

# Oral Traditions

Oral Traditions

## **Oral communication is valued greatly and used widely within Aboriginal communities.**

It is through oral communication that concepts and beliefs about The Dreaming are passed on from one generation to the next. They help us to understand about the past, present and future.



Oral traditions include the use of story telling, song, dance art, craft making, giving instructions and directions. All of these forms of Oral Traditions help to pass on specific cultural practises and values, language and laws, histories and family relationships.

Some of the traditional ways to share oral histories are on message sticks, through a story in sand or a painting on rock or bark, through ceremonies and body art and by storytelling through songs and dance and mime.

Today our oral traditions are expressed in many other ways. Through the visual arts and drama productions, in contemporary songs, in poetry, on the radio or film, on television or video, even through computers and CDs.

There are many different types of oral histories and they all relate to The Dreaming in different ways. Some oral histories are about teaching laws, rules and cultural practises. Others teach about peoples' lives and personal stories. Others share how life was created and how the land and seas and waterways were formed. Oral Traditions come under many names - oral histories, creation stories, Dreaming stories, biographies, Aboriginal stories etc..

Oral traditions were - and are - continuing to be passed down from generation to generation in various forms. One Dreaming story, for example, may have been passed down through storytelling through specific artwork, a dance and a song. This made sure that the story and all the rules that the story taught were passed on. Traditionally oral traditions were told by an Aboriginal person who was a Elder or a prominent person in an Aboriginal community.

Contemporary oral traditions, life stories of a person, biographies and song and drama productions are often shared by many young Aboriginal people as well as non-Aboriginal people. However the original story must always be told by or come from an Aboriginal person. Stories told by non-Aboriginal people may be their oral traditions, however these have no connection with The Dreaming