). Also large coloured pictures, charts, picture books and picture talks.
3. Native animals, birds, reptiles. Description of these, their habits, where and how to find.
4. Stories and poems of other places and other people, particularly children and places or things with which they can identify.
5. Sport of all kinds as talking points. Outdoor activities: fishing, hunting, collecting.
6. Impromptu drama, play-acting, puppets.
7. After school jobs, cars, trucks, planes, machinery.
8. TV (where available), films.

(b) Successful Ways and Means

1. Small groups - closely seated - informal talking and listening - talking to and *with* them - not *at* them. Use of outside areas under trees - on grass - in shed (comments mainly by mid-upper primary).
2. Playway activities - miming - puppets - playing shop - dressing up (comments mainly by junior primary teachers).
3. Jokes, riddles: I spy, Simon Says, Chinese Whispers, and other talking games.
4. Use of photos, colour slides - particularly of environment and topical, also large colour pictures and magazine pictures.
5. Use of tape recorders, sounds of voices, animals, birds, and machinery. Use as stimulus and for correction. Exchange tapes with other schools.
6. News sessions, show and tell, draw and tell. Confine to personal experience or develop in conjunction with 4 and

5 above.

7. Talking through telephones.
8. Other suggestions: informal discussions at night, use of children to "call spelling" etc., reciting in unison or repeating in unison, learning repetitive songs, poems, rhymes, drills to eradicate speech defects, use of substitutions and expansion type sentences.

WRITTEN ENGLISH

(a) Interests

1. Topics about themselves and actual happenings in and out of school. Their own environment, own experiences, family happenings.
2. Specifically listed topics: outdoor life, the bush, hunting, horses, stockman, camping, bush tracker, rodeos, fighting, sport.
3. Writing letters.
4. Describing nature, how to track, identify wild life.
5. Imaginative topics - violence, fantasies, space.

(b) Successful, ideas, projects, etc.

1. Use of photographs of own friends, acquaintances or locality as stimulus. Make up files or books and illustrate. Use as reading material.
2. Use of strips, slides, large pictures, magazine pictures. Talk about these, then write about them.
3. Re-telling actual happenings - home, friends, people on Station, reserve.
4. Writing letters to friends, relatives.
5. Illustrated sentences, strips - avoid lengthy work.
6. Group activities and discussions as basis for group writing of poems, plays and stories.
7. Delay written English until basic vocabulary mastered; avoid unnecessary disheartening failure. Great deal of preliminary work needed to supply ideas.
8. Other suggestions: daily diary, writing about "Project" course, writing poetry, Praise efforts.

MATHEMATICS

(a) Interests

1. Practical application, work with "concrete" objects, local materials for young children. Use of all kinds of number aids, blocks, rods, shapes, measuring, weighing.
2. Interest in shopping and money (real or make-believe).
3. Enjoy simple operations where they can succeed.
4. Quick, simple examples, brief periods, variety.
5. Competition with others in groups, maths games.
6. Maths they can apply to their own environment.

(b) Successful, ideas, projects, etc.

1. Restrict and confine initial number to "concrete"; use all types of aids and materials.
2. Class "shop", practical shopping, help canteen, play money.
3. Maths games, maths table, mathemax cards, colourful blocks, rods, and all types of aids; use cyclostyled sheets.
4. Relate maths to practical aspects, real life situations which relate to local environment and for which use can be seen. Correlate with project courses - selling produce - measuring.
5. Painstaking repetition, slow pace.
6. Various groupings according to particular needs. Use child helpers - individual instruction wherever warranted. Early remediation.
7. Handling models, geometric shapes.
8. Counting and sharing articles, books, pencils, milk, fruit, food.

CURRICULUM AREAS OF GREATEST SUCCESS

1. Oral participation.
2. Music, singing.
3. Reading once it is mastered. Keen to know about many things.
4. Social studies. Must have interest factors - people, places, customs.

5. Natural science, nature.
6. Physical education, sport.
7. Writing letters.
8. Literature - they love stories.
9. Drama, mime.
10. Others: handwriting, home science, mothercraft.

Of interest also are the results, from this sample of teachers, to the questionnaire item: Please rate the following teacher attributes in terms of effectiveness in teaching Aboriginal children.

1 = Essential, 2 = Valuable, 3 = Useful, 4 = Unimportant, 5 = Negative.

	1	2	3	4	5
Understanding	82%	10%	%	%	%
Sympathy	38	31	14	7	1
Firmness	71	15	3	1	
Air of authority	22	15	28	9	7
Adaptability	72	19	3		
Knowledge of culture	24	33	38		
Fairness	75	15	3		
Patience	86	8	2		

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