50 WORDS
ACTIVITY BOOKLET

50 WORDS

🔍 **50words.online/**

Research Unit for Indigenous Language

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GETTING STARTED

Here you'll find a set of activities to help you learn a bit more about the languages of Australia.

People from around Australia have shared some words from their language with us. The 50 Words map is a resource that allows people to hear some words from the language or languages of the land where they live, work, and go to school. It also shows the diversity of Indigenous languages spoken around Australia. It's not complete yet, but there's lots you can learn already!

The 50 Words map and audio are not replacements for connecting with local community members; First Languages Australia have resources complied to support teachers in teaching about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages. Have a look here:

gambay.com.au/teachers

The activities in this booklet are just a starting point to help you use the 50 Words map. The activities at the start of the booklet are more accessible and suitable for younger students, while older students might enjoy those towards the end.

Have fun exploring!

You can see a map of Australia with lots of words over the top. Some are orange, some are white. These are the names of languages. They are placed in the land where the language is spoken. Language names in orange show that there is audio you can listen to for that language.

In the top right menu you have the option to view by Language or Word.

Selecting a Word

Select hello, you'll see fewer words on the map. These are the words for hello in the languages that have been contributed. You can select play all words to hear all the words for hello one after another. Or, alternatively select the speaker button to listen to only one language.

Selecting a language

You can do so in the main right menu or by clicking on a language name in orange. When selecting Language, you'll be able to see and listen to the words recorded.

WORD SEARCH

Can you find the following words in the Bangerang language? Once you've found them in the word search, go to the map to have a listen to how they sound!

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M M Z P F S G L N Y U W A X D G I E V D M X I
M X M U A W V K A P I C J W A R T A B K Q O T
C C H K L U O G O O N V E Y Y C Z P I A A I P
I I T U R U S I S V F I U T R U J T U R R Z I
N T J R U V N R N K U R U C U W F S R L R V R
G R U L T N T A U P L R U J T J I E A A A Q R
U U K P N Y A W V A Q I M H U Z F A W Y J I I
N M A A I A P U E P T T L C Z Y G E M A T X Y
Y R L P T R A T W N U N U R V W Z A T D N T A
T O P I R R P U O R Q R T I R R A W U K U T G
J G A T U A X Y I U Q I L I L R U K Z W G J T
U N N J P N W C Z J U P C M G A M A M I N I U
K A T A K Y K C T T Z V O K W Y R G Z Y U L S
T R X M I A T B A J T A K G N I P A K A Y K Z
R M G A K I A Y N A A G N W K U R T A P R U X
D V F U K I Y N W N A L C A L K O F S U P V I
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ngowe (yes)
dhonga (smoke)
datjidja (hot)
gorrkarra (rain)
yurratha (sky)
ngunangga (elbow)

wurru (mouth)
maniga (fish)
wala (water)
yimilang (today)
dhatjiba (sister)
lilima (bone)

QUIZ

Using the 50 Words map, can you find the answers to these questions?

What is the word for hand in Akarre?

_____

What is the word for Southern Cross in Barngarla?

_____

What is the word for firewood in Tiwi?

_____

In which language is mungawinki the word for tomorrow?

_____

In which language is jarlangardi the word for goanna?

_____

What are some words for welcome, hello and goodbye in the state where you live?

_____

Near which major city is the language Awabakal spoken?

_____

On which islands is the language Mawng spoken?

_____

How would you welcome someone you've just met and find out their name in Wajarri?

_____

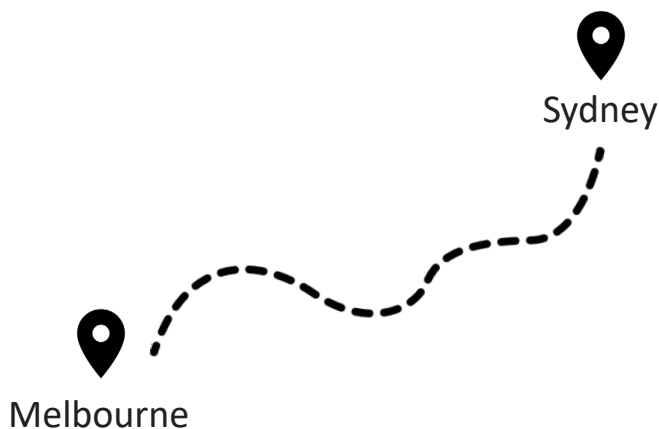What about in Wik-Mungkan, palawa kani and Mudburra?

_____

_____

_____

LANGUAGE CHALLENGE

☐ Learn 5 words from a language spoken in your state

☐ Learn the word for 'hello' in 5 languages

☐ Learn the names of the 5 languages spoken nearest to where you live

☐ Learn the name of the language(s) of your nearest state capital city

☐ Learn 'Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes (/Foot!)' in one language

LANGUAGE ROAD TRIP

Find Sydney on the map.

If you were travelling through country to Melbourne, how many languages would you need to speak if you wanted to have some chats along the way?

Sydney

Melbourne

_____

_____

_____

_____

SOUNDS GOOD

When you listen to the words on the 50 Words website, you will notice that Australian languages have many sounds that are not found in English. These sounds can be very tricky for English speakers to pronounce!

Watch the series of videos below explaining what these sounds are and how to pronounce them.

▶ go.unimelb.edu.au/67ys

When there's an 'ng' at the start of a word

Sounds like ' tja', 'dja' and 'nya'

Vowel sounds

Sounds that are tapped or trilled

Sounds where you curl your tongue back
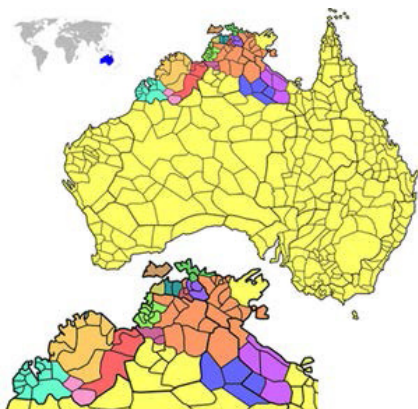
DISCISSION QUESTIONS

1. Take a look at the words for yes in all the languages on the map. What do you notice? Which are most different?

2. Take a look at the words for no in the languages on the map. What do you notice?

3. Take a look at the phrases for What is your name? in the languages on the map. When you look at whole sentences, do Australian languages all look similar to each other? Can you spot any similarities between any languages?

4. Click on Languages in the top right corner. Did you notice that in some places there are lots of languages located close together, while in others they are much more spaced out? Why do you think that might be?

5. Animals: choose a few languages from different parts of Australia and look through the words for different animals. Do you notice any differences in what the language words translate to? Why do you think these differences might exist?

6. Kinship: choose a few languages from Northern Australia and look through the words for family members. Do you notice any differences in what the language words translate to? Why do you think these differences might exist?

DID YOU KNOW?

The languages of Indigenous Australia belong to a number of language 'families': groups of languages that are historically related and share certain features.

One large family, which linguists refer to as 'Pama-Nyungan', encompasses the languages spoken across most of Australia (in yellow on the map to the right).

The languages spoken in the rest of Australia (in northern WA and the NT) belong to perhaps as many as 24 other distinct language families, which are known collectively as 'Non-Pama-Nyungan'. You can see some of these in the other colours on the map above. Linguists continue to research and debate how the languages of Australia are related to each other – it's a very difficult task that involves lots of careful and painstaking work!

MULTI-LANUAGE REGION

When the First Fleet arrived in 1788, Australia was an intensely multilingual place (and it still is!). Indigenous people typically had mastery of several languages (including sign language), and used different ones in different contexts and places. There were lots of reasons for this. One important reason is that language in Aboriginal Australia is very strongly connected to land and territory: people and languages are understood to belong to particular terrain.

There was no one language that was used across Australia that everyone could understand. Language communities were often quite small, but that didn't mean that they were endangered; people used language in such a way that many different languages were able to be maintained.

While things have certainly changed in the last couple of centuries, many Aboriginal people are still very multilingual. In some regions, people speak several Indigenous languages as well as a variety of English and/or Kriol.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

To find further resources on each language, follow the link on the left-hand information menu where it says: "See more information about LANGUAGE here"

First Languages Australia

- a discussion about terminology for First Nations languages
- Gambay First Languages map showing the language names and groupings favoured by community
- First Languages Australia's recommendations teachers' notes and general about teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait languages content

The Research Unit for Indigenous Language at the University of Melbourne works with Australian First Nations communities on language research, and to support the maintenance of linguistic and cultural heritage.

MORE RESOURCES

Are there other kinds of activities or learning support you would like to see? Get in touch and let us know! Email us at RUIL-contact@unimelb.edu.au