



The Australian Journal of **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

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3. *Getting ideas*
4. *Learning to think.*
5. *Developing discussion skills.*
6. *Listening/reading/creating poems and plays.*
7. *Production:* work for rest of class, e.g. experience readers, charts, collecting information on particular sub-themes, articles from magazines.
8. *Dramatising:* e.g. role playing - going for job interview; telephone conversations; working on a dance to go with a particular musical piece; working on a skit that can be presented to the class on a particular theme; Miming (what am I doing?) and other group games.

REMEMBER - You have to *work at it*.
You must be *flexible*.

NOTE - Caution must be exercised in regard to the concept of role playing

Reference

Farrelly, K. : Paper presented at Darrandera Primary School, 1976.

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S.C.F. KINDERGARTEN, ROBINVALE

M. Merlin,
Kindergartner,
S.C.F. Robinvale

The Aboriginal people in Robinvale do not want separate schools, classes and housing. Some of the more dependent ones need extra help, but the capable ones are proud of succeeding on their own merits as people.

However, the children do have problems at school. For this reason the Save the Children Fund has set up a kindergarten for

three-year-old children. All the Aboriginal children attend four days a week; even itinerant families and visitors bring their three-year-olds along. They may stay with the children, leave them, come back early, join in the program, or just watch, any day and every day. Two Aboriginal aides take a major part in running the program, with a kindergartner.

Non-Aboriginal children are welcome. They attend one or two days a week, and their families are also welcome. Visiting parents are introduced to one another, and encouraged to act as guests to whom all the children play host.

As the Aboriginal children attend more often, they get to know the program routines, the songs, stories, puzzles, games and equipment better. They are the confident ones, the helpers, the messengers.

We feel that the real handicap of Aboriginal children starting school here, is a lack of confidence, and our program is aimed at overcoming this.

The children move on to the normal pre-school centre along with all the white children, and then to school. The teachers report a great increase in confidence and the children are enjoying school instead of dreading it, so their attendance is regular. As the parents have grown to know other parents and children, the whole setting has changed; parents are less tense and apprehensive about school and this rubs off on the children.

With two years of songs and stories and conversation shared with most of the peer group, the working vocabulary of the Aboriginal children is much the same as the others, as well as their confidence in using it. This is an oblique attack on the problem of poor academic achievement, but it does seem to be having some effect on the children here.

The program is into its eighth year, and we have 9 to 15 Aboriginal children in any one year, and up to 40 white children.

I wish it were possible to buy confidence in a tube and rub it in.

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