

The background is a light beige color with various stylized food illustrations. In the top left, there is a white flower with an orange center. In the top center, there is a green circular shape with five small green circles inside. In the top right, there is a green leaf. In the middle left, there are two green leaves. In the bottom left, there is a slice of watermelon with a green rind and red flesh with black seeds. In the bottom center, there are two green leaves. In the bottom right, there is a slice of orange with a green rind and orange flesh, and a red bell pepper with a green stem. There are also some small brown shapes in the bottom right corner.

Year 10

Aboriginal Cultural Food Considerations

10 FTE

FOOD TECHNOLOGY





LEARNING INTENTIONS AND OUTCOMES

Stage 5 Syllabus Outcomes:

- FT5-7: Investigates the relationship between food, technology, and society.
- FT5-8: Applies food preparation skills to design, produce and evaluate solutions.
- FT5-12: Assesses influences on food choices and attitudes toward food.

Learning Intentions

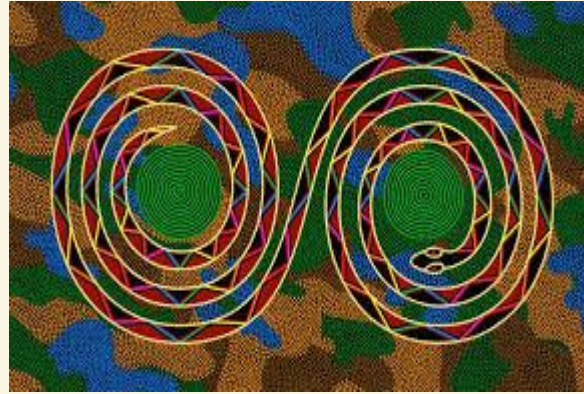
By the end of this lesson, students will:

- Understand the cultural significance of food in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
 - Explore how The Dreaming, totems, and lore shape food practices.
 - Appreciate the value of Indigenous food customs in modern food technology
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Kahoot

Please launch Kahoot



LINK: <https://kahoot.it/>



What is the Dreaming?

The Dreaming – Aboriginal Spiritual Beliefs and Food

- The Dreaming is a spiritual belief system that explains how the world, people, animals, and plants were created by ancestral spirits.
- Many traditional foods are believed to have spiritual origins—some are thought to be ancestors transformed into food
- The Dreaming provides rules and laws for how food should be:
 - Collected (who can gather it)
 - Prepared (how it is cooked)
 - Eaten (who can eat it and when)
- These rules differ between language groups and regions, based on their local Dreaming stories.
- Following these food rules shows respect for culture, ancestors, and the land.




What are Beliefs & Customs?

Beliefs are the stories, ideas, and understandings that help Aboriginal people make sense of the world around them. These beliefs guide how they live, connect to the land, and care for each other.


Example:

Aboriginal people believe in The Dreaming, a special time when ancestral spirits created the land, animals, plants, and people.

 For example, honey ants are believed to be ancestral spirits in another form. Some people are spiritually connected to these animals (called totems) and are not allowed to eat them.

Customs are the traditional ways people behave and do things. In Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, customs include rules about food, ceremonies, family roles, and how people connect with the land and each other.

Example:

 In traditional times, food was shared during special occasions and followed strict rules:

- People could not eat their totem animal or plant, except during certain ceremonies. Children and pregnant women were not allowed to eat some foods for cultural reasons.
- Some foods could only be eaten at certain times of the year or were forbidden during ceremonies.
- These customs helped people show respect for culture, land, and family traditions.

What is a Totem?

A totem is a special plant, animal, or natural element that is spiritually connected to a person, family, clan, or group. It is often seen as a protector or ancestor.

Example:

✚ For example, someone may have a Platypus as their totem.

- They are spiritually linked to the platypus.
- They are usually not allowed to hunt, kill, or eat it.
- In some communities, it can only be eaten during special ceremonies.
- Having a totem teaches people to respect and protect nature.



Nightjar Owl



Platypus

What are Lore and Food Rules

Lore

Lore is the traditional law that tells people how to live, behave, and care for the land and each other. It is passed down through stories, songs, ceremonies, and Elders.

Example:



For example, lore tells people:

- Who can hunt or gather certain foods
- How food should be prepared and shared
- What is allowed or forbidden during ceremonies

Lore helps keep culture, knowledge, and respect alive across generations.

Food Rules

Food rules are the cultural guidelines that explain who can eat certain foods, when, how, and why. These rules are based on lore, customs, totems, age, gender, and ceremonies.

Example:



Examples of food rules include:

- People usually can't eat their totem (e.g. honey ant, goanna)
- Children and pregnant women may be restricted from eating certain foods
- Men and women may have different roles in gathering and cooking

These rules show respect for culture, community, and ancestral spirits.

ACTIVITY: Cultural Chef Challenge

Instructions

Scenario Example:

You are a 14-year-old boy preparing for initiation. Your totem is the Goanna.

- Task:
 - Can you eat goanna? What Food Rules apply?
 - Who prepares your food?
 - Are there any ceremonies or customs you must follow? When and where can you eat the food?
 - Reflect: Why is this important?
 - Spirituality. How does this link with the Dreaming, totems, custom, beliefs etc.

PLEASE SEE NEXT SLIDE FOR TEMPLATE

ACTIVITY: Cultural Chef Challenge

Instructions

Please choose one of the animals below to complete this activity.
Once you have chosen your totem → Go to the Next slide for the template.



TOTEM NAME

- Your Name:
- Character Role:
- Food Rules (allowed/restricted):
- Who cooks your meals?:
- When and where can you eat? :
- Reflection:
- How does this link to Spirituality?

INSERT
IMAGE OF
TOTEM
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Indigenous Australians Health & Dietary Considerations




Modern Day Indigenous Australian Lifestyles




How has the shift from traditional bush foods to modern processed foods affected the health of Aboriginal communities today?

LINK: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=deaO2n6pjEk>

CAUSE

- Traditional diets replaced with store-bought and processed foods
 - Cultural disconnection from traditional food knowledge
 - Produce not fresh or local
 - Cost of produce
 - Limited access to education and informed food choices
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EFFECT ON HEALTH

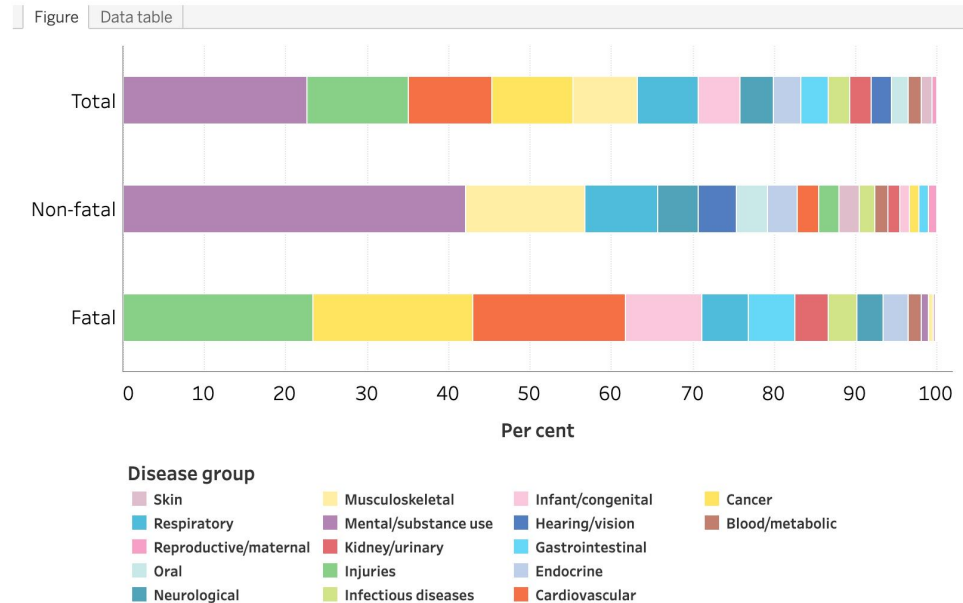
- Type 2 diabetes
 - Diet related Disease
 - Coronary Heart Disease
- 

Current Health of Indigenous Australians

Table 2. Comparison of hunter-gatherer and contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander diet

	Hunter-gatherer life	Contemporary life
Energy intake	Adequate	Excessive
Energy density of the diet	Low	High
Nutrient density of the diet	High	Low
Physical activity level	High	Low
Protein content of diet	High	Low-moderate
Animal food intake	High	Moderate
Plant food intake	Moderate	Low
Carbohydrate intake	Moderate (slowly digested)	High (rapidly digested)
Complex carbohydrate intake	Moderate	Moderate
Sugars	Low	High
Dietary Fibre	High	Low
Fat	Low	High
Saturated fat	Low	High
Alcohol	Not available	Available
Sodium: potassium ratio	Low	High

Figure 1: Disease group contribution to total, fatal and non-fatal burden among First Nations people, 2018



Source: AIHW 2022.

Aboriginal Health & Dietary Considerations



Life Expectancy & Health Disparities

Higher rates of type 2 diabetes and kidney disease

Diets often high in sugar, salt, and fat. Low in fresh produce

Limited access to fresh, healthy food in remote communities

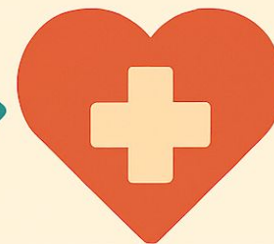
Life Expectancy & Health Disparities:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males born in 2020–22: average 71.9 years

Females: average 75.6 years



This about 8 years less than non-Indigenous Australians



Leading Health Issues

Heart disease, diabetes, lung cancer, respiratory illness, and mental health issues

Suicide is a leading cause of death among young people



Dietary Concerns

Higher rates of type 2 diabetes and kidney disease

Social Determinants

Lower income, housing quality, education, and healthcare; intergenerational trauma, racism, and disconnection from land and culture affect health



Real World Connection

In your table groups please discuss the following and fill out the cause and effect flow chart.

How has limited access to traditional foods affected community health?

THINK: Compare traditional diets (e.g. bush foods, lean meats, native fruits) with modern diets (e.g. processed, high-sugar foods)

➔ How does this shift impact physical health and wellbeing? Focus on ACCESS to resources in rural and remote communities

CAUSE

REASON



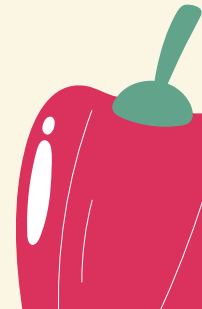
EFFECT ON HEALTH



Real World Connection



Please Answer the following Questions

1. **What are some key health challenges faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities today?**
 - ➡ List 2–3 health concerns (e.g. Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, kidney issues)
 - ➡ Explain how these are connected to changes in diet and lifestyle
 2. **Why is it important to include traditional foods and cultural knowledge in health education?**
 - ➡ Explain how returning to cultural food practices can improve health
 - ➡ How can schools, families, and communities support this?
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Mix and Match: Aboriginal Spirituality Terms

Instructions: Colour code each Aboriginal spirituality term with its correct definition.

ABORIGINAL TERM	DEFINITION
The Dreaming	A cultural rule about who can eat or prepare certain foods.
Totem	Respected older people who guide and teach others.
Lore	Land with deep spiritual and cultural meaning.
Elders	Traditional rules passed down through generations.
Country	A plant or animal that spiritually connected to a person or group.
Food Rule	Stories about how the land, people, and animals were created.