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ETHNOBOTANY IN THE SCHOOL

*S. Szabo and D.Smith

A new and highly successful initiative in education this year has been to introduce ethnobotany into the school's Culture Program. We feel certain that this approach will be successful through all school grades and will promote oral and written discourse for Aboriginal children.

Pre-Reading

John W. Harris: Aboriginal science, Western science and the problem of conceptual inference. *The Australian Science Teachers Journal*, Vol.24, 1978. pp.61-67.

Helen Sungaila: Reorganizing the school and classroom to meet the instructional needs of Aboriginal country children. *Unicorn*, Vol.6, No.2, May 1980.

Aims - Social

- 1) To instil in children a pride and feeling of worth in traditional Aboriginal culture.
- 2) To develop in children a greater awareness and knowledge of their natural environment.
- 3) To develop greater links with the community through involvement with Aboriginal elders.
- 4) To provide a learning environment outside the traditional classroom situation.

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Academic

To develop in children a knowledge of the various types of plants in their environment from an Aboriginal viewpoint.

Oral and Written Discourse

Ethnobotany provides an excellent vehicle to stimulate oral and written discourse. With upper-primary children these studies lead easily into Injibarndi language studies, a development we will look at next year.

Methods

Children with the aid of Aboriginal elders make field trips weekly. In doing so the children are able to observe the plant life in the natural environment. From there they collect samples, return to school, press them and record information, both in English and in Injibarndi.

Conclusion

The program has been extremely successful in fulfilling the aims outlined. Essential to the success of this program is a good working relationship between the school and Aboriginal community.

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ABORIGINAL STUDIES IN THE SCHOOL: A PORT AUGUSTA EXPERIENCE

M. Edwards

Following co-ordinated effort on the part of teachers and Aboriginal school assistants from three Port Augusta schools and an Aboriginal Education and Aboriginal Studies adviser throughout 1980, courses have been developed for an Aboriginal Studies program at Year 8 and 9 levels.

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