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Book Reviews

Resource Guide for Aboriginal Studies and Torres Strait Islander Studies

Curriculum Corporation, Melbourne, 1995

Reviewed by Victor Hart

Many teachers are constantly on the lookout for Aboriginal studies and Torres Strait Islander studies resource materials. An extension of this dilemma is when materials are located how can teachers be sure of their accuracy or appropriateness?

The *Resource Guide for Aboriginal Studies and Torres Strait Islander Studies* offers valuable information and examples for teachers seeking to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content across the curriculum for all students from preschool to Year 12. Presented as an A4 size paperback book of 104 pages, the guide is thus reasonably priced and facilitates quick and easy reference to a range of resource materials.

The guide's introduction informs readers that it is a product of the National Aboriginal Studies and Torres Strait Islander Studies Project funded by the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training in 1992, and incorporates two components of that Project, namely:

- nationally agreed criteria for evaluating and selecting materials to be used in Aboriginal studies and Torres Strait Islander studies, and
- an annotated collection of 218 available resources which have been selected using this criteria.

The National Project was coordinated by Kaye Price (ACT Department of Education and Training) with a management committee, chaired by Penny Tripcony (Queensland Department of Education), which comprised coordinators of Aboriginal education from all states and territories. It is understood that a further publication from the National Project, *National Principles and Guidelines for Aboriginal Studies and Torres Strait Islander Studies, K-12*, has also just become available from Curriculum Corporation.

In terms of the appropriateness of resources, a fundamental criterion is the involvement and endorsement of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. Compilers of the guide have demonstrated this by involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at all stages of its development.

The selection criteria for the evaluation of Aboriginal studies and Torres Strait Islander studies materials was developed at a national workshop held in Canberra in May 1992, attended by representatives of all state and territory Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander education consultative groups, coordinators of Aboriginal education, Aboriginal writers, higher education institutions, the National Catholic Education Office, and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. It is pointed

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out that the committee and compilers have included in the guide only those items recommended by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people during and as a result of a series of consultative meetings and workshops conducted in all states and territories.

Recommended items include:

- Printed Resources: books, booklets, journals, newspapers
- Audiovisual Resources: videos, audio tapes
- Multi-media Resources: curriculum packages, kits.

The guide is informative and easy to use. Items are listed alphabetically by title and include the following information:

- publisher, date of publication and, if appropriate, edition
- names and addresses of suppliers
- format – type of publication (for example, book, video, manuscript); extent (either number of pages or length in minutes); and the inclusion of materials (such as maps, illustrations, indices, appendices and glossary)
- recommended retail price
- audience (lower primary, upper primary, lower secondary, upper secondary)
- descriptors or key words to provide an indication of the scope of the resource
- curriculum areas, based on the eight national curriculum areas of the arts, English, health and physical education, languages other than English (LOTE), mathematics, science,

studies of society and environment, and technology

- indication or suitability for general reading and teacher reference.

Ready identification of some resources is facilitated by photographs of covers.

The guide's authors also advise that the set of criteria, including background information and examples, can be used to evaluate new resources as they become available.

The availability of such a resource is well overdue. Because of the time required for publication, however, (the manuscript was finalised in 1993), it does not include some of the more recently published materials which may be of interest and use to teachers.

Editor's Note: *The Resource Guide can be obtained from Curriculum Corporation, 141 Rathdowne Street, Carlton, Victoria 3053. Telephone (03) 9639 0699; Facsimile (03) 9639 1616.*

Cost: \$14.95 (+ \$5 postage and handling for orders of less than \$100)

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