

COLOURDOOS



ANNA MCGREGOR

TEACHERS RESOURCES

COLOURROOS

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY ANNA MCGREGOR

TEACHERS RESOURCES BY LEONIE JORDAN

Level

Stage 1 (Kindergarten to Year 2)

Key Themes

- Colour (primary colours, secondary colours & colour mixing)
- Australian plants and animals
- Australian places and landscapes
- Difference and diversity
- Acceptance and inclusion
- Weather (drought)

About the Book

When three different groups of kangaroos – red, blue and yellow – all come to the same watering hole, they aren't sure what to make of each other at first. But they soon discover that they aren't so different after all. As the three groups become one, new colours appear, and soon the roos have created a beautiful rainbow!

On the surface, this is a fun, light-hearted story about the colour in an Australian context, but on deeper level it is a beautiful celebration of diversity.

About Anna McGregor

Anna McGregor is a Melbourne-based writer and illustrator. Her background in graphic design is evident in her high impact compositions and her penchant for problem-solving. Her debut picture book, *Colouroos*, was partly inspired by her childhood in rural Australia.

Learning Activities and Discussion Questions

Note that many of the activities below cover multiple subject areas.

English

- Discuss how the text in the book has been laid out, with some words and sentences presented in unusual ways. For instance, 'They hopped and hopped, but where would they stop?' is written in a series of steps down the page, with the word 'hopped' bolded and arranged in an arch. What other examples can you find? How does this help make the book more engaging?
- What collective noun for kangaroos is used in the first sentence of the story? Make a list of other animals with their collective nouns. (A useful resource is *101 Collective Nouns* by Jennifer Cossins.)
- Identify examples of repetition in the story (in both the text and illustrations). Why do you think the author uses this technique? Think particularly about the ideas she is trying to highlight.
- In what ways might people be similar to the kangaroos in the story? Discuss your ideas as a class.
- *Colouroos* is a story about accepting others who are different and realising that deep down, everyone is the same. Have you ever met someone who initially seemed to be different to you, yet turned out to be similar in some way? Share an example from your own life with a classmate.
- What type of birds are shown in the illustrations of the kangaroos at the waterhole? (Answer: rainbow lorikeets.) Why do you think the author has chosen these particular birds?
- Read another picture book that deals with diversity and acceptance and compare and contrast it with *Colouroos*. Possible texts could be *Wide Big World* by Maxine Beneba Clarke & Isobel Knowles, *I'm Australian Too* by Mem Fox, *A Bus Called Heaven* by Bob Graham and *Same, but Little Diff'rent* by Kylie Dunstan.
- Write and illustrate your own story on the theme of diversity. You might like to choose an Australian animal to use as the main character.
- Write an acrostic poem using the title 'Colouroos'.

Science

- Introduce the terms 'flora' and 'fauna'. Make a table of flora and fauna mentioned in the story or featured in the illustrations.
- Choose one Australian plant or animal species to research on the internet. Some useful starting points might be 'Britannica for Kids' (<https://kids.britannica.com/kids>) and 'San Diego Zoo Animals & Plants' (<https://animals.sandiegozoo.org/>).
- Watch video footage of satin bower birds building their nests. (A good *National Geographic* video is available at <https://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/00000144-0a34-d3cb-a96c-7b3d40110000>) Create a bower bird nest in the classroom, bringing in material from home that might appeal to a courting male!
- Visit a park or botanical garden to see some of the plants mentioned in the book.
- Do a botanical drawing of an Australian native plant. Label some of the features, such as leaves, stems, flowers and seed pods. What are some of the things the young roos might do with this plant?
- Kangaroos are famous for their pouches, but they are not the only animals with this unique feature. Research online a list of animals with pouches. What else do all these animals have in common?

Humanities and Social Sciences

- Locate the different parts of the world that students' families come from on a map or globe. Explore how their journeys could be compared to the kangaroos' journeys to the waterhole.
- Discuss droughts as a class. What are some of the effects of drought? Make a poster showing things people can do to help during times of drought.

Visual Arts

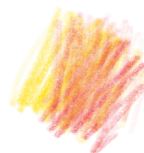
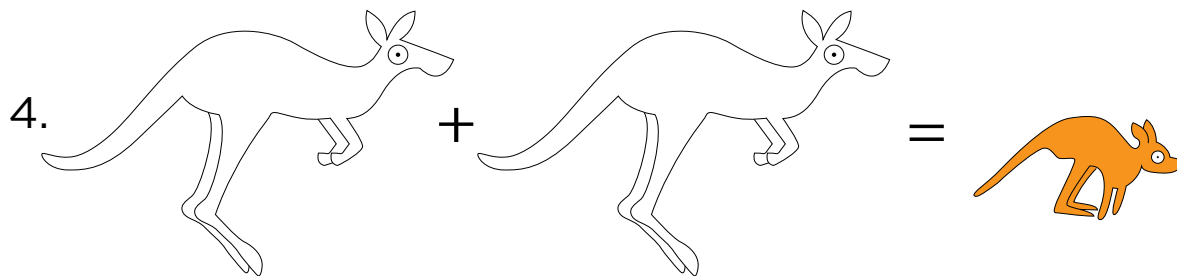
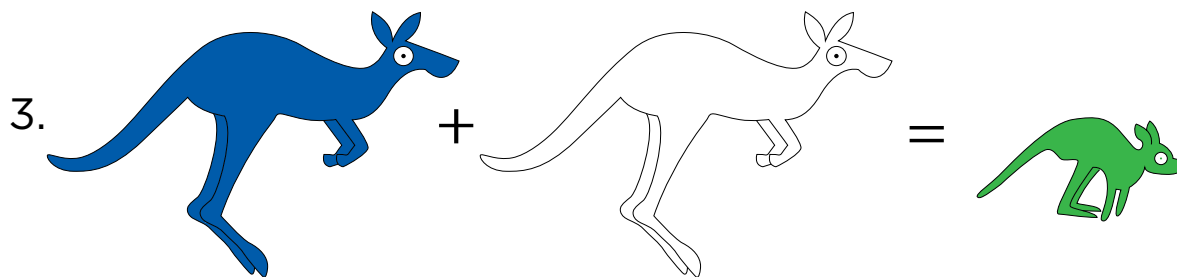
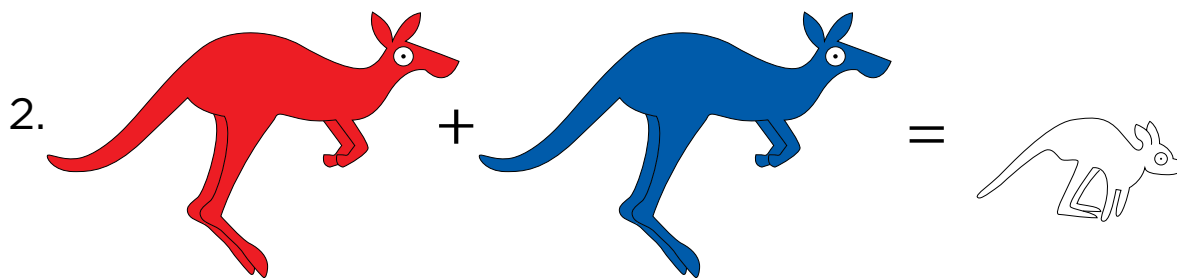
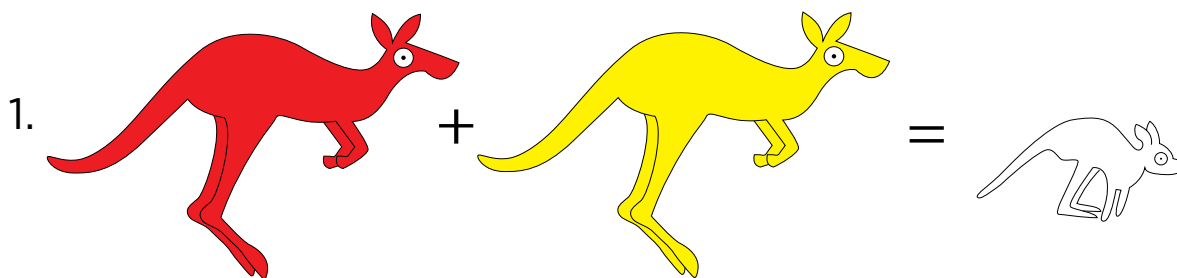
- Explore the way McGregor uses colour in her illustrations to emphasise key themes.
- Mix primary colours to make the colours of each of the baby roos. What other colours can you make?

- Create a stained-glass colouroo. Trace the outline of a kangaroo onto a sheet of paper or cardboard. Next, cut out the kangaroo shape to leave an empty frame. (You may like to retain the kangaroo cut-out for the next activity.) Cut out different-coloured strips of cellophane and sticky tape these across the empty frame with the edges overlapping to form new colours. Tape the colouroo to a window so that you can see the way the different colours combine when the light shines through them.
- Cut out a kangaroo shape and decorate it with patterns, pictures and words that represent you as an individual. Display the roos on a 'Diversity Wall' in the classroom.

Further Activities - Anna McGregor

Colour Mixing Quiz

Solve the quiz below by colouring in the blank kangaroos.



TIP: If you get stuck, experiment by mixing pencil or paint colours.

Colourful Destinations

Colouroos features many colourful place names, eg. the **Red Centre** - named after the red dirt of the region, the **Blue Mountains** - named after its appearance from a distance and the **Gold Coast** - named not for its golden yellow sand, but because real estate prices were very high in the 1950s.



1. Create imaginary tourist destinations by combining words from each column (right) as inspiration. There are no right or wrong answers, try for interesting or unusual combinations.

Red	Valley
Orange	Mountains
Yellow	Coast
Green	Desert
Aqua	Forest
Blue	River
Purple	Sea
White	Glacier
Black	Island
Grey	City
Brown	Village

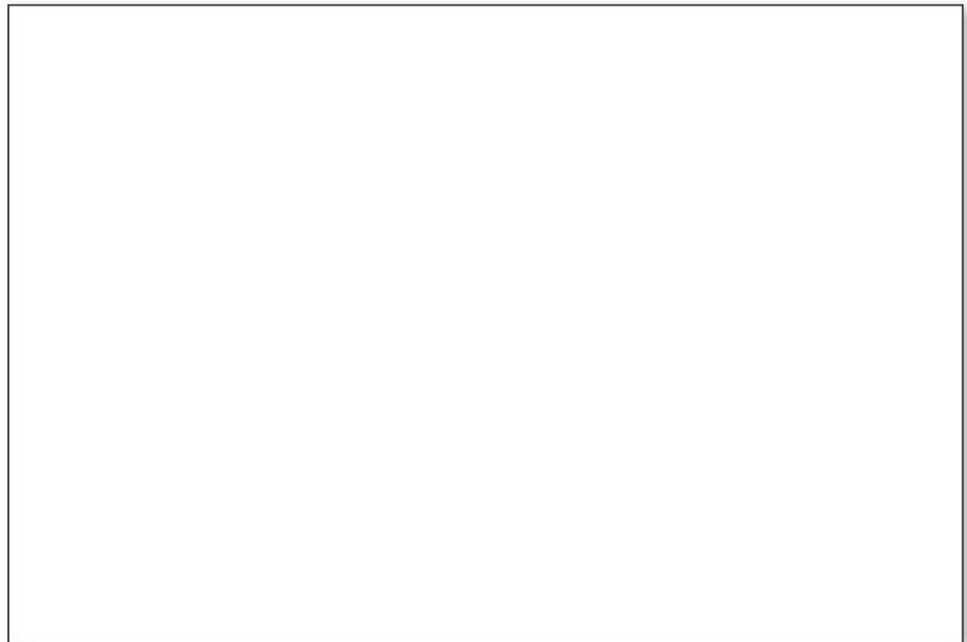
TIP: Use different coloured lines for each combination.

2. Choose your favourite destination from above

_____. (eg. Orange Glacier)

3. Draw how you imagine it would look on a postcard?

Front of postcard



Optional exercise. Show the class your postcard and discuss what a holiday is like at your destination (maybe it's good, maybe it's bad). Remember, it's all make-believe, so have fun and use your imagination.