

# Wordlist for schools and communities

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages — Resource guide



This list suggests words that could create the basis for language teaching and learning in school communities. It includes topics and themes that are both suitable for everyday use in the school community and for developing into units of work. The topics are:

- People and family
- Actions (verbs)
- Numbers
- Pronouns
- Directions
- Time
- Everyday words
- Animals and birds
- Tools, artefacts and weapons
- Landscape
- Weather
- Descriptions (adjectives)
- Parts of the body
- Greetings and introductions
- Questions and answers
- Simple phrases.

Words within each topic have been arranged based on difficulty and availability of vocabulary. The relevant level is indicated by shading in the left column: white for beginner, pale for elementary and medium for lower intermediate.

Some words have been formed after colonisation. They may differ from other words in the language. The tables containing these words have a note at the start, and the words are preceded by an asterisk (\*).

The language and associated cultural knowledge belongs to the respective groups and the authenticity and use of such knowledge should be negotiated with communities, particularly Elders and other custodians, who should be included in a school's Language Reference Group.

This list is not prescriptive. Schools are encouraged to work in partnership with their communities to incorporate words that are contextualised to their community setting and reflect the language of country, including the local landscape and features of the environment.

## People and family

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
<b>Beginner</b>	Mother		
	Father		
	Boy		
	Girl		
	Man		
	Woman		
<b>Elementary</b>	Sister (generic word)		
	Brother (generic word)		
	Old man		
	Old woman		
	Grandfather (generic word)		
	Grandmother (generic word)		
	Aunt (generic word)		
	Uncle (generic word)		
	Child		
	Children		
	White man		
	White woman		
	Poor fellow		
	<b>Lower intermediate</b>	Son	
Daughter			
Young man			
Young woman			
Grandfather (father's father)			
Grandfather (mother's father)			
Grandmother (mother's mother)			
Grandmother (father's mother)			
Older sister			
Younger sister			
Older brother			
Younger brother			
Aunt (mother's sister)			
Aunt (father's sister)			
Uncle (mother's brother)			
Uncle (father's brother)			

## Actions (verbs)

Students may begin with verbs in their infinitive form. As students progress, it is important for them to understand different verb forms, e.g. those indicating tense. Some verbs will also be useful in their imperative form in the classroom; prompts are given for these in the table below.

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
Beginner	<b>Look</b>		
	To look (infinitive)		
	Look! (imperative)		
	<b>Listen</b>		
	To listen (infinitive)		
	Listen! (imperative)		
	<b>Speak</b> <i>Note:</i> There may be separate or distinct word/s referring to speaking language.		
	To speak (infinitive)		
	Speak! (imperative)		
Elementary	<b>Come</b>		
	To come (infinitive)		
	Come here! (imperative)		
	<b>Go</b>		
	To go (infinitive)		
	Go away! (imperative)		
	<b>Walk</b>		
	To walk (infinitive)		
	Walk! (imperative)		
	<b>Run</b>		
	To run (infinitive)		
	Run! (imperative)		
	<b>Stand up</b>		
	To stand up (infinitive)		
	Stand up! (imperative)		
	<b>Sit down</b>		
	To sit down (infinitive)		
	Sit down! (imperative)		
<b>Pick up</b>			
To pick up (infinitive)			
Pick up! (imperative)			

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
Elementary	<b>Put down</b>		
	To put down (infinitive)		
	Put down! (imperative)		
	<b>Give</b>		
	To give (infinitive)		
	<b>Eat</b>		
	To eat (infinitive)		
	<b>Drink</b>		
To drink (infinitive)			
Lower intermediate	<b>Dance</b>		
	To dance (infinitive)		
	Dance! (imperative)		
	<b>Sing</b>		
	To sing (infinitive)		
	Sing! (imperative)		
	<b>Swim</b>		
	To swim (infinitive)		
	<b>Hop</b>		
	To hop (infinitive)		
	<b>Hit</b>		
	To hit (infinitive)		
	<b>Fly</b>		
	To fly (infinitive)		
	<b>Sleep</b>		
	To sleep (infinitive)		

## Numbers

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
	One		
	Many		
	Two		
	Five		
	Three		
	Four		
	None		

## Pronouns

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
<b>Beginner</b>	I		
	You (one person)		
	He		
	She		
<b>Elementary</b>	We (you and me — two people only)		
	You (two people)		
	You (more than two people)		
<b>Lower intermediate</b>	Me		
	My		
	Mine		
	Your		
	They		
	We (you and two people)		
	We (you and more than two people)		

## Directions

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
	To		
	From		
	Towards		
	Away		
<b>Lower intermediate</b>	East		
	West		
	North		
	South		
	Right		
	Left		

## Time

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
	Day		
	Night		

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
Elementary	Morning		
	Afternoon		
	Sunrise		
	Sunset		
Lower intermediate	Today		
	Tomorrow		
	Yesterday		
	Long time ago		
	Soon / By and by		
	Now		

## Everyday words

Words preceded by an asterisk (\*) are words that have been formed after colonisation. They may differ from other words in the language, as they may be based on pronunciation of a word from another language.

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
Beginner	Water		
	Food		
	* Bread		
	* Money		
	* House		
Elementary	Fire		
	Camp		
	Meat		
	Plant food / Bush tucker		
	* Policeman		
Lower intermediate	Door		
	Pen		
	Book		
	* Paper		
	* Coffee		
	* Tea		
	* Milk		
	* Sugar		
	* Shoes		
* Clothes			

## Animals and birds

Words preceded by an asterisk (\*) are words that have been formed after colonialisation. They may differ from other words in the language, as they may be based on pronunciation of a word from another language.

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
<b>Beginner</b>	Bird (generic word)		
	Kangaroo		
	Snake (generic word)		
	* Sheep		
	* Horse		
	* Cow		
	* Dog		
<b>Elementary</b>	Fish (generic word)		
	Crow		
	Emu		
	Dingo		
	* Cat		
<b>Lower intermediate</b>	Possum		
	Wallaby		
	Fly		
	Bee		
	Mosquito		
	Ant		
	Lizard (generic word)		
	Brolga		
	Crayfish		
	Eagle		

## Tools, artefacts and weapons

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
<b>Beginner</b>	Spear (generic word)		
	Boomerang		
	Stone axe		
<b>Elementary</b>	Nulla nulla / Club		
	Digging stick		
	Bag / Dilly bag		
	Fire stick		

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
Lower intermediate	Spear (fishing)		
	Spear (hunting)		
	Spear-thrower		
	Shield		
	Knife		
	Grinding stone		
	Coolamon		
	Canoe		
	Billy / Billycan		
	Net		

## Landscape

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
Beginner	Ground		
	Stone		
	Rock		
	Sand		
	Beach		
	Creek		
Elementary	River		
	Waterhole		
	River bank		
	Sea		
	Sky		
	Moon		
	Sun		
	Star		
Cloud/s			
Lower intermediate	Hill		
	Ridge		
	Mountain		
	Mangroves		
	Island		
	Dust		
Mud			



## Weather

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
	Rain		
	Wind		
Elementary	Thunder		
	Lightning		
	Storm		
	Hail		
	Sunshine		
	Cloudy		
Lower intermediate	Windy		
	Rainbow		
	Wet season		
	Dry season		
	Fog / Mist		
	Whirlwind		
	Frost		
	Flood		
	Dust storm		

## Descriptions (adjectives)

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
Beginner	Hot		
	Cold		
	Good		
	Bad		
Elementary	Short		
	Tall		
	Big		
	Small		
	Black		
	White		
	Deaf		
	Blind		

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
Lower intermediate	Happy		
	Sad		
	Tired		
	Hungry		
	Sore		
	Clever		
	Flash		
	Cheeky / Bold		
	Good-looking		
	Dead		

## Parts of the body

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
Beginner	Ear/s		
	Eye/s		
	Nose		
	Hand		
	Foot		
Elementary	Head		
	Hair		
	Mouth		
	Arm		
	Leg		
	Stomach		
Lower intermediate	Finger/s		
	Toe/s		
	Shoulder/s		
	Knee		
	Ankle		
	Wrist		
	Tongue		
	Neck		
	Chest		

## Greetings and introductions

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
	Hello		
	Goodbye		
	I am ...		
	You are ...		
	Who are you?		
	How are you?		

## Questions and answers

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
<b>Beginner</b>	Yes		
	No		
	What?		
<b>Elementary</b>	Who?		
	Which?		
	When?		
	Where?		
	Why?		
	How?		
<b>Lower intermediate</b>	I don't know		
	Who is that woman?		
	Who is that man?		
	What are you doing?		
	Where do you live?		
	When is he/she going away?		

## Simple phrases

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
<b>Beginner</b>	This is ...		
	That is ...		
	I am ...		
	You are ...		
	What is this?		
	What is that?		
	Who are you?		

	English word	Language word	Pronunciation
	Are you good?		
	Who is she/he?		
Lower intermediate	I come/came from ... (place)		
	I am going to ... (place)		
	I went to ... (place)		
	I will eat the ...		
	Where are you going?		

## More information

Please email [langtrial@qsa.qld.edu.au](mailto:langtrial@qsa.qld.edu.au), phone (07) 3864 0310 or visit the QSA website <[www.qsa.qld.edu.au](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au)> and search for “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages”.