

Book Study & Author

Title: Black Cockatoo

Author: Carl Merrison and Hakea Hustler

Intended Year Level

Year 3 and 4

**Could be adapted for Year 5 and 6

Big ideas – Learning Intentions

Content Knowledge:

- Modern day Indigenous peoples are still strongly connected to Country and culture.
- Traditions and culture are important to Aboriginal past, present and future.
- Colonisation of Australia included events such as the Stolen Generations and forced labour.

Skills:

- Adverbs of time, place or manner; sentences with fronted adverbs
- Discussion skills using accountable talk sentence stems.
- Summary writing using paragraph shrinking
- Four sentence types – statements, questions, commands, exclamations

Prior to beginning the Book Study Unit

Skills to pre-teach:

Accountable Talk sentence stems

Identifying the subject (noun) and verb to convert fragments into sentences. Before Lesson 1

- [The Syntax Project – Year 3, Term 1](#)

The four sentence types – statement, exclamatory, question, command. Before Lesson 4

- [The Syntax Project – Year 3, Term 1](#)

Background knowledge to explore:

Indigenous Australians are the original people who have lived in Australia for at least 65,000 years, while white settlers have only been here since 1788.

Aboriginal people have a strong spiritual connection with the land on which they live, including a deep understanding of plants and animals. Cultural beliefs and knowledge are shared through storytelling. Aboriginal Elders are highly respected and have an important part in raising the children. Totems are an animal that individual aboriginal people have a special spiritual connection with.

There was a period in Australian history when indigenous people were taken away from their land and kept in camps (reserves, missions, stations) like prisoners. They also took children away from their families and gave them to 'white' families or kept them in orphanages.

Victorian Curriculum Links

History Level 3&4

Sequence significant events in chronological order to create a narrative about one navigator, explorer or trader and Australian settlement (VCHHC066)

Identify and describe continuity and change over time in the local community, region or state and as a result of the effects of European exploration (VCHHC069)

Identify and explain the causes and effects of European settlement and exploration (VCHHC070)

Intercultural Capability Level 3&4

Compare their own and others cultural practices, showing how these may influence the ways people relate to each other (VCICCB005)

Explain the role of cultural traditions in the development of personal, group and national identities (VCICCD007)

English: Reading - Level 3

Draw connections between personal experiences and the worlds of texts, and share responses with others (VCELT251)

Discuss how language is used to describe the settings in texts, and explore how the settings shape the events and influence the mood of the narrative (VCELT253)

Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to evaluate texts by drawing on a growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features (VCELY257)

English: Writing – Level 3

Create texts that adapt language features and patterns encountered in literary texts (VCELT265)

Understand that verbs represent different processes (doing, thinking, saying, and relating) and that these processes are anchored in time through tense (VCELA262)

English: Speaking and Listening – Level 3

Listen to and contribute to conversations and discussions to share information and ideas and negotiate in collaborative situations and use interaction skills, including active listening and clear, coherent communications (VCELY275)

Learn extended and technical vocabulary and ways of expressing opinion including modal verbs and adverbs (VCELA273)

Unit overview – Skills and Literacy components

Background knowledge – content knowledge	Indigenous Australians connections to Country, family connections and some history including the stolen generation.
Vocabulary (bolded words are explicitly taught in the slide deck, other words are briefly defined as they are encountered in the book)	Ch1) respect, defiantly , wrath, devastation Ch2) Country , fascinated, banter, solemnly Ch3) ajar, Ch4) colonisation Ch5) snuggled, nestled, sternly Ch6) Ch7) Code-switching, ancestors Ch8) unblemished, radiated, optimism Ch9) tradition, the station , rounded up, forbidden Ch10) out bush, connection Ch11) mob, freedom , Law man
Word study <i>Syllables, phonemes, graphemes, morphology</i>	Word families – adding prefix and suffixes to a base word (bound and unbound bases).
Comprehension Questions	Questioning the Author prompts to ensure student understanding of character and plot development. (<i>Robust Comprehension Instruction with Questioning the Author: 15 years smarter</i> ; Beck, McKeown & Sandora, 2021)
Discussion prompts <i>Speaking and listening skills</i>	Accountable talk sentence stems – small group discussions relating to the text.
Fluency Expression/intonation, accuracy, rate	First paragraph of the book. Repeat fluency passage throughout the week. Focus on accuracy, phrasing, intonation.
Syntax Word types, structures, word order, punctuation	Adverbs – describing time, place or manner. Using fronted adverbs to begin sentences eg. 'Tiredly, she remembered that ...'
Sentence Level Work Clause, subordinating clauses, conjunctions, etc (The Writing Revolution)	Embed content from the story & background texts to create the four sentence types: - Statement - Question - Command - Exclamatory
Independent Work	Summarising using paragraph shrinking questions: -Who or what was this mainly about? -What was the most important thing that happened?
Assessment (optional)	• Independent work samples throughout the unit – chapter summaries, syntax and sentence work. • Create a final piece of work (written, oral, scripted, video, visual) in response to the book.

	Create a one pager with subheadings/content areas – characters, events, ideas/themes, Aboriginal culture, etc. (One-pager outline in student print outs)
Extended writing activities (optional)	** Extra follow up or extension activities are noted in 'Teaching Notes' on the slides. **Genre writing – if students are learning about a specific type of genre writing, then the content of 'Black Cockatoo' could form the base of the work: <u>Narrative</u> - about saving an injured animal, about a family living in the bush. Retell the Dreamtime story of how the cockatoo turned black. <u>Informative</u> – Aboriginal culture and traditions. <u>Persuasive</u> - Jy should show more respect to his Elders. Should girls be allowed to join the boys/men for the their hunting 'out bush'. Should we change the flag? <u>Evaluative response</u> Do you think Mia is trapped in her own 'cage' or not? Why?

Extra Resources/ Additional Activities

Related non-fiction:

National Geographic: Facts about Indigenous Aboriginal and and culture

<https://www.natgeokids.com/au/discover/history/general-history/aboriginal-arts-and-culture/>

Brittanica - <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Australian-Aboriginal>

Schooling Online Kids: Video: Aboriginal History for Kids - The First Australians

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_4sM72nWNI

Deadly Story : <https://deadlystory.com/page/culture/history>

Related picture books and fiction:

Most picture story books that shows Aboriginal people and their life and culture past and present.

'Welcome to Country' by Joy Murphy Wandin,

'Stories for Simon' by Lisa Miranda Sarzin and Illustrated by Lauren Briggs (explains the Stolen Generation)

'Took the Children Away' by Archie Roach, Illustrations by Ruby Hunter

Other resources:

Songs : Archie Roach "Took the Children Away"; Paul Kelly "From little things, big things grow"; Yothu Yindi "Treaty"

Collection of videos:

http://www.workingwithindigenoussaustralians.info/content/Resources_4A_Videos.html

“Black Cockatoo” - Book Study Planner

Unit designed by Michelle Waterman (2023) – www.teachingtogether.com.au

Lesson schedule and teaching notes

	Lesson 1	Lesson 2
Learning Intentions	To learn more about Indigenous history. To listen, read and respond to the text Black Cockatoo. To understand the vocabulary, respect, defiant. To identify and use adverbs to modify or describe verbs. To write a summary of the chapter	To learn more about the Dreaming and Aboriginal culture of storytelling. To listen, read and respond to the text Black Cockatoo. To understand the vocabulary, respect, defiant. To identify and use adverbs to modify or describe verbs. To write a summary of the chapters
Lesson sequence	Background knowledge <i>Print out for all students:</i> Broad historical facts about Aboriginal culture. Vocabulary – Introduce <u>respect, defiant</u> <i>Incidental vocab:</i> wrath, devastation Read Chapter 1 – Comprehension Questions: Who are the characters we are introduced to in the first chapter?” Ask a follow up question “What do you think the author wants us to think about these characters so far?” (e.g. character traits) ‘How did the author show us some parts of Aboriginal life for this family?’ Discussion – Do you think we should show respect to all older people? Fluency – <i>Print out for all students:</i> Partner reading practice (ensure students are paired up appropriately.) List students in order from high to low reading ability then split the list in the middle and match up partners from the top of both lists through to the bottom. 1st Read focus on decoding accuracy. Syntax – adverbs Independent task – Using paragraph shrinking questions to help identify the main who/what and what happened? Begin orally through I do, We do, then independently write a summary sentence/s.	Review: Ask students to pair/share what they recall from the first Chapter. Begin character maps for Mia, Jy and the Grandparents Background knowledge: <i>Print out for all students:</i> The Dreaming or The Dreamtime stories. Video link: Aboriginal History for Kids - The First Australians - YouTube Vocabulary : Review / Introduce <u>Country</u> <i>Incidental vocab:</i> huddled, ajar, eager, suspiciously Read text: Chapter 2 Comprehension Questions: What do you think the author wants us to understand from this passage? Read text: Chapter 3 Comprehension Questions: <i>Who is the ‘unwelcome visitor’?</i> <i>What do you predict Mia is getting from the shops? What clue does the author give us?</i> Fluency passage: Repeat passage: Focus on punctuation and phrasing. Syntax: adverbs Independent task – Using paragraph shrinking questions to help identify the main who/what and what happened?
Teaching notes	Lesson Preparation: - Print out (background knowledge text) for all students – glue in books - Print out fluency passage for all students – glue in books - Accountable talk sentence stems (if students are still becoming familiar with these) Text feature: inclusion of indigenous language – class/indiv glossary list dirrarn/black cockatoo, jawiji/grandparent or grandchild, gunyarr/dogs, wan.gura/crow	Lesson Preparation: Print out (background knowledge text) for all students – glue in books Indigenous words: Chapter 2: yidiyidi/cicada, barranga/dry weather, bin.girrjaru/bush turkey, jarriny/totem, jij/sister, jiyirr/rainbow bee-eater bird Chapter 3: gulyulyu/budgies, jarrambayi/sand goanna, minyan/nother

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	Lesson 3	Lesson 4
Learning Intentions	To learn more about the Dreaming/Dreamtime To listen, read and respond to the text Black Cockatoo. To understand the vocabulary, colonisation To identify and use fronted adverbs To write a summary of the chapters	To learn more about the Dreaming/Dreamtime To listen, read and respond to the text Black Cockatoo. To understand the vocabulary code-switching, ancestors To identify four sentence types: statement, question, command, exclamatory To write a summary of the chapters
Lesson sequence	Review: Read about previous learnings about Aboriginal history. Background knowledge: <i>Print out for all students:</i> Storytelling and Art; video The story of the Black Cockatoo. Vocabulary : Review / Introduce <u>colonisation</u> Read text: Chapter 4 Comprehension Questions: Why had Mia been crying? Follow up: What does the author want us to know about Mia and her relationship with her brother? Read text: Chapter 5 Comprehension Questions: <i>Does Mia's family value school and education?</i> Follow up question: <i>What evidence is there in this chapter to support your answer?</i> Discussion: Do you think school is important for all kids? Fluency passage: Repeat passage: Focus on intonation Syntax: Fronted adverbs Independent task – Using paragraph shrinking questions to help identify the main who/what and what happened?	Pre-teach: The Syntax Project, 4 sentence types Review: Dreamtime story of the Black Cockatoo Background knowledge: <i>Print out for all students:</i> Cultural burning Vocabulary : Review / Introduce <u>code-switching. ancestors</u> Read text: Chapter 6 Comprehension Questions: <i>What did we learn from this chapter?</i> Read text: Chapter 7 Comprehension Questions: What does the author mean by, “You live in both worlds,” “You will be strong both ways”? Has Jy given up? And what has he given up on? Fluency passage: <i>Print out for all students</i> 1st Read focus on decoding accuracy. Writing: Identifying the 4 types of sentences Independent task – Using paragraph shrinking questions to help identify the main who/what and what happened?
Teaching notes	Lesson Preparation: - Print out (background knowledge text) for all students – glue in books - Accountable talk sentence stems Indigenous words: gardiya/white person Exention/Variations: - Read other Dreamtime animal creation stories - Genre writing – create a narrative (retell) of the story of the Black Cockatoo or other Dreamtime stories.	Lesson Preparation: - Pre-teach 4 sentence types: statement, question, command, exclamatory - Print out (background knowledge text) for all students – glue in books - Print out fluency passage for all students – glue in books - Accountable talk sentence stems Indigenous words: birlbirlji/grasshoppers, jaja/granddaughter

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	Lesson 5	Lesson 6
<i>Learning Intentions</i>	To learn more about the Aboriginal history in the 1900s, To listen, read and respond to the text Black Cockatoo. To understand the vocabulary tradition and stations. To create written statements and question with full stops or question marks. To write a summary of the chapters	To learn more about the Aboriginal traditions and ceremonies. To listen, read and respond to the text Black Cockatoo. To understand the vocabulary connection and freedom. To create written commands and exclamations using correct punctuation. To write a summary of the chapters
<i>Lesson sequence</i>	Review: Cultural burning Background knowledge: <i>Print out for all students:</i> Treatment of Aboriginal peoples during 1900s including the Stolen Generations Vocabulary : Review / Introduce <u>tradition, stations</u> Incidental vocab: unblemished, radiated, optimism, rounded-up, the station Read text: Chapter 8 Comprehension Questions: What clues does the author give us about Jy here? What might it mean? Read text: Chapter 9 Comprehension Questions: What important details does the author tell us about their family history here? Fluency passage: Repeat passage: Focus on punctuation and phrasing. Writing: Creating statements, questions, commands & exclamations about the text. Use of punctuation – capital letter, full stop, question mark or exclamation mark. Independent task – Using paragraph shrinking questions to help identify the main who/what and what happened?	Background knowledge: Aboriginal traditions and ceremonies Vocabulary : Review / Introduce <u>mob, freedom</u>, Incidental vocab: Law man, connection Read text: Chapter 10 Comprehension Questions: “Maybe it was longing for connection. Maybe it was sadness at what had been lost.” What does the author mean by this? What is Jy and his grandfather going to do? Read text: Chapter 11 Comprehension Questions: What was Mia’s dream about? How does Mia feel at the end of the story? Discussion: What do you think will happen to Mia and Jy next? Fluency passage: Repeat passage: Focus on intonation Writing: Summary writing Extended Writing task/Assessment: Create a final piece of work (written, oral, scripted, video, visual) in response to the book. Create a one pager with subheadings/content areas – characters, events, ideas/themes, Aboriginal culture, etc. (<i>One-pager outline in student print outs</i>)
<i>Teaching notes</i>	<i>Lesson Preparation:</i> - Print out (background knowledge text) for all students – glue in books Indigenous words: mangirrigirri tata/ lizard, marlu/kangaroo, jarrambayi/sand goanna, murnduj/black headed python, cousin-sisters Extension/Variations: - Listen to and read lyrics: ‘Took the Children Away’ by Archie Roach	<i>Lesson Preparation:</i> - Print out (background knowledge text) for all students – glue in books - Print out the One-pager outline. Guide students with the subheadings for each section. Include pictures, keywords, short phrases or sentences.

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Assessment / Follow up / Extension

Assessment: Choose what is appropriate for your class

Quiz- can be used as a pre and post assessment to track student learning. (Provided in Black Cockatoo Study assessment documents.)

Fluency passages can be assessed with performance or video recorded readings.

Written work: Use student summary sentences /workbooks as evidence of comprehension and writing skills.

- Key events
- Characters development
- Clear and coherent sentences
- Use of punctuation

Create a final piece of work (written, oral, scripted, video, visual) in response to the book.

- Write the next chapter of the book. What happens next for Mia and Jy? – Performance interview one of the characters about the next year/5 years of their lives.
- Write a book review then record you reading/performing it.
- Create a one pager with subheadings/content areas – characters, events, ideas/themes, Aboriginal culture, etc. (One-pager outline in student print outs) For ideas and examples check out Betsy Potash <https://nowsparkcreativity.com/free-resources>

Further explore Aboriginal history before and after colonisation. Compare and contrast. Information report writing.

Research important Aboriginal people.

Use song lyrics for further Fluency work. Perform for an audience or video individuals/groups/whole class. Eg. Paul Kelly, “From Little Things Big Things Grow”; Yothu Yindi “Treaty”



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References:

<https://australian.museum/learn/teachers/classroom-activities/cultural-burning/>

Working with Indigenous Australians - http://www.workingwithindigenoussaustralians.info/content/History_2_60,000_years.html

Aboriginal History for Kids - The First Australians - <https://www.youtube.com/@SchoolingOnlineKids>

<https://mbantua.com.au/aboriginal-culture/#:~:text=Corroborees%2FRituals,home%20comings%2C%20births%20and%20deaths.>

<https://theculturetrip.com/australia/articles/11-facts-about-aboriginal-australian-ceremonies>

National Geographic: Facts about Indigenous Aboriginal and and culture

<https://www.natgeokids.com/au/discover/history/general-history/aboriginal-arts-and-culture/>

Britannica - <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Australian-Aboriginal>

Deadly Story : <https://deadlystory.com/page/culture/history>

Some passages in the unit (Background Knowledge passages) were written with the assistance of ChatGPT using information found in these referenced sites.