

Teacher's Notes – Coming Home to Country

By Bronwyn Bancroft

THEMES

Country

Time – past, present, future

Home

Emotion

Nature



Bronwyn explores a lot of themes in *Coming Home to Country*. Primarily, she investigates our relationship with the earth and how that relationship can develop over time and connect us to others through time and space.

WRITING STYLE

Bronwyn's writing style is poetic and deeply emotive. The text is pared back, which allows the illustrations to leap off the page. Short sentences appear on each page, with no more words than necessary to get Bronwyn's point across. Writing from a first-person point of view, there is no denying the personal connection she has to the land she writes about and you can feel her deep love for her country and her past, as well as her continued commitment to the land.

ILLUSTRATION STYLE

Bronwyn Bancroft practises contemporary Indigenous Australian art. She draws inspiration from the patterns she finds in the Australian landscape, and is particularly inspired by the love she feels for the landscape of her place of birth on Bundjalung country (in Northern New South Wales). Bronwyn says, 'All my inspiration comes from the reservoir of the Washpool Creek,' which runs through the Washpool National Park.

Bronwyn features lots of different people throughout the book, showing how they each interact with the country. Each page features a person in unique and intimate relationship with the earth and with country. These people are often enclosed within earth-like shapes, foregrounding how closely linked the two are.

These notes have been produced by Hardie Grant Egmont

AUTHOR BIO

Bronwyn Bancroft is a proud Bundjalung woman and artist. She has been exhibiting her work nationally and internationally for over three decades.

Bronwyn has a diverse artistic practice, including public art commissions and privately commissioned imagery design. Bronwyn has illustrated and/or written 40 children's books.

Bronwyn received the Dromkeen Medal for her contribution to Australian Literature and in 2016 was the Australian Finalist for the Hans Christian Andersen Award (Illustrator).

Bronwyn has been a Director of her own company, Designer Aboriginals Pty Ltd, since 1985. She is also a Director of the Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME) and an advisor on Commonwealth Bank's Indigenous Advisory Council. Bronwyn has been a volunteer senior strategist at Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative since 2009.

Bronwyn has a Diploma of Visual Arts from Canberra School of Art and two Master degrees, one in Studio Practice and one in Visual Art, from the University of Sydney. She was awarded a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in 2018.

STUDY NOTES

1. Bronwyn writes a journey through the country she loves. Write a descriptive story about your home. What does the scenery look like? Do you have a garden, or access to outdoor spaces? Do you walk home and if so, what do you pass? Write what you see.
2. After you've written a description of your home, rewrite it using your 5 senses (sight, sound, taste, smell and touch) including one sentence for each sense.
3. The colour palette for this story is very lush and features a lot of colours you would find in nature. Using the description of your home, think about your personal colour palette and draw a scene you described using only those colours.
4. Bronwyn uses a lot of circular shapes throughout the illustrations in this book. Why do you think that is?
5. Why do you think the title is Coming Home to Country? What do you think this means to the author?
6. Is this a fiction or non-fiction book? Can you give a reason for your answer?