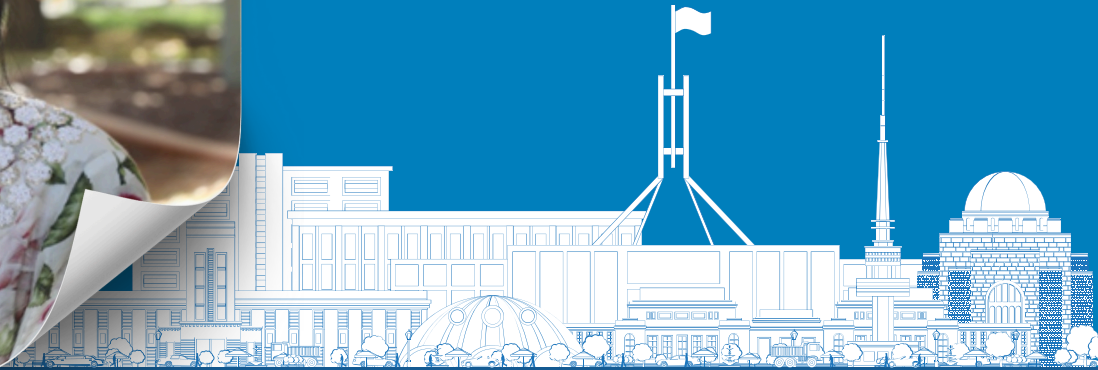




Building tomorrow's minds :

On the shoulders of teaching giants in the bush capital



One of my most memorable teaching moments occurred last year with my preschool class. A group of girls became fascinated with Indigenous play experiences in the mud kitchen. One student, playing alone, asked me to join her. She wanted a net, explaining it was for fishing in the river, like Aboriginal people do. Within minutes, other students joined, eager to explore Indigenous practices. They began pretending to cook and dance for Ceremony. What started as a simple play activity evolved over two weeks, with half the class participating. The children even began creating their own sounds, explaining they were speaking in an Aboriginal language.

We introduced a book on Aboriginal languages, which the students used to identify words for animals and plants in their environment. They enthusiastically incorporated Indigenous words into their play, deepening their cultural understanding. Ultimately, the students decided to name their play area "Ngunnawal Place."

This experience was a powerful reminder of the importance of inquiry-based learning. The children became the authors of their own story, building their understanding and knowledge through authentic exploration. It was incredible to witness their cultural awareness grow so naturally and meaningfully.

This moment highlights the transformative impact of child-led learning, and the power of creating spaces where students can explore and construct their own knowledge. Moments like this reaffirm the importance of fostering curiosity, respect for culture, and deep learning in the classroom.

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