

EDITORIAL

One of the professional challenges for non-Aboriginal teachers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners is to develop a knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal cultures. This is necessary to increase teachers' general understandings of the concept of culture, of the determinants of culture and of the nature and processes of cultural change. In most cases local Aboriginal people could be considered to be the most suitable teachers of Aboriginal Studies courses to Aboriginal (and non-Aboriginal) children, it is important that all general teachers also learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. This is necessary not only for their own professional development which is demanding an increasing broad general knowledge of society and its culture but also as a basis for developing appropriate and effective teaching strategies for their Aboriginal and Islander learners.

The articles by John Ramsland and his team and Martin Nakata in this issue of The Aboriginal Child at School help us to develop our understandings of Aboriginal culture. In fact, the first article is a complete Aboriginal Studies Unit - "The Birriapai of the Manning" - appropriate for secondary schools. On page 38 there is notice of the very recent publication of a study kit for secondary schools - "A Changing Culture: The Lardil Aborigines of Mornington Island". Martin Nakata, in considering the appropriateness of a sociolinguistic model for classifying Torres Strait Islander languages emphasises the complex interrelationship of language and culture.

Best Wishes

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