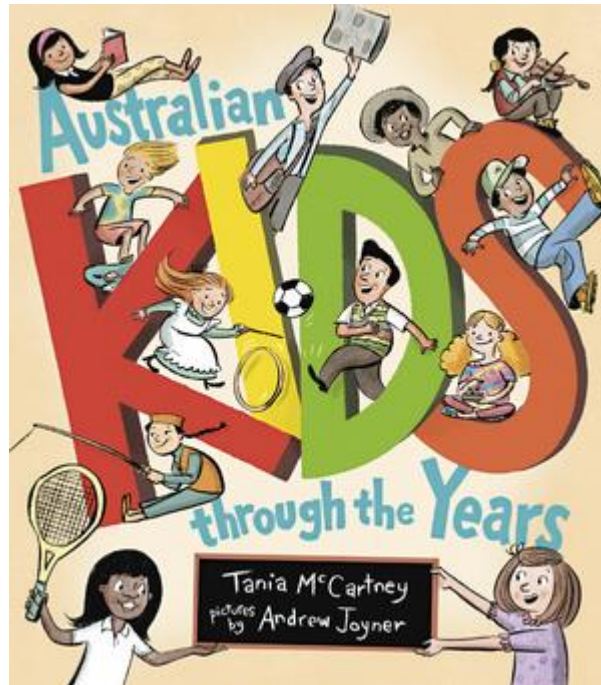


# Australian Kids through the Years

## Teachers' Notes



by Tania McCartney and Andrew Joyner

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### Book Details

Many tens of thousands of years ago, the first people arrived in Australia. When Europeans arrived in the late 1700s, things changed forever. Now, children of many cultures and backgrounds are born in Australia or come here and make it their home.

The way Australian kids live—the things they do and wear, the food they eat, the books they read and the games they play—has changed over time.

This book takes you on a journey of Australian childhood through the centuries, from many thousands of years ago, and through the decades of the twentieth century to today.

Learn more about author Tania McCartney at [www.taniamccartney.com](http://www.taniamccartney.com).

Learn more about illustrator Andrew Joyner at [www.andrewjoyner.com.au](http://www.andrewjoyner.com.au).

## Researching the Past

- Discuss with the children the different ways they can learn about their own childhood.
- Ask children to draw themselves somewhere in their house—perhaps their bedroom or their living room. In a similar way to *Australian Kids through the Years*, have them draw the objects that are in the room they have chosen.
- Pick a topic such as toys, games, favourite food or books. Ask children to interview their parents and/or grandparents to find out which toys, for example, they played with or which games they played when they were young. (Perhaps they can bring some of these toys in to show the class.) See if the children can find, in the book, anything their parents and/or grandparents mention.
- Look at some of the illustrations and photos at the back of the book. Discuss with the children whether they are pictures from the past or from today. Talk about how they know.
- Older children: Have children write about their own life—what they remember so far and what their parents have told them—in a simple short story.

## Understanding Who We Are

Discuss with the children where they were born, where their parents were born, where their grandparents were born? If they don't know, have them ask their parents and grandparents. Talk about any special ceremonies, food, games and so on in their family life.

## Living in the Past

- Choose an early time period from the book and discuss what life would have been like with no electronics and no pre-packaged food. Discuss how food was obtained and prepared, how people lived and in what types of dwellings. What did they sleep on? Could they imagine going to school in a tent or having to wear a dunce cap? Discuss how things have changed and what they would miss most. Discuss the pros and cons of living then and now.
- Have children choose a time shown in the book that they would like to live in. Discuss why they would like to live then.
- Older children: Have children imagine that they are a girl or boy from one of the eras in the book. Discuss the ways in which life would have been different from today and how it would have been the same.

## Illustrations and Text

- The author and illustrator worked closely together. While the author had specific items in mind that required illustration, the illustrator also

included his own ideas to complement the author's. These included humorous activities the children get up to in the story and other happenings (for example, in the 1970s picture, look at the seagulls perched on the woman's head, and the tomato sauce spilling on the ground; in the 1980s, note the cat looking crossly at My Little Pony).

- Discuss the relationship between author and illustrator and how the images are created to complement the text and add further interest. There is a lot happening on each double-page spread throughout the book. Discuss with children what caught their eye and how it makes the book's text more interesting and fun.
- Older children: Point out all the stories (subplots) that have been included in the illustrations in each time era. Talk about why the illustrator added these stories. Have children write a simple line of text, such as 'after school, I play games on the iPad', and then, after discussing how they could make their drawing humorous, ask them to illustrate their sentence.

## Show and Tell

- Have children choose a character from the book and then use dress-ups and props to portray that character.
- Older children: Have children imagine they are a character from the book. Ask them to tell the class about that character—their name, housing, activities, clothes, food, games and toys, and so on.

## Timeline

- Photocopy the pairs of characters from the book. Create a timeline around the wall of the classroom and ask the children to place the characters in the appropriate places on the timeline.
- Have the children handwrite labels from the book. Mix the labels up and ask the children to stick them in the appropriate places on the timeline. This could be made relatively easy or more difficult, depending on the labels used and the children's ages.

## Historical Facts

Older children: Discuss the following questions. Which do they find most fascinating? Children can pick 2–3 questions to research and report their findings to the class.

- Aboriginal children used play to learn important life skills like hunting and gathering food. What kinds of games did they play?
- Australia's first white settlement children came from the United Kingdom. Who were their parents?
- During the Gold Rush, some children went to school in unusual 'buildings'. What were they?

- In the early 1900s, children left school and went to work very early, particularly boys. At what age did they generally leave school?
- During the two World Wars, many Australian children lost their fathers, and their mothers had to work. Who was left to raise the children?
- In the 1950s, television came to Australia for the first time. Which 'school' show was one of our very first TV shows?
- What decade was *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr Seuss released?
- In the 1960s, what kind of music became popular in Australia?
- When were flared jeans and tie-dyed shirts the fashion?
- In which decade did Australians first started playing video games?
- When did the Rubik's Cube first appear?
- In 2010, which flat, electronic device—a bit like a book—became popular?