

Submission to Yoorrook Justice Commission**From: Will****Dated: 31 October 2024****Submission:****How could First Peoples' history and culture be better taught at school?**

Local battles and massacres need to be given teaching preference over specific battles from other countries and regions. It is baffling that these atrocities were committed and are not acknowledged in history classes. There could be a mechanism in the curriculum that allows a case study localised to the region. Teachers should undergo a process of self-decolonising, at least recognising their own history before they teach it. Perhaps a lesson where children investigate their history, and find out if for example, their family played a more active role in displacement/subjugation than they previously thought. Aboriginal students could be supported to tell their story in an unreserved way.

How could Aboriginal kids be better supported at school?

I have heard anecdotes of Aboriginal students being made to wait outside classrooms, while whitewashed lessons on their own history are taught inside. This needs to stop, and the lessons restructured to be more inclusive and less prescriptive.

How else could we improve the Victorian education system for First Peoples?

Recognising that the primary dualistic method of teaching (subject-object, teacher-student) can be inherently oppressive to all children, let alone First Peoples. The delivery of content which must often be taken at face value, and those who question it are seen as troublesome, creates problems when it comes to critical thinking and individual insight from investigation.

END OF SUBMISSION