

**INDIGENOUS
LITERACY
FOUNDATION™**

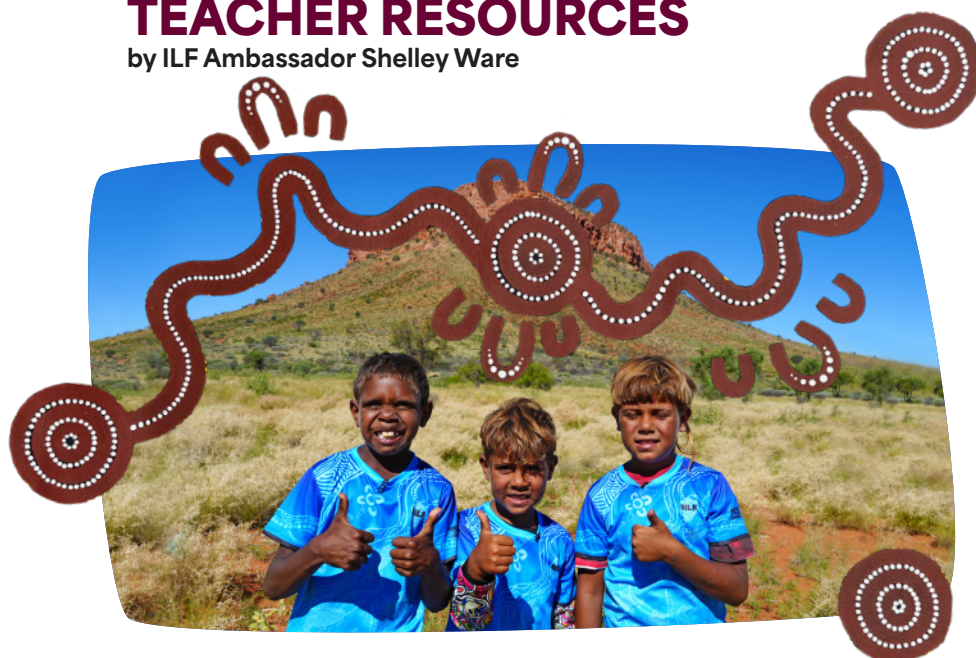
The Indigenous Literacy Foundation proudly presents

Indigenous Literacy Day

2026

TEACHER RESOURCES

by ILF Ambassador Shelley Ware



INDIGENOUS LITERACY DAY FILM

COUNTRY IS OUR TEACHER

Artwork by Sharon Naparulla Burns

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands on which you watch and enjoy the ILD 2026 Film together. We pay our respects to the Warlpiri and Arrernte people and thank them for generously sharing their cultures, languages, knowledge systems and deep connections to Country through this Film. We acknowledge their continuing connections to land, waters and sky Country, and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

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The ILD Film follows Chris and Niningka as they share their Countries, languages, families and knowledge with each other. Through their journey, students are invited to explore the importance of Country as teacher and understand how language, food, plants, family and cultural knowledge are connected to identity and belonging.



Message from Shelley Ware

Country has always been our teacher. For thousands and thousands of years, First Nations people have learned by watching, listening, sharing and spending time on Country with family, Elders and Community. In this beautiful Film, Chris and Niningka show us that although our Countries, languages and Communities may be different, our connection to Country, culture and each other keeps us strong. As you watch and learn with your students, encourage them to think about the Country where they live and learn, the First Nations language connected to that place, and the knowledge held within its plants, animals, foods and seasons. Most importantly, encourage them to listen to and learn from local First Nations people, because when we share language, stories and knowledge respectfully, we help keep culture strong for generations to come.

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CURRICULUM LINKS

Australian Curriculum v9.0

Australian Curriculum v8.4

Cross Curriculum Priorities	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures v9.0	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures v8.4
Country/Place	First Nations Communities of Australia maintain a deep connection to, and responsibility for, Country/Place and have holistic values and belief systems that are connected to the land, sea, sky and waterways. A_TSICP1	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities maintain a special connection to and responsibility for Country/Place. OI.2
		Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have holistic belief systems and are spiritually and intellectually connected to the land, sea, sky and waterways. OI.3
Culture	First Nations Australian societies are diverse and have distinct cultural expressions such as language, customs and beliefs. As First Nations Peoples of Australia, they have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural expressions, while also maintaining the right to control, protect and develop culture as Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property. A_TSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies have many Language Groups. OI.4
	First Nations Australians' ways of life reflect unique ways of being, knowing, thinking and doing. A_TSIC2	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' ways of life are uniquely expressed through ways of being, knowing, thinking and doing. OI.5

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ACTIVITIES FOR ILD FILM

ACTIVITY 1: Our Country, Our Language

ACTIVITY 2: Country Is Our Teacher

ACTIVITY 3: Learning from Country - Fire, Food and Knowledge

These activities can be completed in order or used individually to suit the needs of your classroom and school. They provide opportunities for students to learn from Chris and Niningka's experiences while making connections with the Country and First Nations Community where they live and learn.



Niningka



Chris

ACTIVITY 1: Our Country, Our Language

Duration: 60-90 minutes, with additional time for research and video creation

Resources

- [ILD Film](#) featuring Chris and Niningka
- [AIATSIS Map](#) of Indigenous Australia
- Map of Australia or digital mapping tool
- Tablets, cameras or other devices for filming
- Art materials for planning or storyboarding videos

Learning intention

In this activity we will:

- Explore Nyirripi on Warlpiri Country and Mparntwe/Alice Springs on Arrernte Country.
- Identify the Country and Traditional Custodians where our school is located.
- Explore how First Nations languages are connected to Country, culture and identity.
- Share what we have learned through an Indigenous Literacy Day video.

Watch and yarn together

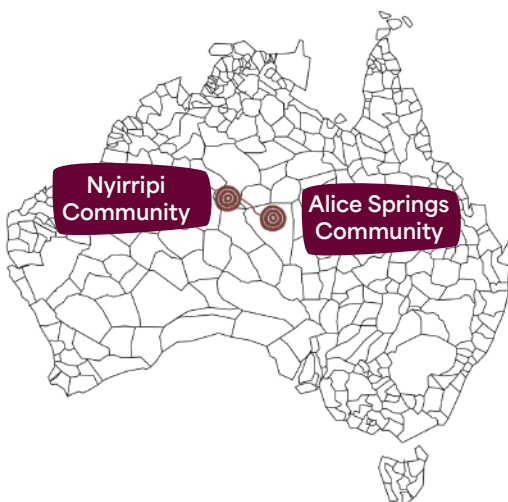
After watching the [Film](#), sit together in a yarning circle and discuss:

- What did Chris and Niningka teach each other about their Countries?
- What role did family and Community play in their learning?
- Why was language important in the Film?
- What similarities did you notice between their experiences, even though they come from different places?
- What would you like other children to know about the Country where you live and learn?

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Students explore the Country on which their school is located and identify the Traditional Owners and local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language/s. Locate their school on a map and compare where they live with Nyirripi on Warlpiri Country and Mparntwe/Alice Springs on Arrernte Country, discussing distance as well as similarities and differences between the places.

With guidance from local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, Land Councils, Elders or Community members, students can investigate local language words and learn about bush tucker, traditional medicines and other knowledge connected to Country.

Create an Indigenous Literacy Day video: Inspired by Chris and Niningka, students create a short video introducing their school and the Country they are learning on. They might share local language they have been given permission to use, introduce plants or foods they have learned about, explain something they have discovered about Country, or simply take viewers on a walk through their school and community. Schools could submit approved videos to the Indigenous Literacy Foundation to potentially share through ILF social channels, creating a celebration of the many Countries, Communities and languages across Australia. Or you can share your videos with your school Community letting them know what Country has taught them as a class.



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ACTIVITY 2: Country Is Our Teacher

Duration: 50-60 minutes,
with opportunities to revisit
throughout the year

Resources

- [ILD Film](#)
- Clipboards, paper or observation journals
- Pencils and drawing materials
- Tablets or cameras for photographs, where appropriate
- Large paper or digital tools for creating a class learning map
- Appropriate local First Nations resources

Learning intention

In this activity we will:

- Explore the idea of Country as a teacher.
- Observe plants, animals, weather, waterways and other signs on Country.
- Consider what we can learn by looking, listening and spending time on Country.
- Explore how First Nations knowledge of Country is connected to generations of observation and learning.
- Create a learning map to record what Country has taught us.

Return to the Film

Ask students to think about the places where Chris and Niningka learn throughout the Film. Discuss:

- Where does their learning take place?
- Who teaches them?
- What do they learn by being out on Country?
- How are language, family, culture and Country connected?
- What knowledge might be difficult to understand without actually spending time on Country?



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Return to the Film and discuss: What did Chris and Niningka learn from Country that they could not learn by simply sitting in a classroom?

Take students outside for a slow walk around the school grounds or, where appropriate, on local Country. Ask them to use their senses to notice what Country might be telling them. What plants are growing or flowering? What birds, insects or animals can they see or hear? What is the weather doing? Where is water found? What changes have they noticed at different times of the year?

Back in the classroom, students create a “Country Is Our Teacher” learning map using drawings, photographs and words to record their observations. Then, with appropriate local First Nations resources or Community guidance, investigate how some of these plants, animals, waterways or seasonal changes are understood locally.

Finish with the question:

*If we learn to listen carefully to Country,
what can Country teach us?*

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ACTIVITY 3: Learning from Country - Fire, Food and Knowledge

Duration: 60-90 minutes, plus time for research and making damper

Resources

- [ILD Film](#)
- First Nations-led resources about cultural burning
- Research materials about bush foods and traditional plant knowledge
- Information about lukarrara (desert fringe-rush)
- Appropriate local resources about bush foods and plants
- Ingredients and cooking equipment for making damper

Learning intention

In this activity we will:

- Explore some of the knowledge shared by Chris, Niningka and Communities in the Film.
- Research how cultural burning can be used to care for Country.
- Learn about bush foods and the knowledge connected to native plants.
- Investigate lukarrara and how its seeds have traditionally been collected and prepared for food.
- Explore bush foods and plant knowledge belonging to the Country where our school is located.
- Consider how knowledge is passed between generations.

Research: Cultural Burning

Return to the ILD Film and identify examples of people learning from and caring for Country.

In small groups, students can research cultural burning, exploring how First Nations peoples have used carefully managed fire to care for Country for thousands of years.

Ask:

- What is cultural burning?
- Who holds and passes on this knowledge?
- How can cultural burning help care for plants, animals and Country?
- How can fire encourage new growth?
- How is cultural burning different from bushfires and other approaches to fire management?

Teachers should use First Nations-led sources when exploring cultural burning and reinforce that cultural burning is living cultural knowledge held by First Nations Communities.



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Research: Lukarrara (desert fringe-rush) and bush foods

Return to the part of the Film where the children in Nyirripi share lukarrara (desert fringe-rush).

Students can investigate lukarrara, including how its edible seeds have traditionally been collected, prepared and ground into flour for making bread or seed cakes.

Students can then broaden their investigation to consider:

- What bush foods grow on the Country where our school is located?
- Are there local plants traditionally used as food or medicine?
- How do people know when particular foods are ready to collect?
- Who holds this knowledge and how has it been passed on?
- Why is it important to seek permission before sharing some cultural knowledge?

Where possible, invite a local Elder, Traditional Owner or respected Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Community member to share knowledge that is appropriate for students to learn.

Make and share damper

As a follow-up to your learning about lukarrara and bush foods, make damper together as a class and share it. While eating together, reflect on the important role food can play in bringing family and Community together and in sharing stories, knowledge and culture. Discuss how the preparation and sharing of food can create opportunities for people to connect, learn from one another and pass knowledge from one generation to the next.

Discuss:

- How can preparing and sharing food help bring people together?

Finish in a yarning circle with:

- Why is it important that First Nations knowledge continues to be learned from, respected and passed on to future generations?

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Australia Post is proud to partner with the Indigenous Literacy Foundation to celebrate Indigenous Literacy Day 2026 and this year's theme, Country is our Teacher. We recognise the vital role that Country plays in sharing knowledge, culture and identity, and we are committed to supporting opportunities for children to learn through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories, perspectives and ways of knowing.

Since 2020, together with ILF, we have delivered more than 800,000 books to over 500 remote Communities across Australia, helping ensure children can access books that reflect and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, languages and stories.

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