

AUSTRALIANS TOGETHER EDUCATION

Teacher Awareness and
Engagement Report 2016



mccrindle
FORECASTS • STRATEGY • RESEARCH

CONTENTS

Contents.....	2
Research objectives	3
Research methodology.....	3
Executive summary.....	4
Results.....	6
Teacher characteristics.....	6
State.....	6
School association or sector.....	7
Teacher year level.....	7
Teacher role.....	8
World view and culture	8
Teacher understanding of world view and culture.....	8
Integration of authentic content in curriculum.....	9
Cross curriculum priorities.....	10
Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.....	11
Understanding and respect to promote reconciliation.....	12
Culture of shared beliefs.....	13
Awareness and engagement.....	14
Authentic history and culture of local Indigenous peoples.....	14
Actions taken to facilitate connection with Indigenous people.....	15
Student engagement with Indigenous people.....	17
Student articulation of understanding of Indigenous culture.....	18
Student articulation of colonisation from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective.....	19
Professional learning areas.....	20
Access to professional learning opportunities.....	22

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

In August 2016, Australians Together commissioned McCrindle Research to conduct a study of teachers and their confidence levels in using the Australian curriculum that relates to Australia's Indigenous history.

The key objectives of this research are to better understand how teachers engage with the Indigenous curriculum across the following areas:

- Understanding and awareness of Indigenous Australian history
- Ability to effectively communicate Indigenous Australian history in an authentic way
- Awareness of student's interaction with Indigenous Australians
- Identifying areas of growth for teachers, where Australians Together could resource more effectively.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The **Teacher Awareness and Engagement Report 2016** is the collation of data that was conducted through the development of a quantitative survey launched to staff members in selected schooling sectors or associations in Australia

Adventist Schools Australia (ASA)
Anglican
Anglican Schools Corporation
Associated Christian Schools (ACS)
Australian Association of Christian Schools (AACCS)
Catholic
Christian Education National (CEN)
Christian Schools Australia (CSA)
Government
Lutheran

The online survey was in field from 24th August to 24th October 2016, with 394 started responses, and 331 fully completed responses.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Only 23% of respondents are extremely or very confident in their understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander worldviews and culture.

A further two in five respondents (40%) indicated they have a thorough or good understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people which enables them to promote reconciliation. Despite there being overall low levels of understanding and confidence, respondents indicated a desire to further understand Indigenous culture, to enable them to better connect with their students, and authentically integrate cultural awareness into the school environment in which they work.

There is a desire among respondents to gain greater skills in the authentic inclusion of Indigenous culture in the classroom.

34% of respondents struggle or don't know how to include authentic required content in their relevant curriculum. This was identified as a desired area of professional learning for respondents to learn 'how to incorporate indigenous culture in programs authentically'.

Two in five respondents (40%) indicated they have limited or no knowledge of the authentic history and culture of their local Indigenous peoples.

Respondents desire greater understanding and knowledge of the authentic history and culture of their local Indigenous peoples. The concept of understanding local Indigenous culture was repeatedly identified as a desired area for professional learning. Teachers are eager to understand the local Indigenous history, and where possible, develop links with the local Indigenous community.

Half of respondents (50%) know who identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in their school.

This is one of the top three actions taken by respondents to facilitate connection with Indigenous people as part of their students' school experience, followed by school excursions (27%), and Indigenous guest speakers (27%). Early years (F-2) and Primary (3-6/7) teachers (39%) were more likely to facilitate school excursions for their students to learn more about the Indigenous culture than Middle years (7-10) (17%) and Senior Secondary (11-12) (15%) teachers.

More than half of respondents (57%) indicated their students have a limited ability or are unable to articulate their understanding of the Indigenous culture of their school region.

Senior Secondary (11-12) and Middle years (7-10) teachers (63% and 61%) are more likely to indicate their students have limited ability or are unable to articulate their understanding of the Indigenous culture of their school region than Early years (F-2) (56%) and Primary (3-6/7) teachers (48%).

Just 1% of respondents indicated their students can clearly articulate their understanding of Australian colonisation from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective.

Two in five respondents (40%) indicated their students have a limited ability or are unable to articulate their understanding of Australian colonisation from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective. Primary (3-6/7) teachers (30%) are the most likely to indicate their students have a reasonable ability to articulate their understanding of Australian colonisations from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective (cf. 17% Middle years (7-10), 16% Early Years (F-2), and 15% Senior Secondary (11-12)).

There is a desire for teaching resources that have an Indigenous perspective.

Respondents indicated they want greater accessibility to resources that display an Indigenous perspective to assist them in their teaching. One participant said these resources could include 'balanced material that frames history fairly and compassionately, showing perspectives and 'voices'.

Face to face workshops are the preferred method for professional learning opportunities.

72% of respondents indicated their preference would be to access professional learning opportunities through face to face workshops, a further 56% of respondents indicated their preference would be through online resources or interactive cultural awareness opportunities.

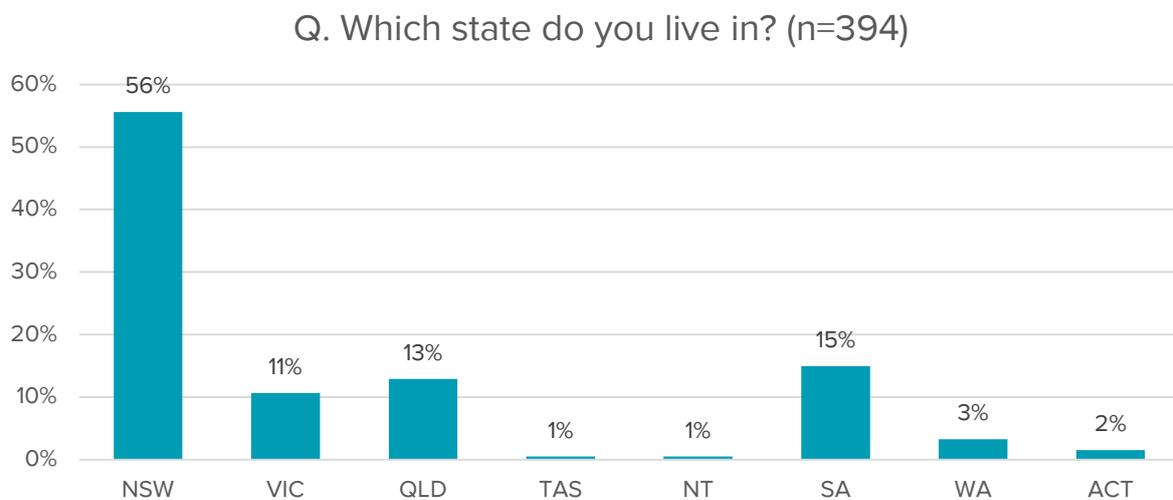
Overall Primary (3-6/7) teachers are the most confident in their student's ability to articulate their understanding of both the Indigenous culture of their school region, and their understanding of Australian colonisation from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective. Primary teachers are also the most confident at including authentic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cross Curriculum priorities of the Australian Curriculum in their year or subject area.

RESULTS

TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS

The purpose of this study is to develop a greater understanding of teacher's confidence levels, awareness of Indigenous Australian history, and to identify areas of growth. The following section outlines the characteristics of the teachers surveyed.

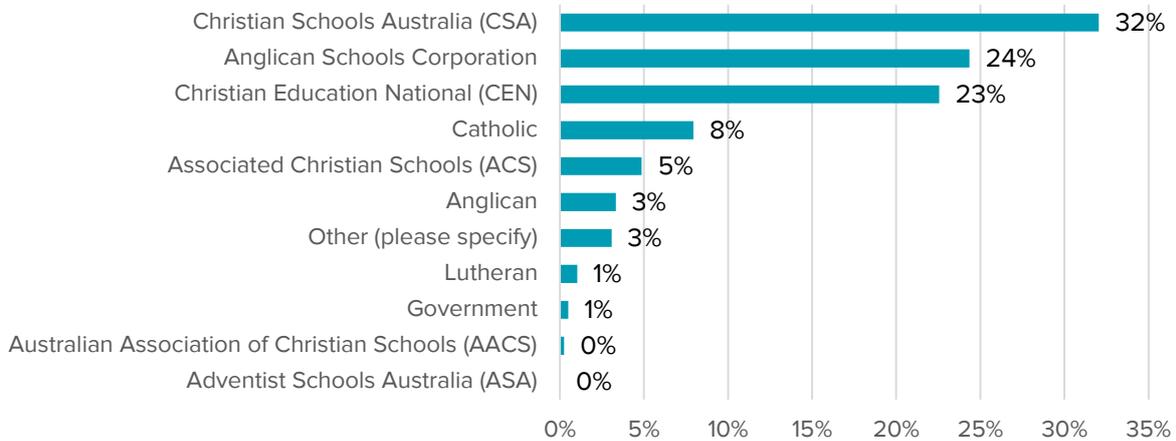
State



The majority of respondents were from **New South Wales** (56%), followed by 15% from **South Australia**, a further 13% from **Queensland**, and 11% from **Victoria**. Less than 7% of respondents were from **Western Australia**, **Australian Capital Territory**, **Northern Territory** and **Tasmania**.

School association or sector

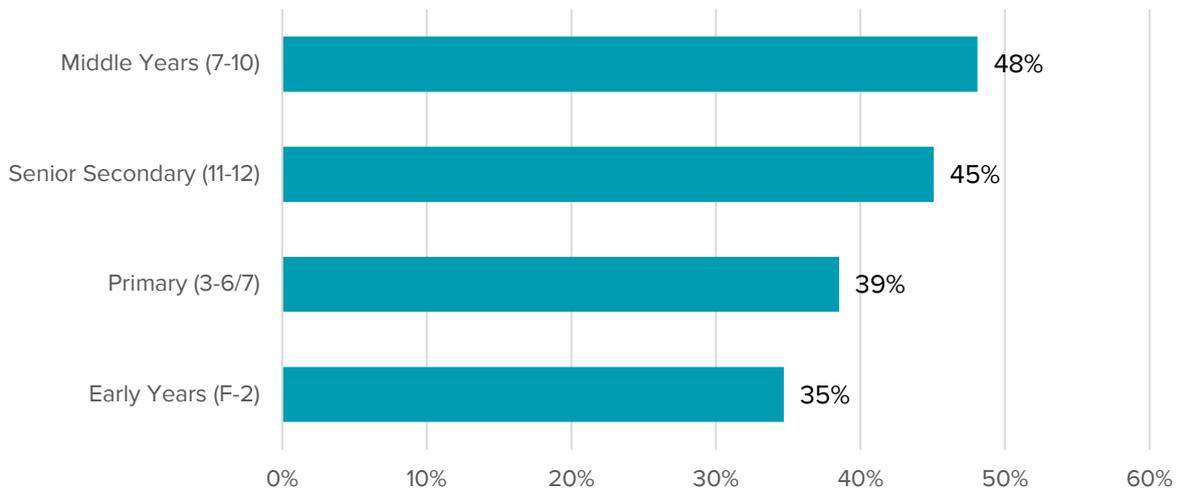
Q. To which association or sector is your school connected? (n=390)



The majority of respondents (32%) were connected to **Christian Schools Australia (CSA)**, followed by **Anglican Schools Corporation** (24%), and **Christian Education National** (23%). The remaining associations or sectors represented less than 10% of respondents each.

Teacher year level

Q. What year level do you teach? (n=366)



Nearly half of respondents (48%) taught the **Middle years** of school (7-10) and a further 45% taught the **Senior Secondary** (11-12) years. Nearly two in five respondents (39%) were involved in teaching **Primary** age (3-6/7), and 35% of respondents taught **Early years** (F-2).

Teacher role

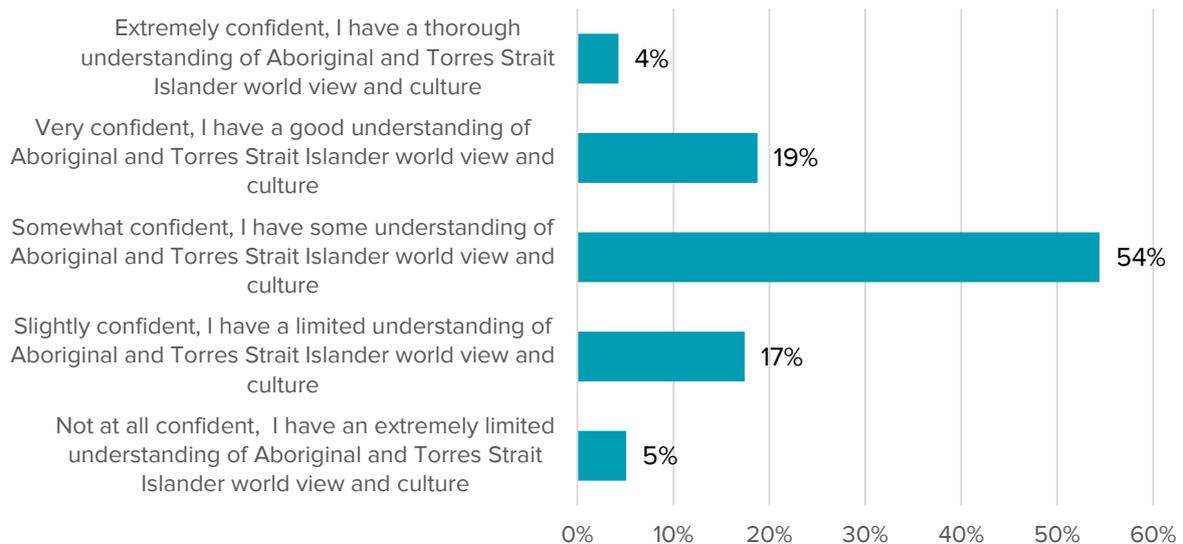
Q. What is your role within the school?

The majority of respondents were **teachers** (254), a further 35 were **executives** and 28 were **principals or deputy principals**. 21 respondents were involved in **learning support** in the school they work in and 39 indicated that they fulfilled a range of other roles in their school.

WORLD VIEW AND CULTURE

Teacher understanding of world view and culture

Q. How confident are you in your understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander world view and culture? (n=373)

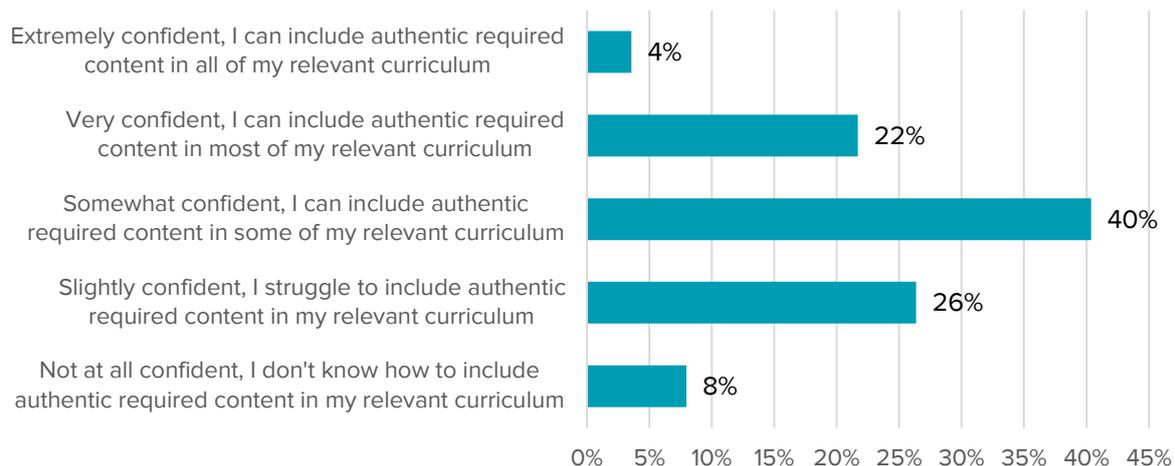


Nearly one in four respondents (23%) indicated they are **extremely** or **very confident** in their understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander world view and culture. More than half of respondents (54%) are **somewhat confident**, and just over one in six (17%) are **slightly confident** in their understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander world view and culture.

Only 5% stated they are **not at all confident**, with an extremely limited understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander world view and culture.

Integration of authentic content in curriculum

Q. How confident are you at including authentic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander required content in your curriculum that meets the Australian Curriculum in your state or territory? (n=364)



Over a quarter of respondents (26%) stated they are confident at including authentic required content in **all** or **most** of their relevant curriculum. A further two in five respondents (40%) indicated they felt confident at including authentic required content in **some** of their relevant curriculum, whilst over one in four (26%) **struggle** to include authentic required content in their relevant curriculum.

Nearly one in ten respondents (8%) stated they **did not know** how to include authentic required content in their relevant curriculum.

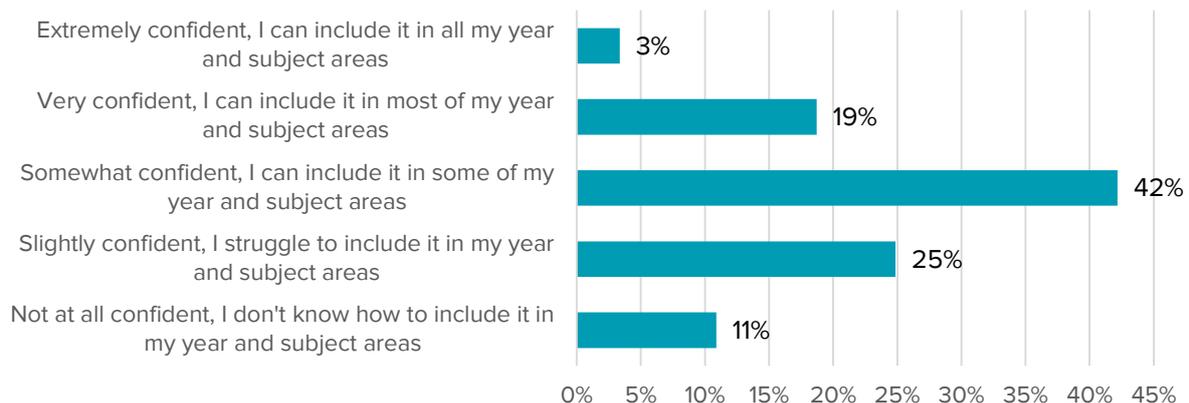
Teacher Insights

Primary (3-6/7) and **Early years (F-2) teachers** are the most likely to indicate they are somewhat confident (46%) at including authentic required content in some of their relevant curriculum (cf. 28% **Middle years (7-10)** and 30% **Senior Secondary (11-12)**).

Senior Secondary teachers (11-12) (11%) are more likely to indicate they are not at all confident, and they don't know how to include authentic required content in their relevant curriculum (cf. 10% **Middle years (7-10)**, 6% **Early years (F-2)**, and 3% **Primary years (3-6/7)**).

Cross curriculum priorities

Q. How confident are you in including authentic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cross Curriculum Priorities of the Australian Curriculum in your year or subject areas? (n=358)



Just 3% of respondents indicated they are **extremely confident** they could include authentic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cross curriculum priorities of the Australian Curriculum in all their year or subject area. 19% are **very confident**, and 42% are **somewhat confident** they could include it in some of their year and subject areas.

More than one in three respondents (36%) indicated they are **slightly** or **not at all confident**, they struggled or did not know how to include authentic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cross curriculum priorities of the Australian Curriculum in their year or subject areas.

Teacher Insights

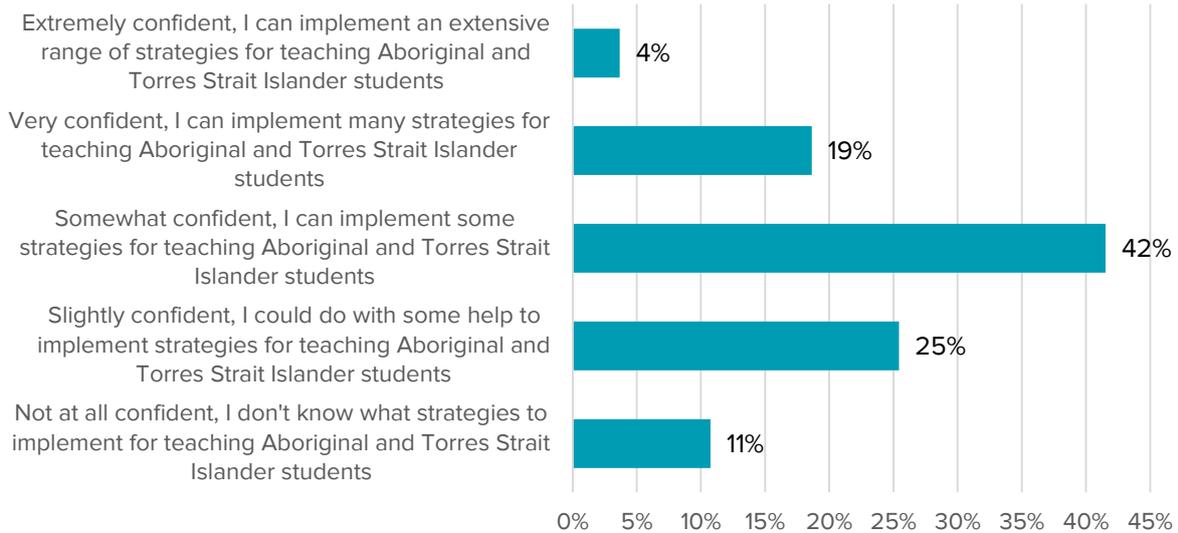
Primary (3-6/7) teachers are most likely to indicate they are extremely or very confident (27%) at including authentic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cross Curriculum priorities of the Australian Curriculum in their year or subject area.

Middle years (7-10) and **Senior Secondary (11-12)** (45% and 44% respectively) are more likely to indicate they are slightly confident or not at all confident (cf. 27% **Primary (3-6/7)** and **Early years (F-2)**).

Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

Q. Do you feel confident in meeting the AITSL Standard 1.4? (n=354)

Focus Area 1.4: Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students



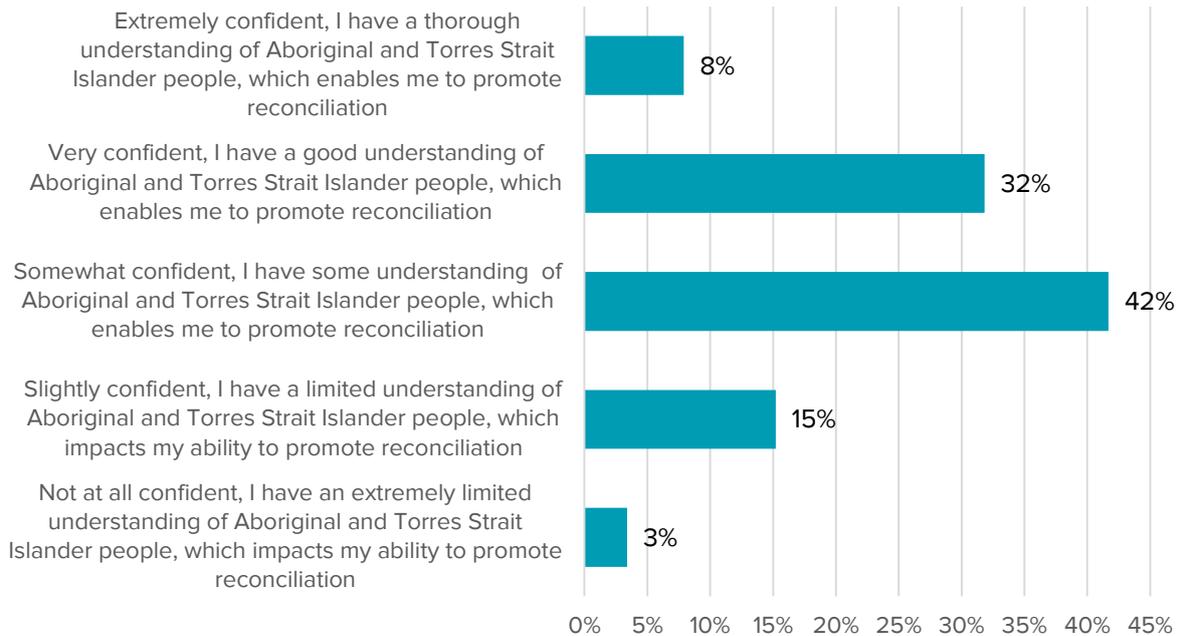
One quarter of respondents (25%) indicated they are **extremely or very confident** in their ability to implement strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Two in five respondents (42%) stated they are **somewhat confident** in their ability to implement some strategies, whilst a further 25% are **slightly confident** and indicated they could do with some help to implement strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Just over one in ten respondents (11%) indicated they are **not at all confident** and did not know what strategies to implement for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Understanding and respect to promote reconciliation

Q. Do you feel confident in meeting the AITSL Standard 2.4? (n=355)

Focus Area 2.4: Understand and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non Indigenous Australians



Two in five respondents (40%) indicated they are **extremely or very confident** in their understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, which enables them to promote reconciliation. A further two in five respondents (42%) indicated they are **somewhat confident**, with some understanding that enables them to promote reconciliation.

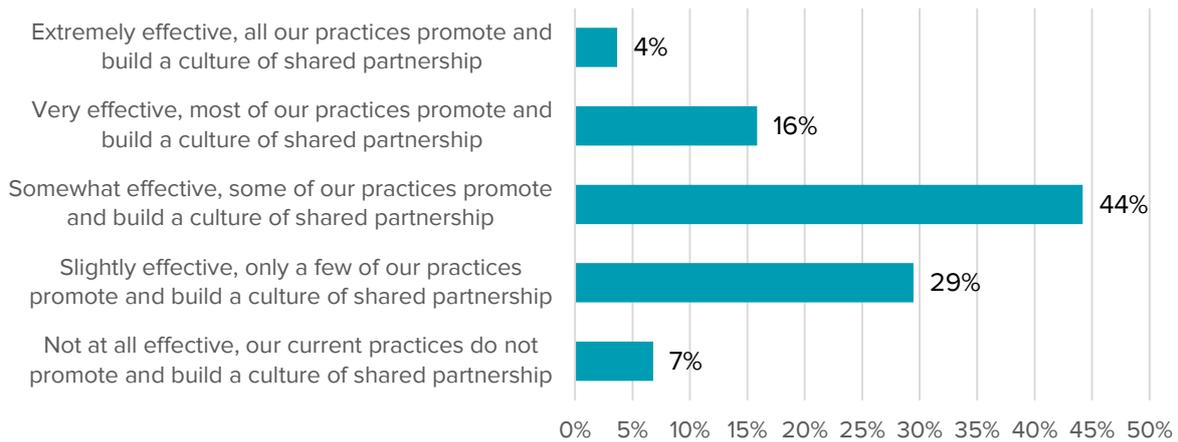
Nearly one in five (18%) indicated they are **slightly or not at all confident** with a limited or extremely limited understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people which impacts their ability to promote reconciliation.

Teacher Insights

Early years (F-2) teachers (33%) are the least likely to indicate they are extremely or very confident in their understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, which enables them to promote reconciliation (cf. 44% Primary (3-6/7), 43% Middle years (7-10), and Senior Secondary (41%).

Culture of shared beliefs

Q. How effectively does your school curriculum, assessment and pedagogical practice reflect a culture of shared partnership between Indigenous and non Indigenous Australians? (n=353)



One in five respondents (20%) indicated their practices are **extremely** or **very effective** at building a culture of shared partnership between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Nearly half of respondents (44%) indicated their practices are **somewhat effective**, whilst one in three (29%) indicated that their practices are only **slightly effective** at building a culture of shared partnership.

Just 7% stated that their current practices are **not at all effective** and did not promote and build a culture of shared partnership.

AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT

Authentic history and culture of local Indigenous peoples

Q. How aware are you of the authentic history and culture of your local Indigenous peoples? (n=354)



Nearly one in four respondents (23%) stated they are **extremely or very aware** of the authentic history and culture of their local Indigenous peoples. Nearly two in five respondents (37%) indicated they are **somewhat aware**, with some knowledge of the authentic history and culture of their local Indigenous peoples.

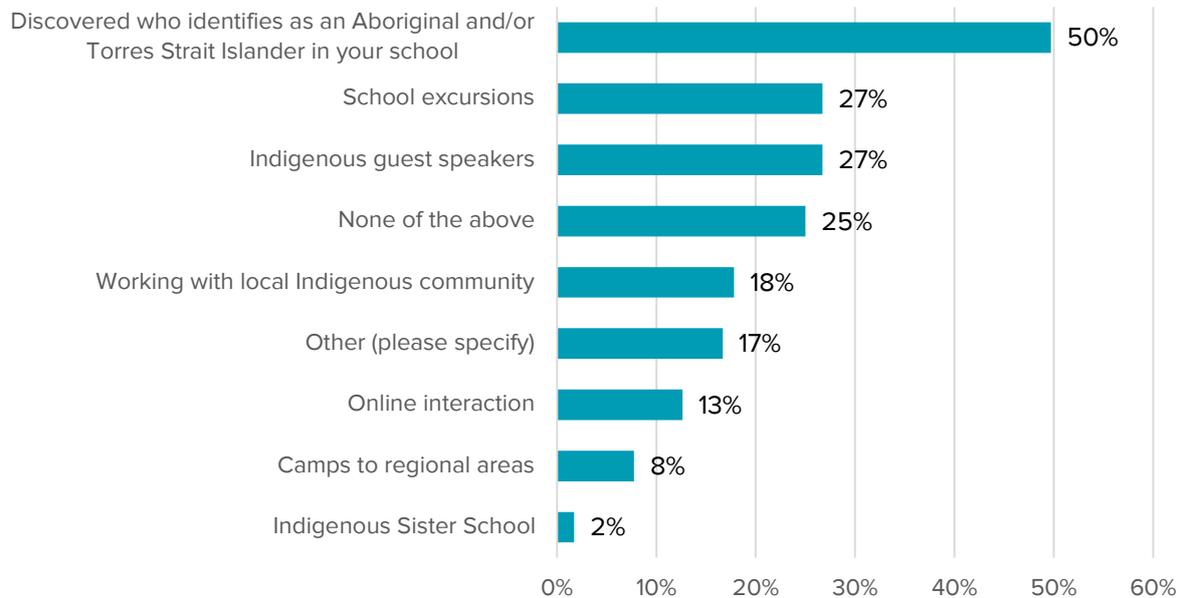
A further two in five respondents (40%) indicated they are only **slightly aware or very unaware**, with limited or no knowledge of the authentic history and culture of their local Indigenous peoples.

Teacher Insights

Nearly half of **Senior Secondary (11-12) teachers** (48%) indicated they are slightly unaware or very unaware, with limited or no knowledge of the authentic history and culture of their local Indigenous peoples. This is followed by 44% of **Middle years (7-10) teachers**, 38% of **Early years (F-2) teachers** and 32% of **Primary (3-6/7) teachers**.

Actions taken to facilitate connection with Indigenous people

Q. What have you done in the last twelve months to facilitate connection with Indigenous people as part of your students' school experience? (n=348)



In the last twelve months the top three actions taken by teachers to facilitate a connection with Indigenous people as part of their students' school experience are:

- **discovered who identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in their school (50%)**
- **school excursions (27%)**
- **Indigenous guest speakers (27%).**

17% of respondents indicated **other**, there were a range of approaches taken which included:

Written programs to include a connection to indigenous culture.

Adopted an elder.

I have been attempting to use local Biripi language in class.

Teacher Insights

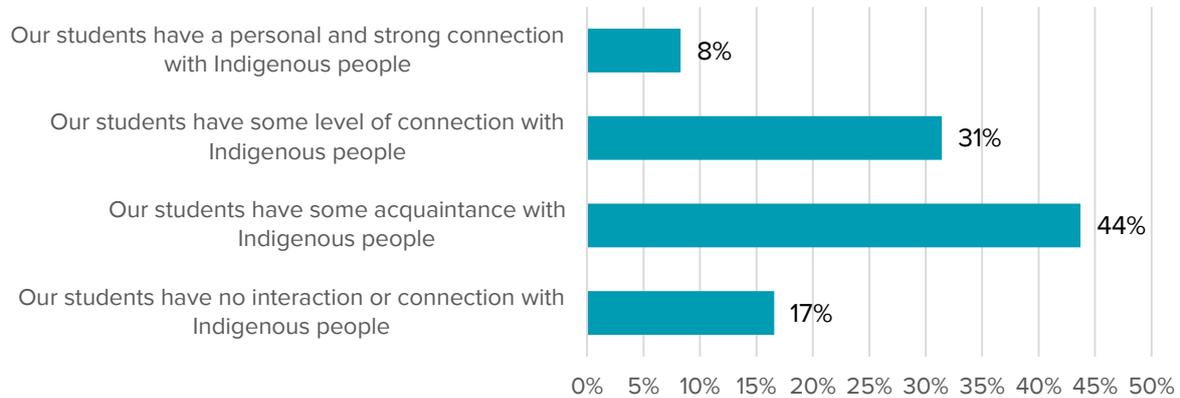
Early years (F-2) and **Primary (3-6/7) teachers** (39%) are more likely to facilitate school excursions for their students than **Middle years (7-10)** and **Senior Secondary (11-12) teachers** (cf. 17% and 15% respectively).

Early years (F-2) teachers are twice as likely as **Middle years (7-10)** and **Senior Secondary (11-12) teachers** to facilitate online interaction for their students (20% cf. 10%).

What have you done in the last twelve months to facilitate connection with Indigenous people as part of your students' school experience	Early Years (F-2)	Primary (3-6/7)	Middle Years (7-10)	Senior Secondary (11-12)
Camps to regional areas	7%	7%	9%	7%
School excursions	39%	39%	17%	15%
Online interaction	20%	16%	10%	10%
Indigenous Sister School	3%	2%	1%	3%
Working with local Indigenous community	21%	19%	18%	15%
Indigenous guest speakers	31%	31%	27%	23%
Discovered who identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in your school	58%	52%	47%	47%
Other	13%	14%	18%	15%
None of the above	18%	17%	31%	33%

Student engagement with Indigenous people

Q. To what extent do you feel your students engage with Indigenous people as part of their school experience?
(n=350)

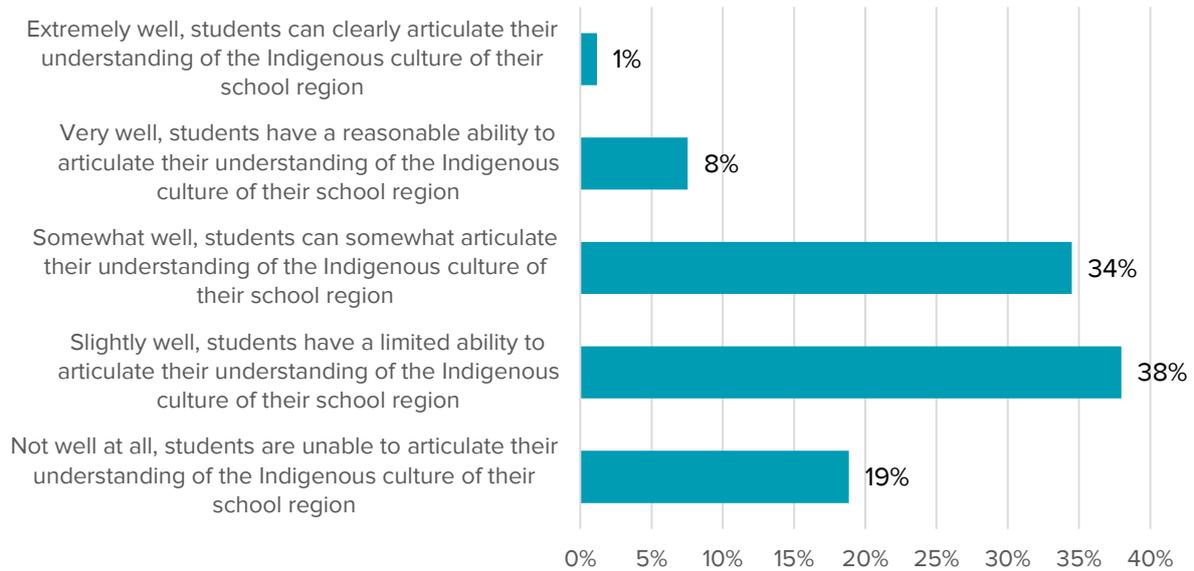


Nearly one in ten respondents (8%) stated their students have a **personal and strong connection** with Indigenous people, whilst nearly one in three respondents (31%) stated their students have **some level of connection**. The majority of respondents (44%) however indicated their students have **some acquaintance** with Indigenous people.

A further 17% of respondents indicated their students have **no interaction or connection** with Indigenous people.

Student articulation of understanding of Indigenous culture

Q. How well do you believe your students can articulate their understanding of the Indigenous culture of their school region? (n=345)



Just 1% of respondents indicated that their students can **clearly articulate** their understanding of the Indigenous culture of their school region, whilst 8% of respondents indicated their students have a **reasonable ability to articulate** their understanding. One in three respondents (34%) indicated their students can **somewhat articulate** their understanding of the Indigenous culture of their school region.

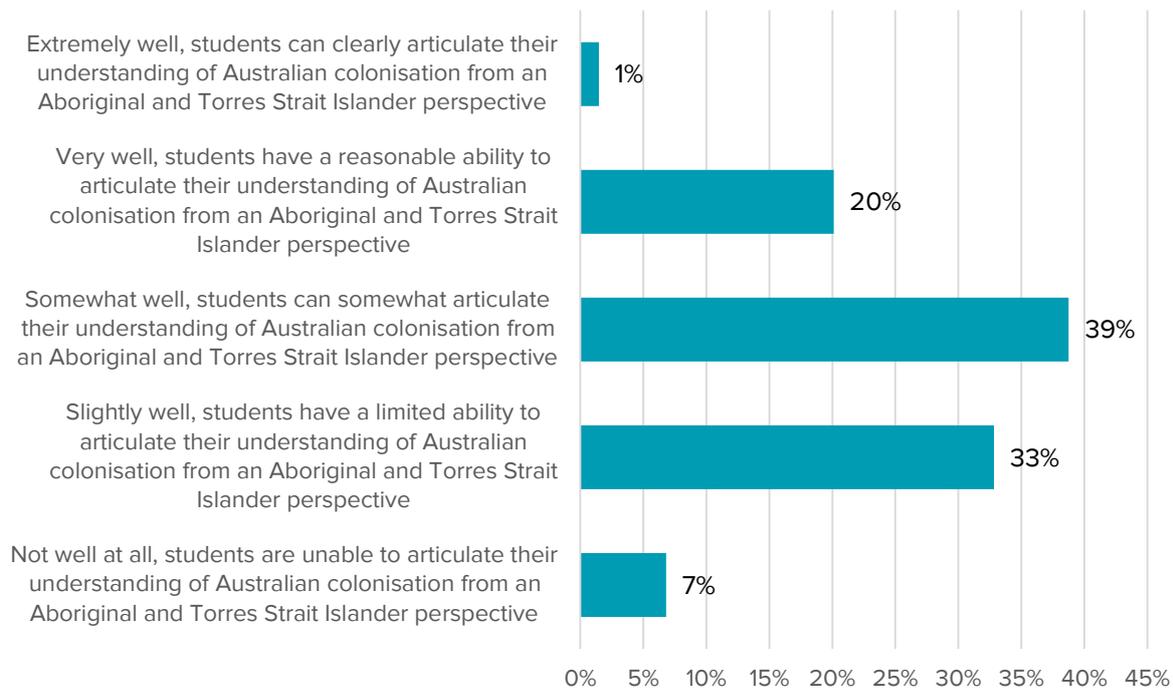
Nevertheless, more than half of respondents (57%) indicated their students have a **limited ability** or are **unable to articulate** their understanding of the Indigenous culture of their school region.

Teacher Insights

Two in three **Senior Secondary (11-12)** and **Middle years (7-10)** teachers (63% and 61%) indicated their students have limited ability or are unable to articulate their understanding of the Indigenous culture of their school region (cf. 56% of **Early years (F-2)** and 48% of **Primary (3-6/7)**).

Student articulation of colonisation from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective

Q. How well do you believe your students can articulate their understanding of Australian colonisation from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective? (n=338)



Just 1% of respondents indicated their students can **clearly articulate** their understanding of Australian colonisation from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective. One in five respondents (20%) indicated their students have a **reasonable ability** to articulate their understanding, whilst nearly two in five respondents (39%) indicated their students can **somewhat articulate** their understanding.

Two in five respondents (40%) indicated their students have a **limited ability** or are **unable to articulate** their understanding of Australian colonisation from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective.

Teacher Insights

Primary (3-6/7) teachers (30%) are the most likely to indicate their students have a reasonable ability to articulate their understanding of Australian colonisation from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective (cf. 17% **Middle years (7-10)**, 16% **Early Years (F-2)**, and 15% **Senior Secondary (11-12)**).

Professional learning areas

Q. In which areas would you most want professional learning opportunities in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders curriculum, teaching and learning?

Guidance on authentic inclusion of Indigenous culture in the classroom

There is a desire among respondents to gain greater skills in the authentic inclusion of Indigenous culture in the classroom. That the action is well thought through, promotes Indigenous culture and is not simply a token action. Where possible the development of practical strategies would be most helpful.

How to incorporate Indigenous culture in programs authentically.

Strategies to use in the classroom for integrating their culture.

Authentic and meaningful ways to integrate things into teaching (not just "tack ons").

Greater knowledge of supporting teaching/learning practices

Respondents desire further training on practical strategies that incorporate Indigenous culture/perspective in learning. Also, teaching strategies that help to engage Indigenous students in the classroom.

Teaching strategies for teaching Indigenous students.

Strategies to include their culture/perspective in most areas of learning.

Greater understanding of local Indigenous culture

The concept of understanding local Indigenous culture was repeatedly identified as a desired area of professional learning. Respondents are eager to understand the local Indigenous history, and where possible develop links with the local Indigenous community. These links may provide opportunities for excursions, and mutual learning interactions between Indigenous Australians and students.

Knowledge of authentic local culture and history of Indigenous peoples.

Developing links with local Indigenous community.

Local people teaching us about local culture.

Excursion to local Aboriginal sites with local guides.

More interaction with our local Indigenous people.

Resources from an Indigenous perspective

Respondents indicated a desire to gain a better understanding of the perspectives of Indigenous Australians. Further to this, they want increased access to resources that display an Indigenous perspective to assist them in their teaching.

Engagement and understanding more fully 'how' our Indigenous students view Reconciliation.

Finding resources to support teaching of colonisation from an Indigenous perspective.

Balanced material that frames history fairly and compassionately, showing perspectives and 'voices'.

Increased cultural awareness and understanding

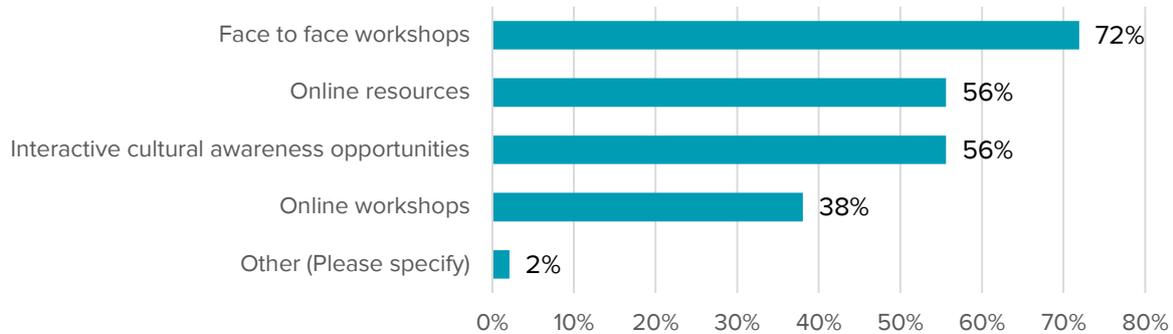
Respondents indicated a desire to further understand Indigenous culture, to enable them to better connect with their students, and authentically integrate cultural awareness into the school environment.

Connection between dreaming, country and identity.

Greater knowledge of culture.

Access to professional learning opportunities

Q. How would you best like to access professional learning opportunities? (n=331)



The majority of respondents (72%) indicated their preference would be to access professional learning opportunities through **face to face workshops**. More than half (56%) indicated their preference would be to access these through **online resources** or **interactive cultural awareness opportunities**. Nearly two in five (38%) indicated they would like to access professional learning opportunities through **online workshops**.

Teacher Insights

A higher proportion of **Primary (3-6/7) teachers** (79%) indicated their preference for access to professional learning opportunities would be face to face workshops (cf. 74% **Early years (F-2)**, 72% **Middle years**, and 68% **Senior Secondary** (11-12)).

How would you best like to access professional learning opportunities?	Early years (F-2)	Primary (3-6/7)	Middle years (7-10)	Senior Secondary (11-12)
Online resources	58%	58%	57%	55%
Online workshops	44%	38%	38%	39%
Face to face workshops	74%	79%	72%	68%
Interactive cultural awareness opportunities	54%	59%	57%	52%
Other (please specify)	2%	2%	2%	2%

mccrindle

FORECASTS • STRATEGY • RESEARCH

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

T +61 2 8824 3422
E info@mccrindle.com.au
W mccrindle.com.au

For more great content and research resources please visit our blog:



blog.mccrindle.com.au



[twitter.com/
MarkMcCrindle](https://twitter.com/MarkMcCrindle)



[youtube.com/user/
mccrindleresearch](https://youtube.com/user/mccrindleresearch)



[facebook.com/
mccrindleresearch](https://facebook.com/mccrindleresearch)



[linkedin.com/company/
mccrindle-research](https://linkedin.com/company/mccrindle-research)