

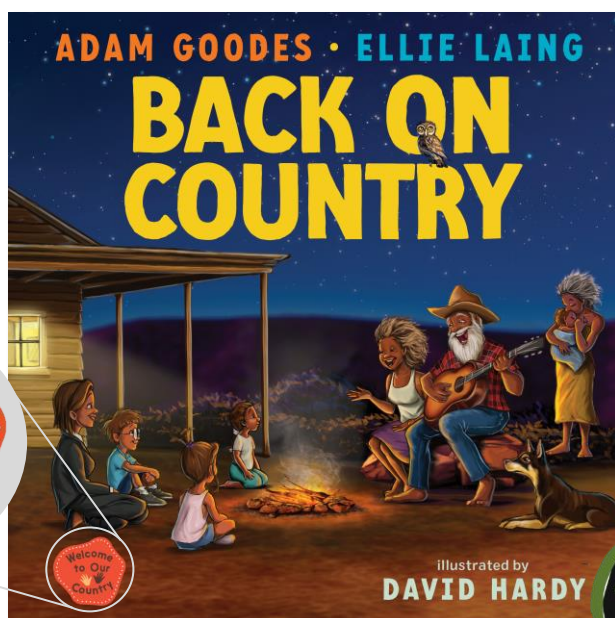
## EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES BY CULTURE IS LIFE



# BACK ON COUNTRY

By Adam Goodes and Ellie Laing,  
illustrated by David Hardy

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands and waterways. We pay respects to Elders both past and present and extend respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.



ISBN: 9781761065088

**THEMES:** First Nations, Indigenous Australians, Australian History, Adnyamathanha culture, Connection to Country and Culture, Kinship

**RECOMMENDED FOR:** 4–8 years old. A book for preschool to Year 3

**CURRICULUM LEARNING:**

- **Cross-curricular priorities:**

**Conceptual framework for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures priority**

See key concepts and learning ideas [here](#)

See how each learning area can value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures as a cross-curriculum priority [here](#)

- **ENGLISH**
- **HASS:** History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship
- **ARTS:** Dance, Music, Visual
- **MATHS and SCIENCE**

**General Capabilities:**

- Creative and Critical Thinking, Intercultural Understanding.

**Key concepts:**

- Identity, relationship, kinship.



## ABOUT THE RESOURCE DEVELOPERS: CULTURE IS LIFE

Culture is Life is an Aboriginal-led not-for-profit organisation that works to inspire change by supporting projects and programs that are anchored in cultural activities and expression. To address the prevalent issues of health inequity and to draw on growing evidence that cultural strengthening influences the health and wellbeing of First Nations peoples globally, Culture is Life backs Aboriginal-led solutions that deepen connection to culture and Country for Aboriginal young people. The organisation's work aims to build awareness and educate the broader community to reframe the relationships non-Aboriginal people have with Australia's First Peoples, leading educational and advocacy change across key environments to strengthen the wellbeing of Aboriginal young people.

## CONTENTS

About *Back On Country* and the *Welcome to our Country* series ... 2

### CURRICULUM

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures..... 3

Notes in Context from *Culture is Life*..... 3

**FROM THE AUTHORS:** Adam, Ellie and David..... 4

### FOR EDUCATORS

Understanding PROTOCOL..... 5

Maintaining CULTURAL SAFETY ..... 6

Recommended Reading..... 6

Building Field Knowledge ..... 7

### IN THE CLASSROOM

Before Reading..... 7

Let's Start Reading ..... 9

**ACTIVITIES** ..... 16

Activity Links to Australian Curriculum..... 20

Debriefing..... 21

About the Authors and Illustrator ..... 21

## ABOUT *BACK ON COUNTRY*

*Back on Country* is a beautiful story sharing the first time sister and brother, Lucy and David, go back on Country with their mother to meet their cousins and Elders. They visit special places of their Adnymathanha people, whilst learning language and hearing the stories of their Country and ancestors along the way. A true illustration of the connection to community, Country and culture that is not just in the past, but is celebrated today.

The story told by Adam Goodes and Ellie Laing, together with David Hardy's illustrations, create a sense of wonder to further explore the protocols of First Nations people. As you turn each page, you are immersed in the joy of ancient songlines, beliefs, beauty and ceremony of First Nations peoples. Embedded in the book is Yura Ngarwala language of Adam Goodes' people, the Adnyamathanha people, for you to learn and share. The Kinship system of the Adnyamathanha people is shared throughout *Back on Country* where you will explore the moiety system and kinship structure with your students and the levels of respect shown towards Elders within their family structure.

The creators and publishers hope the book will be a prompt for people to take a deeper interest in First Nations rights and issues and explore the many other books, documentaries and films that are available. Adam Goodes worked in consultation with senior cultural advisors, when writing *Back on Country*.



## ABOUT THE *WELCOME TO OUR COUNTRY* SERIES

*Welcome to Our Country* is a five-book series designed to connect young children, teachers, parents and carers with First Nations history and cultures.

*Somebody's Land* acknowledges the hurt of the past and joins together the community as one, with a precious shared history, and is available for purchase now. The educational resources for *Somebody's Land* can be downloaded [here](#).

*Ceremony* is a delightful story shared through the eyes of children, about the end-of-season ceremony and celebrations of First Nations Peoples. The resources can be downloaded [here](#).

*Back on Country* highlights connection to Country and kinship as Lucy and David go back on Country for the first time with their mother.

The next book in the series will be available in November 2023.



# CURRICULUM



These notes are aligned with the Foundation to Year 10 Australian Curriculum version 9.

([Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority](#))

In 2021, the Australian Curriculum worked towards addressing two distinct needs in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education:

- that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are able to see themselves, their identities and their cultures reflected in the curriculum of each of the learning areas, can fully participate in the curriculum and can build their self-esteem.
- that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority is designed for all students to engage in reconciliation, respect and recognition of the world's oldest continuous living cultures.

## ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HISTORIES AND CULTURES

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures priority provides opportunities for all students to deepen their knowledge of Australia by engaging with the world's oldest continuous living cultures. Through the Australian Curriculum, students will understand that contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are strong, resilient, rich and diverse.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures priority uses a conceptual framework to provide a context for learning. The framework comprises the underlying elements of **Identity** and **Living Communities** and the key concepts of **Country/Place**, **Culture** and **People**.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Identities are represented as central to the priority and are approached through knowledge and understanding of the interconnected elements of Country/Place, Culture and People.

The development of knowledge about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' law, languages, dialects and literacies is approached through the exploration of Cultures. These relationships are linked to the deep knowledge traditions and holistic world views of Aboriginal communities and/or Torres Strait Islander communities.

Students will understand that Identities and Cultures have been, and are, a source of strength and resilience for Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Peoples against the historic and contemporary impacts of colonisation.

# THESE NOTES IN CONTEXT, FROM THE RESOURCE DEVELOPERS:

Aboriginal people are the oldest known civilisation on the earth. The land we now know as Australia has stories going back thousands of generations told through ancient songlines. As Aboriginal people we have a shared oral history, passed through thousands of generations, that has only been documented through writing since European colonisation began in 1788.

As Aboriginal people and educators it is important that we highlight and influence education settings, homes and communities to connect with and truly understand our history of strong cultures and peoples who lived harmoniously on this land for tens of thousands of years. It is also important that all people living in Australia understand our shared history of colonisation that caused devastating impacts for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that continue to have impact today. Despite this, our cultures and connection to Country, meaning all spirits, land, waterways, sky, animals and people, still remain strong.

We hope to inspire an everlasting connection to and appreciation of our beautiful culture, peoples and Countries for yourself, young people in your care, family and wider community. In doing this, we believe in the positive impact and change that we can collectively create in shared story and truth telling.

Culture is Life acknowledges the ongoing work of so many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as well as First Nations peoples globally – those who have paved the way for us to be seen, heard and truly appreciated for the value and knowledge that has lived in us for time immemorial.

We also acknowledge all the people who walk beside us and choose to be a part of these important conversations, particularly those who inspire our next generation of leaders.

Culture is Life is grateful to play a role in supporting our young generations' education through your teachings and assisting in strengthening students' knowledge, awareness and understanding of the First Peoples of the Country they live on.

We would love to hear from you with any feedback or insights into this resource and your journey at

[info@cultureislife.org](mailto:info@cultureislife.org)

# A WORD FROM THE **CREATORS** OF *BACK ON COUNTRY*



This book was written for all those Indigenous families who weren't born on their Country and haven't been able to reconnect to Country.

It is also made for everyone to understand the importance of Country and the connection Aboriginal people have to it.

– Adam Goodes



*Back on Country* is a story that showcases the importance of Country for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and their deep connection to it. It showcases how Country is much more than a place, but central to one's identity and existence: Everyone and everything is connected by Country, which encompasses the physical, the spiritual and the cultural.

Our book *Back on Country*, the third in our Welcome to Our Country series, aims to highlight all of those elements through the exciting adventures and experiences of the central characters.

The book aims to highlight how powerful, strengthening and unburdening the experience of going Back on Country can be, leaving people feeling more relaxed, energised and at one with nature.

– Ellie Laing



*Back on Country* as a story reminds me of my childhood. My mother had been reunited with her family later in life, after being separated when she was a child. I was about 6 years old when we reconnected with our relatives and started to learn about our country and culture.

Annually, my mum, dad, sister and I travelled back on country to Brewarrina from Sydney. I still remember the countless hours of the long drive, being surrounded by nothing but red dirt and the occasional roo.

Catching up with all the relatives was always something to look forward to, especially hanging out with all my cousins. Learning about how our ancestors used to live was so amazing to me, especially learning about the Brewarrina fish traps. I also loved the bush tucker, pigging out on as many quondongs as we could stomach.

The illustrations in this book were heavily inspired by my personal experiences, during these times back in Brewarrina. Even though this book is set in Adnyamathanha country, I still added some elements of my country in this book, especially the tents in the backyard where all the kids used to sleep at Auntie Viv and Uncle Bill's place.

This book holds so much importance to me and my family, and I know that so many other families would have had similar experiences in their life.

– David Hardy



# IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR EDUCATORS:

## Consider before teaching *Back on Country*

Please consider **protocols** and **cultural safety** in providing a safe space for young people to learn, ask questions and express their thoughts and feelings.

It is also important that educators value the benefits of young people's understanding and connection to place, belonging, community and kinship in strengthening relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. To know our world's longest surviving culture is a gift to be appreciated!

## Useful questions for educators to ask themselves after reading *Back on Country*

1. What is this book about?
2. Who is the book intended for?
3. What messages and learnings are obvious in this book? What messages and learnings may be more deeply embedded?
4. Why is this book important for my students to read?
5. What changes do I want to see? What role can I play in facilitating these changes?

**Personal check-in:** We invite educators to truly pause and reflect on your connection and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, traditions, customs, perspectives and knowledge before reading this book to children in your classroom. We ask you to be vulnerable in reflecting on your experiences and prior knowledge of the traditional custodians of the land that you live on. Identify any areas where you can strengthen your understanding to ensure you are providing the most respectful and honest learning for your students. A very useful Further Reading list is provided later in these notes.

**In understanding and honouring the survival and strong presence and cultures of Aboriginal people today, when discussing Aboriginal ways in past tense, it is important for adults to confirm that Aboriginal cultural practices in this book are still strong and practised today. Even if this looks different, the topics are not just historic.**

## UNDERSTANDING PROTOCOL

Protocols exist as standards of behaviour used by people to show respect to one another.

Cultural protocol refers to the **customs, lore** and **codes of behaviour** of a particular cultural group and its way of conducting business. It also refers to the protocols and procedures used to guide the observance of traditional knowledge and practices, including how traditional knowledge is used, recorded and disseminated. (Extracted from the website of the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care – SNAICC: [What are Cultural Protocols?](#))

## WHY ARE PROTOCOLS IMPORTANT?

As the traditional custodians of the land, it is imperative that the special position of Aboriginal people is recognised and integrated into official protocol so as to propagate the culture into the wider community and promote a better relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the general community.

A lack of understanding of the differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures is often the site for breakdowns in communication, leading to a misconstrued portrayal of Indigenous people. (Extracted from SNAICC online: [Why Do We Need Protocols?](#))

TO FIND OUT MORE, WE RECOMMEND THAT ALL EDUCATORS VISIT [SNAICC ONLINE](#)

**In understanding and honouring the survival and strong presence and culture of Aboriginal people today, when discussing Aboriginal ways in past tense, it is important for adults to confirm that Aboriginal cultural practices in this book are still strong and practised today. Even if this looks different, the topics are not just historic.**

## CULTURAL SAFETY FOR CHILDREN

This book was written from both an Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspective, with a shared vision for all people to better connect and understand the true histories, cultures and peoples of the land we now call Australia.

**It is important to first consider any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children reading this book and how the perspectives and themes could impact them.** The significant impacts of past and current policies influence Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's journey, and knowledge and experiences differ between every child. It is also important to consider the experiences of any person reading this book, who could be impacted by the removal from their homelands, family, kinship and Country.

**Start conversations** with your students and their families prior to teaching and consider the wellbeing and backgrounds of your students. There may be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in your classroom who will relate and feel connected to these stories in a way that they want to celebrate. Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are also directly impacted by practices and policies that impact their connection to culture, kinship and place, and stories of removal and dispossession can be triggering. As their educator, you know your students best, so please use your professional judgement.

Consider what school/setting policies and practices you have in place for **ensuring the wellbeing of children**.

This may include the presence of wellbeing staff, Aboriginal support workers, chill-out rooms or tasks children can do to feel safe while reading, e.g. drawing.

**Identify local support services** in your school and community and share these with your school and staff. Encourage staff to access these services, and/or school welfare, for any students showing signs of needing additional support.

**Invite your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and local Aboriginal services to your school.** Build relationships with them so they are a part of your learning community. We strongly encourage you to invite and respectfully compensate an Elder of the traditional Country that you are on to welcome your staff and students to Country and share their knowledge and perspectives.

**Consider cultural competency or inclusion training** and how your school can benefit from ongoing professional development and training in this area.

Visit [Reconciliation Australia's website](#) to consider your school's reconciliation journey through their Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) and educational resources.

## FURTHER RECOMMENDED READING FOR ADULTS

### On Adnyamathanha People and Anangu Society

[Adnyamathanha – Aboriginal people of South Australia](#)  
(State Library of South Australia)

[Men's and women's business – Anangu society](#)

### On Indigenous Kinship and Moiety

[Kinship – The heart of First Nations Society](#)

[Skin, Kin and Clan: Moiety Names in South-Eastern Australia \(ANU\)](#)

[Moiety \(University of Sydney\)](#)

### On Songlines

[Songlines: the Indigenous memory code \(All In The Mind, ABC Radio National\)](#)

### On Language

[What happened to Australia's Indigenous languages?](#)

### On Country

[AIATSIS Map of Indigenous Australia](#)

[Welcome to Country \(AIATSIS\)](#)

[Welcome to or Acknowledgement of Country?](#)

### On Dreaming

[Understanding Aboriginal Dreaming and the Dreamtime](#)

[Aboriginal Dreaming stories, birds and the local environment \(A Strategy for years R-5\)](#)

### On Aboriginal Culture and Histories

[Why is it important for students to learn about Aboriginal culture?](#)

[Histories written in the land \(SBS\)](#)

### On Aboriginal Art Creation

[Grinding Ochre – a classroom activity](#)

## BUILDING FIELD KNOWLEDGE

Find out what your students already know about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures:

- In pairs, in one minute tell each other what you know about about First Nations peoples' connection to Country and kinship. (Encourage active listening.)

In understanding and honouring the survival and strong presence and cultures of Aboriginal people today, when discussing Aboriginal ways in past tense, it is important for adults to confirm that **Aboriginal people's connection to Country, Community, Kinship and Culture is alive today**. Even if this looks different, the topics are not just historic.

- What are different names for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples? What does Indigenous, First Nations and First People mean?

It is important for children to understand these names can be used for the same group of people. It can be appropriate to use either term or their specific clan or language group if known. **The best way to know how a specific person prefers to be referred to is to respectfully ask**. This book refers to Aboriginal people as a term for the collective of many groups of First Peoples from mainland Australia.

## EXPLORING AND RESPONDING IN THE CLASSROOM

### BEFORE READING *BACK ON COUNTRY*

#### The preface

The preface on the dedication page is important to note about the purpose of the book. We highly recommend you read the message from the book's creators as it encapsulates what they hope to achieve in classrooms and homes across Australia.

Whilst reading and sharing *Back on Country* you will strengthen understanding of connection to Country and kinship to Aboriginal people. You will also learn about the connection to our stories and special places and the importance of reclaiming language.

#### Yura ngarwala language used within the book.

Throughout *Back on Country*, Yura ngarwala is used – this is the common term used for the Adnyamathanha people's language, and when literally translated, it means 'people speak'. Yura ngarwala has been embedded for children to be exposed to and to learn language. Adnyamathanha people are members of the Thura-Yura language family.

The QR code in the preface links to a recording of the story and glossary. This will help with learning the pronunciation of the Adnyamathanha words. Alternatively, head to the audio link on the A&U website.



#### F-1 Language

Understand that English is only one of many languages spoken in Australia and that different languages may be spoken by family, classmates and community.

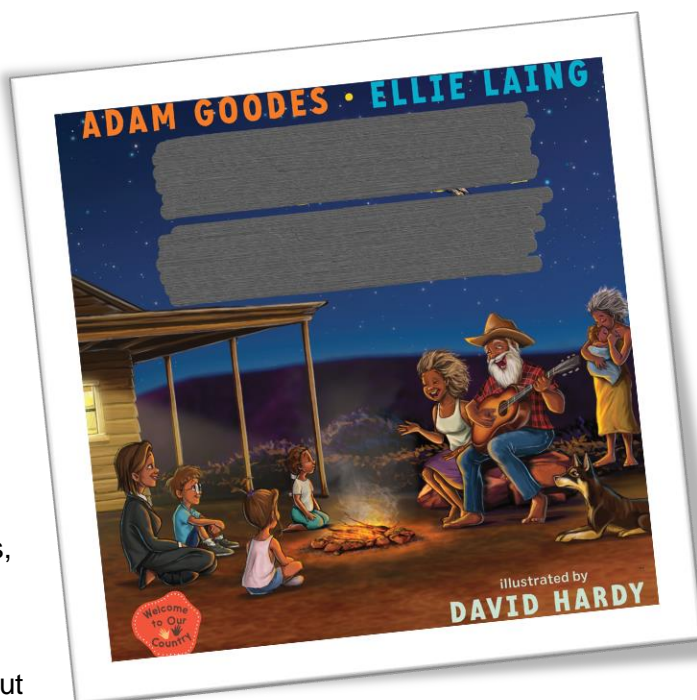
#### Y3-6 Role of Language and Culture

Explore connections between identity and cultural values and beliefs and the expression of these connections in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

## More than Words

Use Post-It notes to cover the title and text on the cover and within *Back on Country*. Show students the cover and page through the internal pages, examining just the illustrations.

- Open the book to the second double page spread (where they meet Nanna) and ask what students see and think is happening in the story so far.
- Open the book to pages where the kids have their feet in the dirt. What do they think is happening in the illustrations?
- Turn to the pages where the family is looking at the night sky and ask what they notice in the illustrations and what they are doing together.
- Discuss what feelings and emotions the students had, while looking at the illustrations, and how they feel the characters felt, throughout the book.
- Ask the students to give their predictions about what the book *Back on Country* is about.

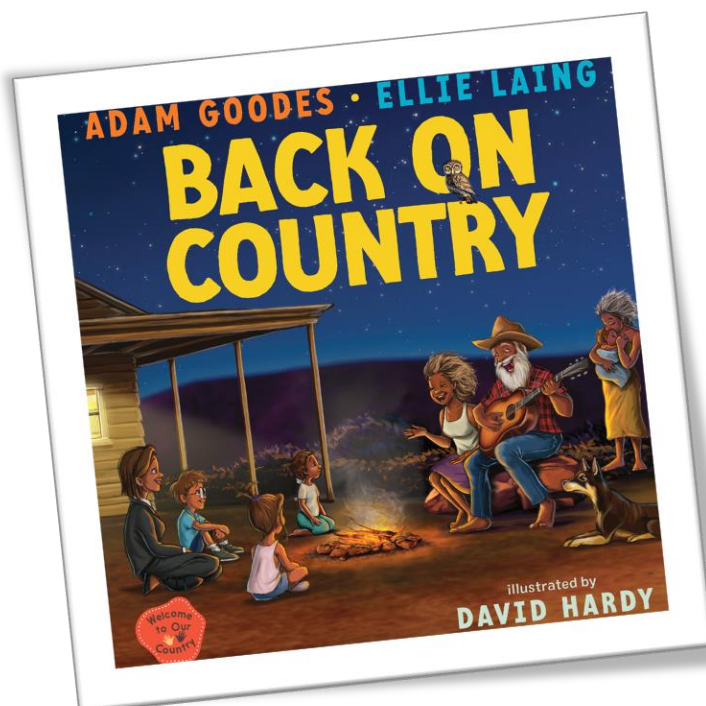


## Uncover the Cover

Reveal the full cover of *Back on Country* including the title, and give students plenty of time to absorb what they see. You may need to discuss the definition of *Country* with your students and why Aboriginal people write *Country* with a capital C.

Encourage them to think deeply about the cover by asking questions such as:

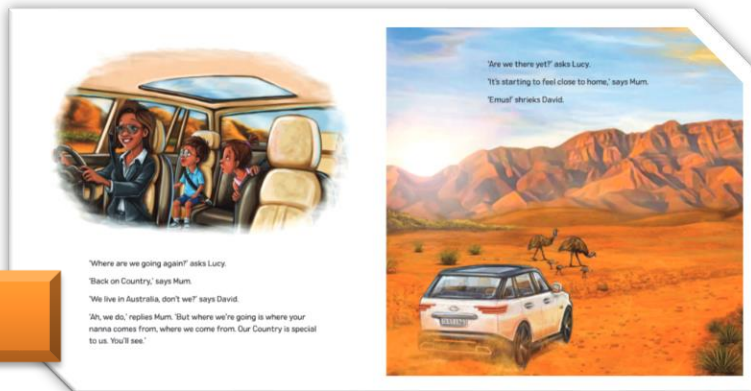
- Now you can see the title of the book is *Back on Country*, does that change your first thoughts about what the book was about?
- What does the title *Back on Country* tell you about this book?
- Is this story nonfiction or fiction? How do you know?
- Do you think this is a book about the past or now?
- What else can you tell me about the book from the cover and title?





# LET'S START READING *BACK ON COUNTRY*

Consider asking the following questions as you read, to prompt discussions and as a way to help students better understand the deeper teachings of First Nations peoples, culture and histories throughout *Back on Country*.



Page 1 and 2

Country is a term Aboriginal people use to talk about the land, the waterways and the skies to which they have an ancestral connection. That connection to Country is a fundamental part of Aboriginal people's wellbeing, their spirituality, culture, language, family and it is their cultural responsibility to care for Country.

Aboriginal people have a deep connection to Country and it gives them a sense of identity and belonging.



**COUNTRY:** When Aboriginal people speak of Country they speak of Country as a person. **Aboriginal people see Country as family.** The capital C in Country elevates this term to proper noun status.

Watch this short video produced by Evolve Communities (an authority on Indigenous Cultural Awareness) to help you understand more: [Aboriginal culture | Why is Country Spelled With a Capital 'C'?](#)

## Y1-2 Human-nature relationships

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities maintain a special connection to and responsibility for Country/Place. Holistic belief systems are spiritually and intellectually connected to the land, sea, sky and waterways.

## Y1-2 Socialising

Interact with peers, the teaching team and visiting Elders/community members about aspects of personal worlds, such as experiences at school, home, everyday routines, interests and activities.

Examine this spread closely:

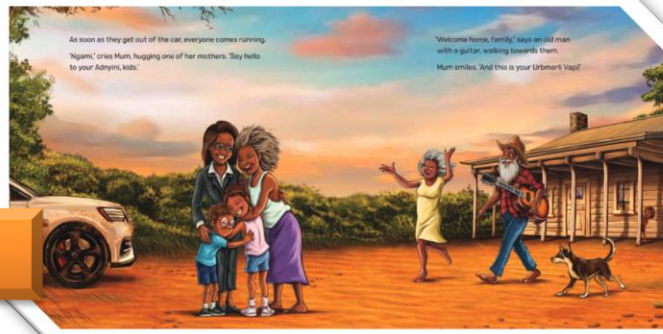
- How do you think the two young people, Lucy and David, are feeling?
- Looking at their Mum, how do you think she feels?
- What does it mean to go 'Back on Country'?
- Why is Country special to Aboriginal people?
- How do you feel when you have been away and you are heading home and getting closer?



## Y3 Intercultural understanding – Values, rights and responsibilities

Investigate culture and cultural identity. Explore and compare cultural knowledge, beliefs and practices. Develop respect for cultural diversity.

## Page 3 and 4



You can see the family arriving to hug their Adnyini (Grandmother) and other family members are coming to greet the children as well. This spread is important as it is a subtle introduction to the kinship structure of the Adnyamathanha people where the authors say the Mum is hugging one of her mothers. In their kinship system the sister of her mother is also consider a mum to her and respected equally.

### Foundation: Knowledge and Understanding

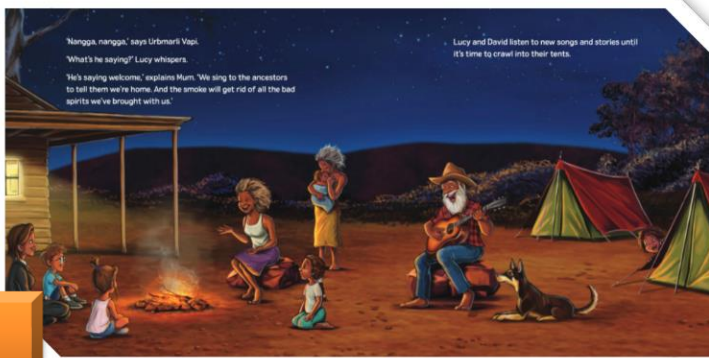
How the stories of families and the past can be communicated, for example, through photographs, artefacts, books, oral histories, digital media and museums.



**KINSHIP** determines where a person fits within their community and family, it is a very important fundamental part of Aboriginal people and will be different within all Aboriginal communities. You need to know who you are related to, to also understand the levels of respect you give people and who you can and cannot marry. **It is important for you to understand the local kinship system within your local Aboriginal community that you live, work or play in.**

- How is everyone feeling in the pictures?
- How do you feel when you see your family or friends after a long time apart?
- Do you know what kinship means?
- What is different in the kinship structures of your culture?

## Page 5 and 6



On these pages you see the family sitting together to share in a Welcome to Country together. The Adnyamathanha people sing to their ancestors to tell them they are home on Country and use smoke to get rid of all the bad spirits and energy that you bring from other places with you back on Country.

- What emotions can you see from everyone?
- Have you ever been to a Welcome to Country ceremony? What was your experience like?
- How do you celebrate together as a family when you get together?
- Do you have special songs that you sing as a family?
- How do you pay respect to your ancestors?

### Knowledge and Understanding:

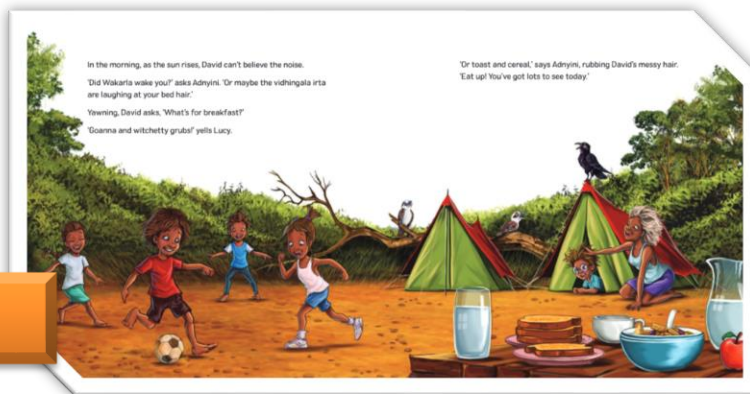
#### History.

Y1: Differences and similarities between students' daily lives and life during their parents' and grandparents' childhoods.

Y2: The ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples maintain special connections to particular Country/Place.

Y3: The importance of Country/Place to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples who belong to a local area.

## Page 7 and 8



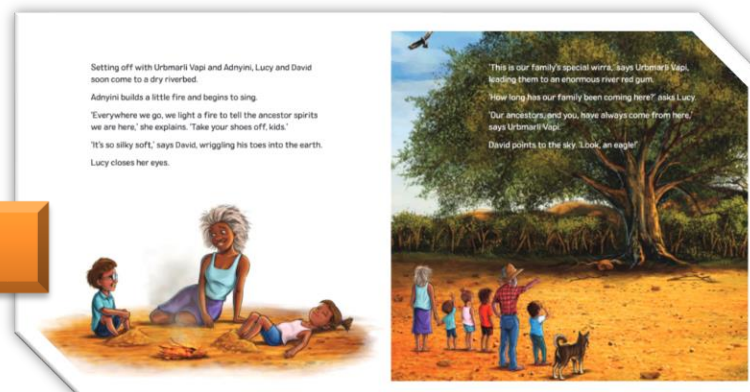
In this spread the family are camping together and wake up in the morning and start playing soccer. Lucy yells out she wants traditional Aboriginal food of goanna and witchetty grubs for breakfast and her Adnyini says toast and cereal and encourages them to eat up.

- Have you been camping with your family?
- Why is it important to spend time with your family?
- Have you ever eaten traditional Indigenous food before?
- What are some traditional foods your family eat together?

**Y1 and 2 – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures. Identity**

Creating family history/life stories, identifying values and practices that keep families strong, such as working together. Identify with Country/Place and understand connections between Country/Place and individuals and groups.

## Page 9 and 10



This page highlights the importance of fire and place for Aboriginal people. The Adnyamathanha people believe that when you sit together and light a fire you are telling the ancestor spirits that you are on Country. You also learn the Wirra (River Red Gum) is a very special place where the Adnyamathanha people have gone to sit together and share in culture together for a long time.

- Explain what you see happening in the pictures.
- How is everyone feeling?
- Why do you think it is important for the Adnyamathanha people to light a fire to let the ancestors know they are on Country?
- Why do you think the Wirra (River Red Gum) is so important?
- Do you have a special place your family have been going to for years to share stories?

**Y1-2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures. Identity**

Learning from Elders appropriate ways of interacting with others and behaving according to kin and other social groupings.

Identifying elements of behaviours or relationships that mark individual or community identity.

Considering the nature of groups and sub-groups within the school and larger community.

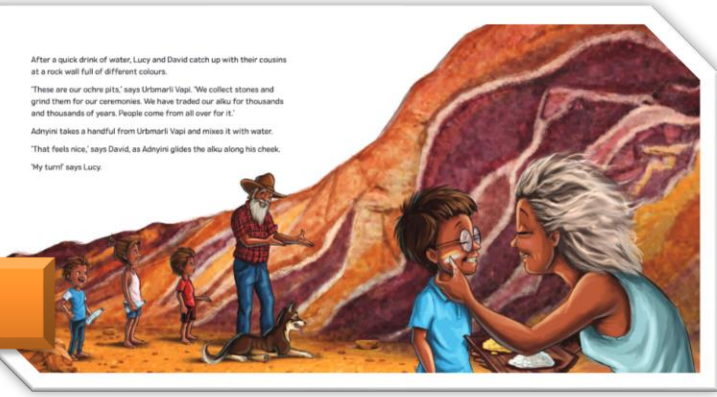
After a quick drink of water, Lucy and David catch up with their cousins at a rock wall full of different colours.

'These are our ochre pits,' says Urbmarli Vapi. 'We collect stones and grind them for our ceremonies. We have traded our silus for thousands and thousands of years. People come from all over for it.'

Adyini takes a handful from Urbmarli Vapi and mixes it with water.

'That feels nice,' says David, as Adyini glides the alk along his cheek.

'My turn!' says Lucy.



**Page 11 and 12**



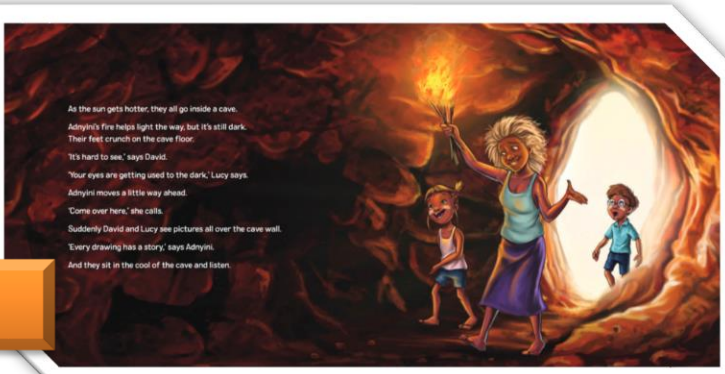
**YI-3 Science**

*Understanding everyday materials can be physically changed in a variety of ways.*

*Exploring how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples apply physical changes to natural materials to render them useful for particular purposes.*

The Adnyamathanha people are known as the people of the rocks – their country is rich in valuable ochre and stones. Ochre from the Flinders Ranges plays an important role in all ceremonies. In this spread you can see the Elders painting the young children with ancient markings and helping them prepare for the ceremony ahead.

- What do you see is happening in the pictures?
- What do Aboriginal people use to paint their faces and skin? (This will be explored later in the After Reading activities).
- What is their Urbmarli Vapi (Uncle) doing?
- What is their Adyini (Nanna) doing?
- Why do you think the Elders are teaching them about Ochre?
- Do you know how to make Ochre?
- Have you seen First Nations people wearing Ochre before?
- Do you have any similar practices in your culture?
- Or have you seen other cultures who paint their bodies for ceremonies before?



As the sun gets hotter, they all go inside a cave.

Adyini's fire helps light the way, but it's still dark. Their feet crunch on the cave floor.

'It's hard to see,' says David.

'Your eyes are getting used to the dark,' Lucy says.

Adyini moves a little way ahead.

'Come over here,' she calls.

Suddenly David and Lucy see pictures all over the cave wall.

'Every drawing has a story,' says Adyini.

And they sit in the cool of the cave and listen.

**Page 13 and 14**



**Visual Arts:**  
*Exploring ideas and improvising with ways to represent ideas*

*Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination to create visual artworks and design, including considering ideas in artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.*

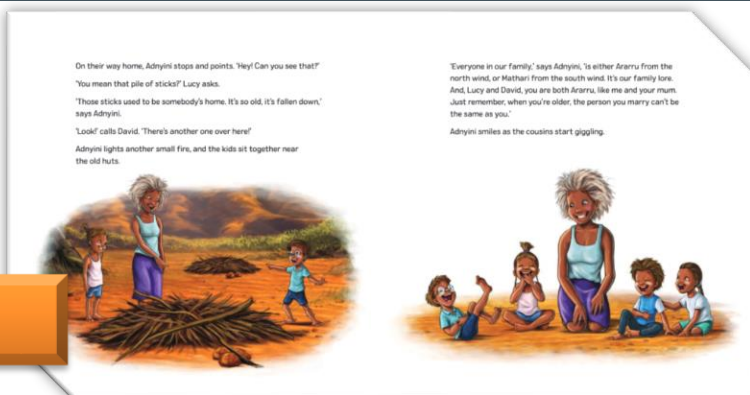
**Responding to and interpreting artworks**

*Respond to visual artworks and consider where and why people make visual artworks, starting with visual artworks from Australia, including visual artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.*

In this spread you will explore the cave paintings of the Adnyamathanha people as a way of sharing the history and stories with each other. You won't see the drawing in this book as they are the sacred stories of the Adnyamathanha people and not to be copied and shared with others or drawn by people who are not Adnyamathanha. These pages are a perfect way to introduce your class to cave paintings and why Aboriginal people used this form as an expression of their culture and stories.

- What are they doing together on this page?
- What can you see?
- They have entered a cave and the words tell us they are looking at Adnyamathanha cave paintings. Do you know why we can't see the cave painting in the illustrations?

- Why are cave paintings sacred?
- Why is it important to share the stories from the past with the younger generations?
- Do you have stories from your culture that are sacred to you and your family?



Page 15 and 16

In this spread you see Adnyini showing the children the old huts that their ancestors once lived in, and taking this opportunity to sit by a fire with the children and share in the family lore and moiety structure about who they can and can't marry.

The children find this amusing as they giggle with each other but it is very important for them to know, so they can keep the blood lines strong and healthy.

- Why do Aboriginal people like to sit around a fire in a circle to talk?
- Do you know what kinship is?
- What is a moiety?
- What do you think would be the difference between a south wind moiety and a north wind moiety?
- Why is it important for the children to know about their moiety?
- Do you have moieties in your culture or something similar?



**Y1-2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures. Identity**

*Categorising names of students in the class into clans, moieties and other sub-groupings, and where appropriate their affiliations with the natural environment, for example, salt versus fresh water, north versus south wind.*

*Learn about and understand the concepts of kin, social groupings and relationships, and how these are connected to the natural environment.*

*Recognising clans and other sub-groupings and the symbolic representation of these, for example, totems and personal relationships with plant/animal species and Country/Place.*

*Talking about family names, given names, skin names and moiety as appropriate, for example, maternal versus paternal grandparents, presence or absence of birth order names, and other ways of referring to people.*



**MOIETIES:** The Adnyamathanha society is divided into two parts, called moieties. These moieties are Mathari and Ararru.

Every person in Adnyamathanha society has a moiety. The moiety is passed down from mother to child, so you'd be the same moiety as your mother, and her mother. **Your father, by law, would be the opposite moiety to your mother – and thus opposite to you.**

**A person's moiety determines all important aspects of their lives, including who they can marry, the knowledge they can possess and how they interact with others in society. Adnyamathanha moiety and kinship also includes ancestors and people who have passed away. (Extract from the Foreword of Ceremony)**



**Y1–2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures. Identity**

Learning from Elders appropriate ways of interacting with others and behaving according to kin and other social groupings.

Identifying elements of behaviours or relationships that mark individual or community identity.

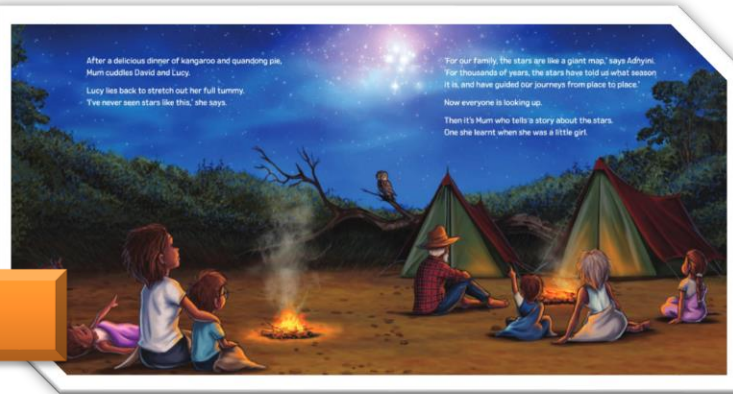
Considering the nature of groups and sub-groups within the school and larger community.

**Y2 Culture**

Investigating the production and transfer of heat in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' methods of cooking, such as the use of ground ovens

**Y1 Science as human endeavour**

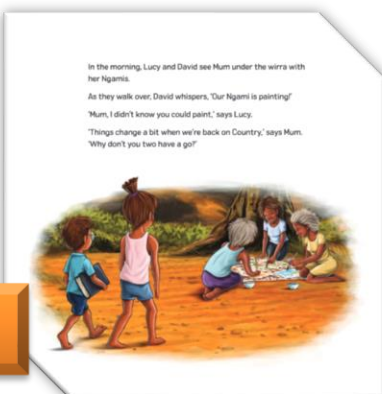
Heat can be produced in many ways and can move from one object to another. Considering how science is used in activities such as cooking, fishing, transport, sport, medicine and caring for plants and animals.



**Page 17 and 18**

This spread again elaborates on the traditional foods of the Adnyamathanha people and how the stars guide them like a giant map and how they help them with seasons. The star constellation in the night sky they are looking at is known to the Adnyamathanha people as 'The Seven Sisters' and they are sharing in the Dreaming story together.

- Have you ever tried any traditional First Nations foods?
- What are the local traditional First Nations foods in your local area?
- Why is passing on ancient knowledge to young people important?
- What are they learning?
- Do you know what a creation story or dreaming story is?
- Do you know the dreaming story of the Seven Sisters?
- Do you have any stories about the stars in your culture?
- What have you learnt?



**Page 19**

You can see that Lucy and David's mum is sitting with her mother's painting under the Wirra and she invites her children to put all of their memories of their trip back on Country into their own canvas. Aboriginal people have been sharing their stories of their lives and creation stories in art form for thousands and thousands of years.

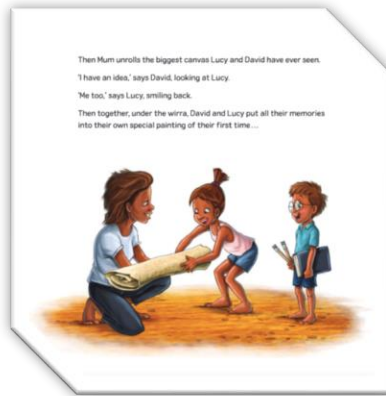
- Why are the women painting together under the Wirra?
- What are some ways we share stories with each other? (Art, dance etc)
- Do you know the different styles of Aboriginal art and ways Aboriginal people have been expressing themselves for thousands and thousands of years?

**The Arts: Dance**

Perform dances using expressive skills to communicate ideas, including telling cultural or community stories. Identify how the elements of dance express ideas, including exploration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance. Investigate how elements of dance can be used to tell a story

**The Arts: Music**

Respond to music and consider where and why people make music, starting with Australian music, including music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. Exploring how traditional musical instruments used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples produce their characteristic sounds.



This page is important as it elaborates the role of Elders in the lives of Aboriginal children. They are guiding them to collect sticks and bark and teaching them that we all have a role to work together for the benefit of the whole community's well being. This Ceremony has been a lot of fun for the children; they laugh and enjoy each other's company, while they learn.

- What can you see happening in the pictures?
- Why is it important for the Elders to teach the young children to help?
- Who benefits from the children collecting the sticks and bark?
- What is something you do at home that helps your whole family?



**Y3 Intercultural understanding. Values, rights and responsibilities**

Investigate culture and cultural identity. Explore and compare cultural knowledge, beliefs and practices.

Develop respect for cultural diversity.

**Y1 HASS History**

Differences in family structures and roles today, and how these have changed or remained the same over time.



The final pages are the paintings of Lucy and David and their trip back on Country with their family. You can see that they had a happy time and enjoyed the local native animals together as a family. They also shared the culturally important aspects of fire and the Wirra that are important to the Adnyamathanha people.

- When you look at the painting what does it make you feel about their time on Country with their family?
- Why is it important for Aboriginal people to share and remember the stories they have been taught?
- When appropriate, ask your students to share stories of their cultures that they have been entrusted with to learn from and share with their next generations.
- How have they been passed down to you? (e.g. art, oral)

**Visual Arts: Exploring ideas and improvising with ways to represent ideas**

Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination to create visual artworks and design, including considering ideas in artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.

**Responding to and interpreting artworks**

Respond to visual artworks and consider where and why people make visual artworks, starting with visual artworks from Australia, including visual artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

# CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

## Create an Indigenous Map

Display an Indigenous Language Group [Map of Australia from AIATSIS](#) in your classroom. As a class, find where the Adnyamathanha people are on the map. Create a whole class display, where students can add information, language and pictures throughout the year, such as about the Adnyamathanha people, as they are learning. This will encourage student-driven learning that other students in the classroom and visitors to your classroom can learn from.

## Acknowledgement and Welcome to Country

Connection to the Country we work, play and live on is important. You are wanting your students to make a strong connection to Country so that they respect and care for the Country they live on. As a class explore the difference between an Acknowledgement of Country and a Welcome to Country. [Welcome to Country | AIATSIS](#) You may choose to invite a local Elder to your school to perform a Welcome to Country maybe for the start of a school year, a special ceremony or event at your school.

Writing an Acknowledgment of Country together as a class is an important step forward together. Go outside and sit on Country in a yarning circle. Write down what you are grateful for and would like to acknowledge following the structure of an Acknowledgement of Country and paying respects to ancestors past and present. [Welcome to Country or Acknowledgement of Country | Indigenous.gov.au](#)

Most importantly, the Acknowledgment of Country is sincere and from the heart. You may choose to have a written one on the wall, to read at the start of the day, but as your class and students' connection to Country strengthens, encourage students to speak freely when acknowledging Country.

## Kinship

You can download a [chart of the kinship system](#) of the two moieties of the Adnyamathanha people and compare them to the structures of the different cultures within your classroom to gain a deeper understanding of the structures and level of respect within the kinship system.

Explain the concept of kinship and Aboriginal peoples' relationships with people, animals and Country. You can learn more about traditional kinship structure [here](#).

Watch this [Reconciliation Australia clip](#) together and further discuss the kinship systems of Aboriginal people with your class.

- What roles do Elders, Aunties, Uncles, men, women and children play in Aboriginal communities?
- What do you see them doing in their roles in the book?
- How is this similar or different in your life?

## Storytelling

Aboriginal people are the oldest storytellers on the planet. Oral history and storytelling are an important part of Aboriginal culture and everyday life. Stories have been passed down for thousands and thousands of years teaching history, culture, kinship, community obligations, cultural obligations, creation stories, storylines, rights and responsibilities, scientific knowledge, everyday practices and so much more.

- Research an Aboriginal storyteller and why their stories have been important to Australians today. You may choose Archie Roach or Baker Boy and their stories through music or watch the Bangarra dance company share their chosen stories through dance and movement. Take the time to research and share more storytellers with your class.
- Where possible and appropriate, organise an incursion or excursion to an exhibit, storyteller, artist, performer, museum or special place in your local community that celebrates or pays tribute to First Nations people, so your students learn more and continue to make their personal connections and develop a deeper pride in First Nations history and culture.

## Sharing Knowledge

Throughout *Back on Country* you gain a deeper understanding of the importance of passing down knowledge from one generation to the next and keeping culture alive for Aboriginal peoples.

In 2017 Yungapunganah, a sacred site and



waterhole in Hookina in the Flinders Ranges (close to Wallerberdina Station) was in danger of becoming a nuclear waste site. A young Adnyamathnatha girl called Ngarlaa raised awareness with her family to protect and preserve the sacred site. She sang 'Vakuvaku' in language, a song that had been taught to her when she was two years old. This song links back to the storyline of Yungapunganah, the sacred site.

Learn more about the story of Yungapunganah and the Song of Vakuvaku and the importance of the waterhole that is a part of the 70km songline here: [4-Year-Old Sings Language to Protect Sacred Site](#)

- Share this story with your class. How does it make you feel?
- Further explore what this moment means.
- Examine the important role that passing on knowledge played in protecting this sacred site.

In August 2021 it was decided that Kimba (and not Wallerberdina Station) would become the nuclear waste site in South Australia: [Kimba in South Australia to be formally chosen for national nuclear waste storage site \(ABC\)](#)

### Create a song – Storytelling

As a class sit outside and walk on Country together quietly just absorbing the sounds, smells and sights of the Country your school is on. Head back into class or sit in a quiet space outside and create a song together sharing the stories of Country. Sing it at a school assembly or at a special school event.

### Language

Aboriginal people were forbidden to speak their language under the Assimilation Policy of 1962 and many languages have been lost or are now starting to awaken with the help of linguists and speakers of Aboriginal Languages.

- Invite local First Nations people through your community, council or Aboriginal Language corporation to your classroom to learn the local language, so you can help these languages thrive today.
- Here are more [Adnyamathanha words](#) you can teach your students and create a language opportunity for your children to share them with others in your school or community.

### Yarning circles

Sitting in a circle around a fire and having a yarn is important to Aboriginal people. Everyone sits down in a yarning circle and is considered equal, taking turns and respecting each other's voice.

- If you haven't already, bring yarning circles into your classroom and highlight the importance of taking time to listen to each other respectfully. Here are some pointers: [Yarning Circles](#)

### Tracker Data Project

The Aboriginal kinship system is very different to the western kinship system and one person can have many mothers, fathers, Aunties and Uncles that are not blood related but are named as such as a sign of respect within the moiety structures. Watch this [Reconciliation Australia clip](#) together and discuss kinship systems with your class.

- The [Tracker Data Project](#) documents the kinship system of the Adnyamathnatha people and the significance of the Ngapulara Ngarnarnyi Wirra (Our Family Tree). Take time with your class to explore the webpage together or in small groups.
- Discuss the moiety system of the Adnyamathnatha people and find places in the book *Back On Country* where they can see the kinship system being used. E.g. 'hugging one of my mothers' and 'this is your Urbmarli Vapi (uncle)'
- You can go further and ask your students if they too have a different kinship system in their family that they would like to share. Or invite their parents/careers in to share their kinship systems with the class.

### Understanding Ochre

Invite a local Aboriginal Community member to your school to explain traditional ochre practices. Ask local Elders what would be an appropriate way of sharing ochre practices and grounding techniques with non-Indigenous people.

- Learn about ochre painting and ceremonies with Aunty Lyn Chapman: [Grinding Ochre](#). This practical activity teaches students more about how to grind rocks or chalk on paper to understand how traditional paint works.
- Explain that the ancient markings put on people during ceremonies are specific to

certain clans/tribes/language groups.

- Explain how Aboriginal people carved stories into rock and painted ochre on sandstone. Ask students what types of teachings could be told through this practice.
- Create a PowerPoint slide of the different markings to show your class. Students could also do some research of their own and find the different ceremonial markings.
- Spend some time as a class researching the cave paintings of the Adnyamathanha people in the Flinders Ranges [Aboriginal Cave Paintings at Yourambulla, South Australia](#) and their meaning.
- Research further as a class to find out if local Aboriginal people use and have used ochre as well.

### Cave Paintings

Explore images and the history of the Adnyamathanha people's cave paintings with your class. You will notice that a lot of charcoal was used, to tell the stories of the Adnyamathanha people, on the cave walls. With your class give them a piece of brown paper each and some charcoal for them to share their stories that are cave worthy. You may even choose to display them collectively to look like a cave sharing their stories with others.



**USAGE PROTOCOLS:** Ancient Cave Paintings are not covered under Australian Law of copyright today, but the photographs and videos taken of them are covered by copyright, and that artwork can not be reproduced.

There is a lot of debate around the intellectual property of these stories, however the best course of action is to **maintain cultural respect of traditional Lore** and not reproduce the artwork of **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people**. Here is a guide to the indigenous protocols from the Arts Law Centre of Australia: [Indigenous Protocols](#)

You will notice that illustrator David Hardy himself did not reproduce the cave paintings of the Adnyamathanha people in the book *Back On Country* as he is also forbidden to do so.

Please do not reproduce ancient Aboriginal cave paintings in your classroom with your students.

### World Heritage Listing

The Flinders Ranges is dubbed “The great outdoor museum” and is over 600 million years old and rich in fossils that tell the story of evolution.

The South Australian Government with the help of many stakeholders is hoping the Flinders Ranges will be added to the World Heritage list in 2025.

[South Australia's Flinders Ranges nominated for Unesco world heritage status | South Australia | The Guardian](#)

- [Watch this video of their bid](#) and encourage your students to follow the story in the coming years.
- Discuss why it is important to protect our country and the stories in the land and what role you play as a class and school community.

### Sacred Places

This country is full of sacred places and sites that Aboriginal people perform ceremonies and care for to this day. It is their cultural responsibility to take care of the land and animals to protect and nourish for future generations. Sacred places have a Creation or Dreaming story that explains the formation and why certain wildlife will appear and live the way that they do. The story of Akurra the Snake tells the Creation story of Lake Frome – a very important story to the Adnyamathanha people.

Check out this incredible image and the story of Akurra here: [Legends of the North – Akurra, the Snake](#)

- Write or draw a place that is really special to you. Who tells and teaches you special stories?
- Explore the concept of deep listening by explaining the roles of Elders passing down knowledge through spoken story. Have your students lie down with their eyes closed to listen deeper to a story and reflect on the experience.
- Read more about the meaning of [sacred sites here](#). It is important to teach our children that all lands, waterways and life are special and need to be protected and nurtured.

## Cooking Quandong (Urti) Pie

Cooking together with your class can be special. If you are able to get some Urti (Quandongs) to make a Urti pie with your class, here is a recipe from Damien Coulthard, who grew up picking Urtis in the Flinders Rangers with his Adnyini.

- Damien has shared his family recipe with you for you to share with your class. Or find out the local Native ingredients from your area and find a recipe that you can make and share with your class. Damper is a great one! [Damien's Urti Pie](#)

## Seven Sisters Dreaming

The Seven Sisters Dreaming is a story of love, lust, passion and danger of a man who pursues seven sisters over land and sky from Western Australia to the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) lands and beyond. This story captivates many Aboriginal people and is expressed beautifully in art as a way of keeping the story strong today.

- Explore the Seven Sisters Dreaming with your class. Provide your students with different materials so they can create their own artistic expression of the Seven Sisters Dreaming. [Seven Sisters \(Pleiades\) Star Dreaming Story - Aboriginal Art Stories](#)
- Watch these amazing [clips of the Digital Domes experience](#) Songlines tracking the Seven Sisters – one features animations of the Seven Sisters flying into the night sky and the other transports you to this previously never filmed Seven Sisters rock art site. A special way to further explore the meaning and connection Aboriginal people have with the Seven Sisters Dreaming

## Songlines

[Damien Coulthard's paintings](#) tell the Creation stories of the Flinders Ranges in South Australia. The Flinders Ranges are culturally significant to the Adnyamathanha people. His paintings evoke songlines where his people performed ceremonies and rituals.

Songs and dances are and have been performed during the travels on the songlines on this land

for thousands and thousands of years.

- Create a collection of Damien's artworks in a powerpoint presentation or visual aid to share with your class. Complete an artist study, demonstrating how he shares the beauty of his culture and songlines of the Adnyamathanha people through art.
- Invite a local Aboriginal artist to your classroom, to share with your class how they use art to share their songlines and keep culture alive. You may be surprised to learn that many of the highways and major roads you may have travelled on are ancient songlines of Aboriginal peoples.
- Encourage your students to share the stories they have learnt with others at home.

**All Aboriginal Art is covered by copyright and cannot be reproduced. Please use the art for inspiration and education purposes only.**

## Creating visually culturally safe places

Creating a culturally safe space for your Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community is of vital importance. A visually inviting and welcoming space is important, so ask yourself as a staff how you can utilise your space to demonstrate respect and continued celebration of the beauty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture with your school community. Your local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community is your greatest asset.

- Build an ongoing and respectful relationship with respected local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and make them an important part of your school community.
- Fly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags at your school.
- Showcase artworks by children and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.
- Display posters and books for all to share and enjoy.
- Have a physical Acknowledgement of Country that you have created with the children of your school.

**Encourage students to take what they have learned home with them and discuss with their parents and carers. A Parents and Carers Guide is also available to download from the Allen and Unwin website.**

# ACTIVITY LINKS TO AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

## **Intercultural understanding**

Values, rights and responsibilities:  
Investigate culture and cultural identity.  
Explore and compare cultural knowledge, beliefs and practices.  
Develop respect for cultural diversity.

## **Culture/Identity**

Exploring how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' observations of external features of living things are mimicked and replicated in traditional dance.

## **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures: Human-nature relationships**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities maintain a special connection to and responsibility for Country/Place. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have holistic belief systems and are spiritually and intellectually connected to the land, sea, sky and waterways.

## **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures: Identity**

Learn about and understand the concepts of kin, social groupings and relationships, and how these are connected to the natural environment. Recognising clans and other sub-groupings and the symbolic representation of these, for example, totems and personal relationships with plant/ animal species and Country/Place.

## **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures: Identity**

Talking about family names, given names, skin names and moiety as appropriate, for example, maternal versus paternal grandparents, presence or absence of birth order names, and other ways of referring to people. Categorising names of students in the class into clans, moieties and other sub-groupings, and where appropriate their affiliations with the natural environment, for example, salt versus fresh water, north versus south wind.

## **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures: Identity**

Learning from Elders appropriate ways of interacting with others and behaving according to kin and other social groupings. Identifying elements of behaviours or relationships that mark individual or community identity. Considering the nature of groups and sub-groups within the school and larger community.

## **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures: Identity**

Creating family history/life stories, identifying values and practices that keep families strong, such as working together. Identify with Country/Place and understand connections between Country/Place and individuals and groups.

## **HASS: Knowledge and Understanding**

The weather and seasons of places and the ways in which different cultural groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples describe them.

## **HASS: Communicating**

Acknowledging and learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' ways of representing and sharing observations.

## **HASS: Inquiry and Skills**

Interpreting geographic and concept maps to explore system connections (e.g how Aboriginal songlines connect places).

## **HASS: Evaluating and Reflecting**

Reflect on learning to propose how to care for places and sites that are important or significant

## **HASS: Geography**

The Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Country/Place on which the school is located and why Country/Place is important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

## **HASS: Geography**

How the stories of families and the past can be communicated, for example, through photographs, artefacts, books, oral histories, digital media and museums

## **HASS: Science as human endeavour**

Heat can be produced in many ways and can move from one object to another. Considering how science is used in activities such as cooking, fishing, transport, sport, medicine and caring for plants and animals.

## **HASS: Science**

People use science in their daily lives, including when caring for their environment and living things.

## **HASS: Science**

Investigating the production and transfer of heat in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' methods of cooking, such as the use of ground ovens.

## **HASS: History**

Differences in family structures and roles today, and how these have changed or remained the same over time. Examining and commenting on the roles of family

members over time (for example listening to stories about the roles of mothers, fathers, caregivers and children in the past) and comparing these with family roles today (for example work at home, work outside the home, childcare, gender roles, children's responsibilities).

## **HASS: History**

Past and Present: Explore definitions of 'the past' and 'the present'. The history of the natural environment in the local community and what it reveals about the past.

## **Maths: Measurement and geometry, using units of measurement**

Name and order months and seasons. Investigating the seasons used by Aboriginal people, comparing them to those used in Western society and recognising the connection to weather patterns.

## **English: Language**

Foundation/Year 1

Understand that English is one of many languages spoken in Australia and that different languages may be spoken by family, classmates and community.

## **The Arts: Dance**

Perform dances using expressive skills to communicate ideas, including telling cultural or community stories. Identify how the elements of dance express ideas, including exploration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance. Investigate how elements of dance can be used to tell a story.

## **The Arts: Music.**

Respond to music and consider where and why people make music, starting with Australian music, including music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. Exploring how traditional musical instruments used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples produce their characteristic sounds.

## **Visual Arts: Exploring ideas and improvising with ways to represent ideas**

Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination to create visual artworks and design, including considering ideas in artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.

## **Visual Arts: Responding to and interpreting artworks**

Respond to visual artworks and consider where and why people make visual artworks, starting with visual artworks from Australia, including visual artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

# DEBRIEFING AND ONGOING CONVERSATIONS

It is important to allow space for ongoing conversations for learning in your education setting.

Some questions you could ask your students are:

- What did you learn or remember from what we read and discussed?
- How do you feel?
- Why might this feel (insert positive response)?
- Why might this feel (insert negative response)?
- What would you like to do and/or learn more about?

Reinforce the title of the book, *Back on Country*, and discuss how we can honour and be respectful to the ceremonies performed by Aboriginal people in the past and today.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Adam Goodes** is an Adnyamathanha and Narungga man and community leader. He is a former Australian Rules footballer, having achieved the greatest heights in the game, and was named Australian of the Year in 2014 for his public work in the fight against racism and his advocacy in First Nations affairs. Together with his cousin Michael O'Loughlin, Adam founded the GO Foundation, which supports and inspires the next generation of First Nations leaders. With a diploma in Aboriginal Studies and his own daughter approaching preschool age, Adam was motivated to publish a series of books for young children and families about Australia's First Nations history.

**Ellie Laing** (nee Southwood) is a political adviser and former journalist and presenter who lives on the lands of the Gammeraygal people on the northern beaches of Sydney with her husband and two sons. When Ellie's eldest son Harvey came home from preschool reciting Acknowledgements of Country and singing Aboriginal lullabies, she was inspired to collaborate with Adam Goodes on a series of books aimed at helping families with young children to talk about Australia's First Nations history. She has recently completed studies in Traditional Aboriginal Cultures.



## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

**David Hardy** is a Barkindji man, author and artist with more than eight years of animation experience with Walt Disney Animation Studios. Married with two children, he is currently a Senior Gaming Illustrator/Animation Manager for Lightning Box Games. David has worked on twelve animated feature films, including *The Little Mermaid: Ariel's Beginning*, *The Lion King 3: Hakuna Matata* and *Return to Neverland*. His books for children include *Somebody's Land* and *Ceremony* (written by Adam Goodes and Ellie Laing), *Alfie's Search for Destiny* and *Alfie's Big Wish*, *On the Way to Nana's* (written by Frances and Lindsay Haji-Ali), *The Proud Foots 1: Shaka Shaka Hawaii* (written by Lucas Proudfoot) and *Aussie Kids: Meet Zoe and Zac at the Zoo* (written by Belinda Murrell).

## ABOUT THE ART STYLE

Creative licence has been taken with regard to historical accuracy. Clothing and other details reflect the sensibilities of a contemporary audience. The art and ceremony depicted in the illustrations are of the Adnyamathanha people and is set on their country in South Australia around the Flinders Ranges.