

NINNI YABINI

CHERYL KICKETT-TUCKER

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TYROWN WAIGANA

ISBN (HB): 9781760991210

YEAR LEVEL: K-2

CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITY: Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander histories and cultures

ABOUT THE BOOK

In this delightful picture book, mother and father swan are busy rebuilding their nest after a storm when their baby, Ninni Yabini, wanders off. Luckily, the evening star, her namesake, comes out to guide her home. Written in Noongar and English, and illustrated with striking contemporary artwork, this is a memorable celebration of family and belonging.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cheryl Kickett-Tucker belongs to three areas of the Noongar people – Wadjuk (Swan River), Balladong (Wheatbelt) and Yued (Moora).

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Tyrown Waigana is a Wardandi Noongar (south-west cape country) and Ait Koedhal (Torres Strait Islander) multi-disciplinary artist and graphic designer.

THEMES

- Family
- Nature
- Belonging
- Seasons
- Indigenous stories

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

K-2 English

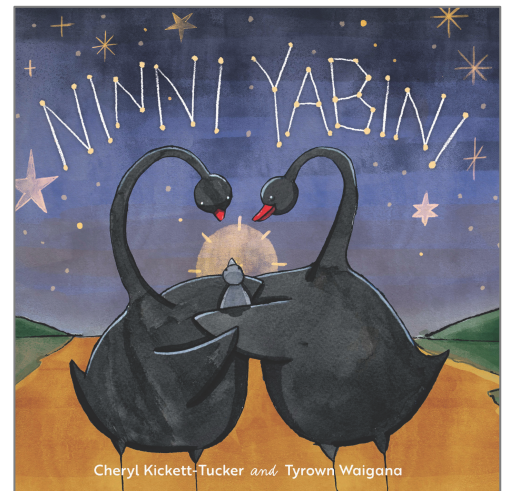
K-2 Science (Biological Sciences)

K-2 Humanities and Social Sciences

K-2 Visual Art

USEFUL WEBSITES

- Illustrator website: crawlinccrocodile.com
- Noongar culture and language: noongarculture.org.au



CLASSROOM IDEAS

Discussion questions

1. Look at the cover and discuss the following:
 - a. Describe the cover. Point to the title and author/illustrator's names.
 - b. How do the colours make you feel?
 - c. What do you think the story will be about?
2. Do you know any other stories by Indigenous authors or illustrators? Share the story with a friend.
3. This story is written in Noongar and English. Why do you think the author has used both languages?
4. Describe the setting.
5. Imagine you are one of the kangaroos by the river. What would you hear, smell and feel?
6. What is Yabini named after?
7. Yabini's parents call her Ninni Yabini. What do you think ninni could mean?
8. Which pictures show you that Yabini's parents love her?
9. What do you think Djidar said when the nest was swept away (p. 12)?
10. Why did Maali help Djidar build a new nest?
11. How do you think Yabini felt when she realised she was lost? How do you think her parents felt?
12. What three words could you use to describe Yabini?
13. What was your favourite part of the story?
14. Do you like the pictures in this story? Why/why not?
15. What do you think is more important in a picture book – the words, the illustrations or both?
16. What lesson did Yabini learn? What lesson did the parents learn? What lesson can you learn from the story *Ninni Yabini*?
17. Do you know any teaching stories from other cultures?
18. Write down a word that rhymes with each of these words from the story: nest, star, wept, river, cuddle.

Creative writing

1. Divide a large piece of paper into three sections. Write or draw what happens in the beginning, middle and end of the story.
2. Write a letter to Yabini. What would you like to ask or tell her?
3. Look on the website of illustrator Tyrown Waigana (crawlingcrocodile.com). Choose a drawing or painting you like and make up a story based on the image.
4. What other title could you give this book?
5. Write a poem about one of these topics explored in the story: family, belonging or nature.

Science

1. Maali and Djidar are proud of their nest (p. 5). Why do birds make nests?
2. Swans make nests on the ground. Do you know any birds that make their nest up high?
3. Collect sticks, grass and other materials to make a nest of your own.
4. Maali and Djidar hunt for food (p. 11). What do swans eat?
5. Describe three ways Yabini looks like her parents, and three ways she looks different.

HASS

1. At the end of the story, you can find the Six Noongar Seasons. In which season do you think this story is set?
2. Are there birds at your school? Make a class record of the birds you see in a day.
3. What do you think would happen to Yabini's family if houses were built near the river?
4. Noongar people and language come from the south-west of Western Australia. What is the language group of the area where you live?
5. Animals can often be found near freshwater sources like lakes, rivers or streams. Are there any freshwater sources near where you live? What animals can be found there?

Visual Art

1. What materials do you think the illustrator used to create the artwork? (i.e. paint, pencil, collage, digital)
2. How would you describe the style of the artwork?
3. Draw or paint your favourite part of the story.

4. At the end of the story, the little star guides Yabini back to her parents. Using recycled materials, create a star to put in your home to remind you that you belong.