

8 Aboriginal Ways of Learning Factsheet

This academic factsheet explains [8 Aboriginal Ways of Learning](#) as one view of Indigenous cultural competence and why it is important for those working with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.

How can teachers (lecturers and tutors) use Aboriginal knowledge authentically and productively with students?

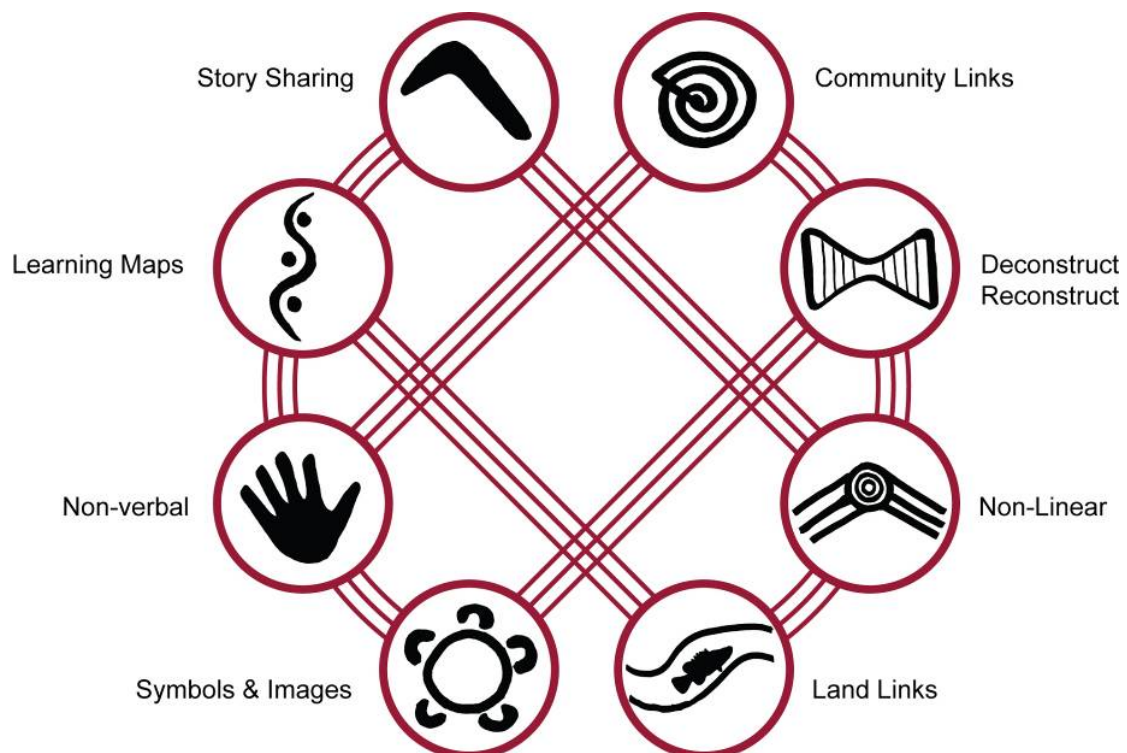
- The [8 Aboriginal Ways of Learning](#) is a pedagogy framework that allows teachers to include Aboriginal perspectives by using Aboriginal learning techniques.

Teaching through Aboriginal processes and protocols, not just Aboriginal content validates and teaches *through* Aboriginal culture and may enhance the learning for *all* students.

Common ground between mainstream and Aboriginal pedagogies:

- Learning through narrative.
- Planning and visualising explicit processes.
- Working non-verbally with self-reflective, hands-on methods.
- Learning through images, symbols and metaphors.
- Learning through place-responsive, environmental practice.
- Using indirect, innovative and interdisciplinary approaches.
- Modelling and scaffolding by working from wholes to parts.
- Connecting learning to local values, needs and knowledge

What is “8 ways” to develop Indigenous Cultural Competence?



You can see here the common ground between western and Aboriginal pedagogy:



We connect through the stories we share.

Story Sharing: *Approaching learning through narrative.*

Personal narratives (stories) are central



We picture our pathways of knowledge.

Learning Maps: *Explicitly mapping/visualising processes.*

Images or visuals are used to map out processes for learners to follow.



We see, think, act, make and share without words.

Non-verbal: *Applying intra-personal and kinaesthetic skills to thinking and learning.*

Kinaesthetic, hands-on, non-verbal learning is characteristic



We keep and share knowledge with art and objects.

Symbols and Images: *Using images and metaphors to understand concepts and content.*

Symbol, image and metaphor are central to pedagogy



We work with lessons from land and nature.

Land Links: *Place-based learning, linking content to local land and place.*

Ecological and place-based, drawn from the living landscape within a framework of profound ancestral and personal relationships with place



We put different ideas together and create new knowledge.

Non-linear: *Producing innovations and understanding by thinking laterally.*

Nonlinear ways of learning are complementary, not oppositional



We work from wholes to parts, watching and then doing.

Deconstruct/Reconstruct: *Modelling and scaffolding, working from wholes to parts.*

Begin with the whole structure, rather than a series of sequenced steps.

Holistic, global, scaffolded and independent learning orientations of students.



We bring new knowledge home to help our mob.

Community Links: *Centring local viewpoints, applying learning for community benefit.*

Connections to real-life purposes, contexts & communities, teams.

Tell a story. Make a plan. Think and do. Draw it. Take it outside. Try a new way. Watch first, then do. Share it with others.