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Teachers typically find it extremely difficult to engage Indigenous students in learning activities that are pitched beyond very basic academic levels. Unfortunately functioning at such low levels means that these students fall further and further behind their mainstream peers.

In ***Accelerating the Literacy Development of Indigenous Students***, Brian Gray outlines an approach to teaching that makes it possible to break through the low level engagement/low outcomes cycle to engage marginalised learners at advanced academic levels that allow them to catch up to their more advanced peers. Gray provides a theoretical and practical framework for successful literacy teaching that sets as its goals the acquisition of control over the academic/literate discourses that are so critical to academic success. Central to discourse control is an understanding of what Gray calls the interpersonal 'intentionalities' that drive academic and literate discourses. The negotiation process through which teachers can assist students to develop this control is rooted in an assertive and positive interpretation of Vygotsky's (1978) notion of the 'zone of proximal development' and what it means to 'scaffold' learning within the zone.

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