

Bawoo Stories

May O'Brien

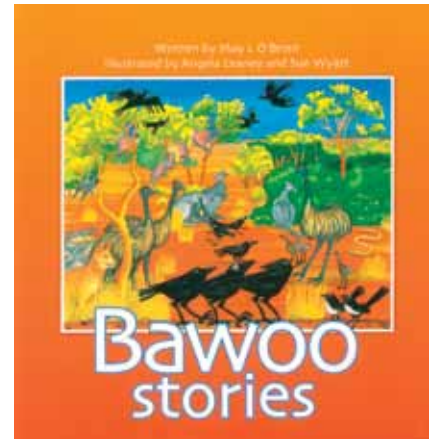
illustrations by Angela Leaney and Sue Wyatt ISBN:
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About the Book

Bawoo Stories brings together for the first time four best-selling stories by May O'Brien. Vividly illustrated, the stories capture traditional tales of the Wongutha people.

About the Author

May L O'Brien was born in the Eastern Goldfields of Western Australia, and at the age of five was taken to Mount Margaret Mission where she spent the next twelve years. She taught in Western Australian rural and metropolitan primary schools for twenty-five years. May served in a number of other positions before being appointed Superintendent of Aboriginal Education, a position she held until her early retirement in 1988. Her total service with the Western Australian Ministry of Education was thirty-four years. May is currently National Indigenous English Literacy and Numeracy Strategy Ambassador for the Department of Education, Science and Training, and Patron of the Australian Principals Associations Professional Development Council's 'Dare to Lead: taking it on' Project.



Study Notes

How crows became black

SCIENCE

A. Before reading

Science Understanding – Biological Sciences

1. Investigate the biological phenomenon known as 'adaptation':
 - a. What is an 'adaptation'? Why must animals adapt to their environment?
 - b. Conduct research into the following animals and, using the table below, think about how the adaptations they have made are beneficial. The Perth Zoo website may help you with this activity: www.perthzoo.wa.gov.au/animals-plants/australia/australian-bushwalk

Australian animal	Adaptation	Benefit of this adaptation
Platypus	Paddle-shaped bill	
Echidna	Spines on its back	
Koala	Long, sharp claws	
Numbat	Long, thin, sticky tongue	
Little Penguin	Ability to spend time on both land (terrestrial) and in the sea (marine)	

2. The central focus of this story is the crow and the reasons why its feathers are black. Find out:

- What parts of Australia the crow lives in
- What it looks like
- What it eats
- What its habits are
- Where it nests
- What varieties of crow exist

3. Using the information you found in the last activity, try to come up with reasons why the crow

- Has dark plumage
- Has a very varied diet, eating just about anything (including cane toads!)
- Has eggs the colour they are
- Has very good eyesight

Science Inquiry Skills – Communicating

4. Draw a diagram of the crow, or any other Australian animal that demonstrates its adaptations for survival.
5. Plan a visit to the native animal section of your local zoo, or arrange for a ranger to visit your class with some animals. See if you can identify the unique adaptations each animal has made to its environment.

B. During reading

Science Understanding – Biological Sciences

6. Investigate ecosystems:
 - a. What is an ecosystem? In what ways did the animals and people in this story interact with each other? How did the crows' behaviour and colouring interrupt the smooth running of the ecosystem?
 - b. What are some examples in your local area of introduced or feral animals disrupting the ecosystem? What impact are they having on native flora and fauna?
 - c. How does humankind affect the environment positively and negatively?
 - d. What measures can each of us take to help the environment? What can we all do collectively?
7. What role do the Wongutha people play in the environment? In what ways are they important to the land?

Science Understanding – Earth and Space Sciences

8. *'Sometimes, the Wongutha men paint white ochre on their bodies. We can do the same with black ochre.'*
 - a. What is ochre? Where does it come from? Why did the crows have such trouble finding ochre that is black?
 - b. Aboriginal peoples have long used ochre for various purposes, including body-painting for ceremonies. If possible, arrange for a local Aboriginal cultural workshop on ochre at your school (you may like to contact a local Aboriginal cultural centre. The Department of Education website in most states has useful links).

9. *A few weeks later the Wongutha men started to burn off the bush. They did this to make it fresh and green again.*
- How does 'burning off' the bush help to regenerate it? Does burning off still happen? Where? Who conducts burn-offs? Do you think this is a good idea?
 - Investigate the 2012 Margaret River bushfire, which was attributed to prescribed burning (www.abc.net.au/news/2011-11-24/margaret-river-residents-angry-over-fires/3692272). What factors contributed to this fire getting out of control? Where would you put the blame for this fire? Why? Do you think that prescribed burn-offs should still happen? What rules or restrictions would you place on them?

C. After reading

Science Understanding – Biological Sciences

10. What reasons are given in the story for the following:
- The crows being black
 - The crows ruffling their feathers when they stand still
 - Crows not living in large groups
 - Salt lakes and salt bushes being a part of the landscape in Wongutha country (the Eastern Goldfields)
 - Why small birds chase crows
11. Identify all the animals in the illustrations of the story. Discuss why each was jealous of, or upset by, the crows.

ENGLISH

A. Before reading

Literature – Examining Literature

- Does the title of this story appeal to you? Why or why not? Why do you think such a simple title was chosen?
- Using your knowledge of 'teaching stories', come up with as many explanations as you can for why the crows will become black. Share ideas with the class and decide on:
 - Which would be most likely
 - Which would be most interesting
 - Which would be funniest
 - Which would be saddest

B. During reading

Literature – Examining Literature

- Look at the illustrations of this story; what are some of the unique elements of the Australian outback that you can identify? How do you think someone from another country would feel about Australia after reading this story? Why do you think that the illustrator has used such bright, vibrant colours?

Literature – Texts in Contexts

- Storytelling has long been an important part of Australian Aboriginal cultures.
 - Wongutha stories were traditionally told, rather than written. Why do you think the author has written this story for today's children?
 - What do stories such as this tell us about the way knowledge has been passed on to children in traditional Aboriginal cultures? Do other cultures have similar traditions? What stories did your parents or relatives tell to you to answer questions you asked?

Literacy – Interpreting, Analysing, Evaluating

5. In what ways do the author and illustrator

- Inform you
- Persuade you
- Entertain you

You might like to use this table to organise your ideas. Use one colour when referring to the author, and another when referring to the illustrator.

The story INFORMS me about: Informs – teaches – educates – tells – makes me understand	This story PERSUADES me about: Persuades – convinces – makes me believe	This story ENTERTAINS me by: Entertains – amuses – makes me feel

6. Read the part of the story that tells of the fire the crows used to burn their feathers: *They didn't have long to wait.* Draw a picture of a fire and around it write all the words from this passage that describe the blaze. What feelings does the author convey? In another colour, add as many of your own words as you can.

7. *'All the bush creatures are angry with us,' said a wise old crow.*

In what ways was this crow wise? How has the author shown that he is the wisest? How has the illustrator done this?

8. Do you think that this story teaches anything in addition to how crows became black?

- What message does it convey about the desire to fit in and be accepted? Do you think that this is a positive message? How might this be relevant in your own life?
- What does it teach us about the Australian bush, landscape and animals? Give specific answers.

Language – Language Variation and Change

9. Why does the story include translations of the Wongutha language? How does it help you understand the story? Why do you think the author has kept the Wongutha language in her story?

10. Engage with language:

- Research the language of the Aboriginal nation in your area. Write down some words you have learned, then try to write a sentence using them. Practise speaking it aloud and share with a partner, the class, or make a recording of it. If you speak another language that is not English, you could record or share the same sentence that way too.
- Reflect on what you found easy and difficult about this activity. What are the challenges and difficulties of learning a new language?

C. After reading

Language – Text Structure and Organisation

11. Without referring back to the text, complete Appendix A (attached at the back of these notes), demonstrating your understanding of the story. You do not have to use the same words as the story but it does still have to make sense!

12. Create and present a story:

- Undertake the 'What Happens Next?' sequencing activity in Appendix B (attached at the back of these notes). Complete this activity in these steps:

STEP ONE: Colour in the pictures using appropriate colours.

STEP TWO: Cut them out, and put them in the correct order.

STEP THREE: Check with your teacher, then paste onto paper or card. Underneath the pictures, write the relevant part of the story.

STEP FOUR: Staple the pages together to form a book, and write your name in the space provided on the cover.

- b. Visit a class of younger students and pair up to read them your book. Explain to them who the Wongutha people are and where they live. Read your book clearly and slowly, stopping to show and explain the pictures to your partner.

Literature – Responding to Literature

13. Critically discuss the story:

- a. With a partner, discuss what you think are the positives and negatives of this story.
- b. Determine whether or not you would recommend this story to others, and why. Share your opinions with the class.
- c. Write a review of this story that includes:
 - The author's and illustrator's names
 - A description of the story
 - What you liked and disliked about the story
 - For whom this book would be appropriate
 - A star ratingDisplay your reviews in your class or in the library.

Literature – Creating Texts

14. Write your own story that explains how crows became black, or why another animal looks or acts the way it does. Illustrate your stories and display them in your classroom or library.

Literacy – Creating Texts

15. In a group, plan, rehearse and perform a short play inspired by this story. Think carefully and creatively about how you can communicate the story to your audience. For example, how might you show:
- That the old silver crow is wise and respected
 - The raging fire that burns the crows' feathers
 - That the other animals and Wongutha people are frustrated with the crows

Why the emu can't fly

SCIENCE

A. Before reading

Science Understanding – Biological Sciences

1. Research native animals:
 - a. Use the Perth Zoo website to complete the following table. You should copy it into your workbook to have enough room to write your information. Visit www.perthzoo.wa.gov.au/animals-plants/australia.

Australian Bird	Weight	Number of eggs laid	Habitat	Diet	Threats to survival	Interesting fact
Emu						
Black Swan						
Brolga						
Glossy Ibis						
Boobook Owl						
Bush						
Stone-curlew						
Red-tailed Black Cockatoo						
Southern Cassowary						

- b. Choose one of the birds about which you have learned and draw a picture of it to be displayed in your classroom. You might like to illustrate in traditional Aboriginal painting styles or by using the colours of ochre – brown, yellow, red, orange.
2. Why is it that some birds can fly and others cannot? What aspects of their body, diet and habitat might cause a bird to lose the ability to fly over time?

B. During reading

Science Understanding – Biological Sciences

3. If possible, view an emu at the zoo or a wildlife park, or watch a video of an emu in its natural habitat. Can you identify the emu behaving in ways that are suggested in the story?

C. After reading

Science Understanding – Biological Sciences

4. With a partner, review what you have learned about emus from the story. For example, who looks after the eggs during nesting season? Share your list with the class to create a master list. Use this list to create a poster that teaches about the emu. Make sure it is bright, colourful, clear, and labelled.

Science Inquiry Skills – Evaluating

5. Does this story try to offer a scientific reason for why the emu can no longer fly? Why would it not be considered scientific? Why are teaching stories important, even if their reasons are not scientific?

ENGLISH

A. Before reading

Literature – Examining Literature

1. Using your knowledge of teaching stories, come up with as many explanations as you can for how the emus might lose their ability to fly. Share ideas with the class and decide on:
- Which would be most likely
 - Which would be most interesting
 - Which would be funniest
 - Which would be saddest

Language – Expressing and Developing Ideas

2. Look up the following words in a dictionary and write a definition in your own words. Check with your teacher if you're unsure of the meaning. Use each of the words in a sentence.
- Vanity Snooty Antics Jeer

B. During reading

Literacy – Interpreting, Analysing, Evaluating

3. *Suddenly, the emus understood the meaning of that special song the important man had sung.*
How has the illustrator shown the emus' feelings about what has happened to them? How can you tell that they are not pleased?
4. In what ways do the author and illustrator:
- Inform you
 - Persuade you
 - Entertain you
- You might like to use this table to organise your ideas. Use one colour when referring to the author, and another when referring to the illustrator.

The story INFORMS me about:	This story PERSUADES me about:	This story ENTERTAINS me by:
Informs – teaches – educates – tells – makes me understand	Persuades – convinces – makes me believe	Entertains – amuses – makes me feel

Literature – Examining Literature

5. Examine the illustrations of the little birds seeking help from the wedge-tailed eagles, the animals, and the galahs.
- Why do you think that the illustrator has drawn the emus as shadows in the sky?
 - Why are the other birds and animals given brighter colours and more detail?

Literature – Literature and Context

6. ‘Garlaya darldu birni, ngayunha gulila,
Nhurraba ngula barrbagu, nhurra ngula barrbagu,
Ngaba nhurraba dirdu, jinangga barnangga barrabithagu.’
 - a. How do you think this song would have been sung? Consider speed, tone, dynamics, and vocal expression. Explain your reasons.
 - b. Use the pronunciation glossary at the end of the book to help you learn how to speak these words aloud. Use your ideas from part (a) and have a go with a partner.
7. In the story, the little birds seek help from the animals, birds, and the Wongutha elders.
 - a. What does this tell you about the Wongutha people’s relationship with the environment?
 - b. Invite to your class a local Aboriginal elder to share stories and information about important local animals.

Language – Language variation and change

8. Why does the story include translations of the Wongutha language? How does it help you understand the story? Why do you think the author has kept the Wongutha language in her story?
9. Research the language of the Aboriginal nation in your area. Write down some words you have learned, then try to write a sentence using them. Practise speaking it aloud and share with a partner, the class, or make a recording of it. If you speak another language that is not English, you could record or share the same sentence that way too.

C. After reading

Language – Text Structure and Organisation

10. Without referring back to the text, complete Appendix C (attached at the back of these notes), demonstrating your understanding of the story. You do not have to use the same words as the story but it does still have to make sense!
11. Create and present a story:
 - a. Undertake the ‘What Happens Next?’ sequencing activity in Appendix D (attached at the back of these notes). Complete this activity in these steps:
STEP ONE: Colour in the pictures using appropriate colours.
STEP TWO: Cut them out, and put them in the correct order.
STEP THREE: Check with your teacher, then paste onto paper or card. Underneath the pictures, write the relevant part of the story.
STEP FOUR: Staple the pages together to form a book, and write your name in the space provided on the cover.
 - b. Visit a class of younger students and pair up to read them your book. Explain to them who the Wongutha people are and where they live. Read your book clearly and slowly, stopping to show and explain the pictures to your partner.

Literature – Responding to Literature

12. As a class, discuss the issues this story raises. For example:
 - Did the emus deserve the punishment they received?
 - Should the birds, animals, and Wongutha people have done more to help the little birds?
 - What are the different ways that bullying was dealt with in the story? Who were the bystanders? Who tried to ‘bully the bullies’? What approach worked best?
13. Consider the story critically:
 - a. With a partner, discuss what you think are the positives and negatives of this story.
 - b. Determine whether or not you would recommend this story to others, and why. Share your opinions with the class.

- c. Write a review of this story that includes:
- The author's and illustrator's names
 - A description of the story
 - What you liked and disliked about the story
 - For whom this book would be appropriate
 - A star rating
- Display your reviews in your class or in the library.

Literacy – Creating Texts

14. Bring the story to life:
- a. Work with a group to draft, practise and perform this story. There is no need to use the same words as the original story, as long as you are communicating the plot and meaning clearly.
 - b. Invite a class of younger students to be the audience for these performances. Have them vote on which was the best and ask for some volunteers to explain what were the highlights. Nominate a number of students to explain to the audience the significance of the story and some information about the Wongutha people.
15. Divide a piece of paper in half. On one side, draw a picture that shows the emus when they were flying. On the other half, show the emus after the head man has taken away their ability to fly. In your drawings, use colour, facial expressions, symbols, and other techniques to communicate how the emus felt at the start of the story and at its end.

Literature – Creating Texts

16. Write your own story that explains how emus lost their ability to fly, or why another animal looks or acts the way it does. Illustrate your stories and display them in your classroom or library.

The kangaroos who wanted to be people

SCIENCE

A. Before reading

Science Understanding – Biological Sciences

1. Kangaroos live and move in large family groups, known as mobs. Using clay, plasticine or another modelling material, each student is to construct a model of a kangaroo. Some should be upright, some lying down, some feeding. Once everyone has finished, create a diorama to be displayed in your classroom. Some students could also be responsible for moulding environmental objects such as trees and grasses.
A number of images of the red kangaroo can be found at www.zoo.org.au/animals#Mammalia
2. What adaptations does the kangaroo have for life on the move? Look beyond the obvious features of its tail and feet.

Science As Human Endeavour – Use and Influence of Science

3. *'We must learn how to make a fire too,' they said.*
Why was the discovery of fire by early man so important? What does it allow people to do? How does it bring communities together?

B. During reading

Science Understandings – Physical Sciences

4. *The Wongutha men watched the kangaroos too, and they talked as they made their boomerangs, shields and strong sharp spears.*
Read about boomerangs on the Questacon website: www.questacon.edu.au/indepth/clever/aboriginal_technology.html
 - a. What did you learn about boomerangs that you did not know before? Are all boomerangs the same? What are they used for? How does a boomerang work?
 - b. Using card, draw and cut out your own boomerang; it could be a curved returning boomerang, a straighter hunting boomerang, or a woomera (spear thrower). Decorate your boomerang appropriately and display it in your classroom.
 - c. Hold a boomerang throwing competition with your class. Make sure you have a very large area, for example the school oval, on which to hold your tournament!

Science Understanding – Earth and Space Science

5. *First they crushed red and white ochre and took great care in painting their special symbols on their faces and bodies.*
What is ochre? Where is it found and what can it be used for?
Invite an Aboriginal elder to speak to your class about the traditional use of ceremonial face and body painting.

C. After reading

Science Understanding – Biological Sciences

6. Watch *Kangaroo Survival in the Wild – BBC Wildlife* found at www.youtube.com/watch?v=4DZnx1mGyq4

- a. Look carefully at the way the kangaroos move. In pairs, develop a mime demonstrating kangaroo actions.
- b. What do you notice about the way they move? Why do they spend so much time lying down when they are such good movers?

ENGLISH

A. Before reading

Literature – Literature and Context

1. The title of this story is 'The kangaroos who wanted to be people'. Why do you think kangaroos would want to be more like humans? What can we do that they cannot?
2. What animal would you like to be? Why? Write a paragraph that explains your reasons.

Literature – Responding to Literature

3. The introduction to this story reads, '*The Kangaroos Who Wanted To Be People*' tells what happens when walking kangaroos disobey the rules. It helps to explain why some places or areas are out of bounds to children.
 - a. Can you think of a time when you have disobeyed the rules, even though you knew it was the wrong thing to do? What were the consequences of your actions? Why are rules important in society?
 - b. List ten rules that we have – in society, at school, or at home – that exist to protect us. Share with the class and decide on the three most important rules.
 - c. In what ways are rules enforced in modern Australia? Give examples of rules that are enshrined in law and of rules that are not laws but are commonly accepted behaviour.

B. During reading

Literature – Examining Literature

4. *The kangaroos and the people watched each other while pretending not to.*
What do you think the author means by this? Why would the people and the kangaroos not want to show that they are each watching the other?
5. *Although the kangaroos overheard the stories and songs, important secrets were kept by the elders.*
Why do you think the illustrator has drawn a whirlwind – gubi-gubi – in the middle of the elders? What might it represent?

Literature – Responding to Literature

6. *They were important to the Wongutha people, because they were painted by the people's ancestors. It was a very special place indeed.*
 - a. What are some of the places that are special to your family? Why are they significant? Does your family have any special rituals – for example, visiting a particular restaurant, doing an activity – in which you participate when visiting these places? Why are they important to you?
 - b. Create some cave paintings of your own. Use symbols and colours to represent your family's special places and rituals. Present your 'cave wall' to the class, explaining why you chose these symbols to represent your traditions.

Language – Language variation and change

7. Why does the story include translations of the Wongutha language? How does it help you understand the story?

Why do you think the author has kept the Wongutha language in their story?

8. Research the language of the Aboriginal nation in your area. Write down some words you have learned, then try to write a sentence using them. Practise speaking it aloud and share with a partner, the class, or make a recording of it. If you speak another language that is not English, you could record or share the same sentence that way too. What made this activity difficult (or easy)? Share your experiences with the class.

Literacy – Interpreting, Analysing, Evaluating

9. In what ways do the author and illustrator:

- Inform you
- Persuade you
- Entertain you

You might like to use this table to organise your ideas. Use one colour when referring to the author, and another when referring to the illustrator.

The story INFORMS me about: Informs – teaches – educates – tells – makes me understand	This story PERSUADES me about: Persuades–convinces–makes me believe	This story ENTERTAINS me by: Entertains – amuses – makes me feel

C. After reading

Language – Text Structure and Organisation

10. Without referring back to the text, complete Appendix E (attached at the end of these notes), demonstrating your understanding of the story. You do not have to use the same words as the story but it does still have to make sense!
11. Create and present a story:
 - a. Undertake the ‘What Happens Next?’ sequencing activity in Appendix F (attached at the end of these notes). Complete this activity in these steps:
STEP ONE: Colour in the pictures using appropriate colours.
STEP TWO: Cut them out, and put them in the correct order.
STEP THREE: Check with your teacher, then paste onto paper or card. Underneath the pictures, write the relevant part of the story.
STEP FOUR: Staple the pages together to form a book, and write your name in the space provided on the cover.
 - b. Visit a class of younger students and pair up to read them your book. Explain to them who the Wongutha people are and where they live. Read your book clearly and slowly, stopping to show and explain the pictures to your partner.

Literature – Creating Literature

12. Aboriginal art uses many symbols to tell stories visually. Read the information given on this page: <http://www.teacherstimesaver.com/discoz/art.html>
 - a. Look at the symbols at the end of the article. Why do you think these symbols have been used to represent these ideas?
 - b. Create your own symbols to tell a story. Use your fingers to paint the story. When it is dry, share it with the class and explain the story the symbols tell.

Literature – Literature and Context

13. *Although the kangaroos overheard the stories and songs, important secrets were kept by the elders. These were never talked about in front of women and children*
In Aboriginal cultures, there are stories, secrets and rituals that are men-only and women-only. Are there any stories

and activities that are 'men-only' or 'women-only' in your family? Why is this?

Barn-Barn Barlala, the bush trickster

SCIENCE

A. Before reading

Science Understanding – Biological Sciences

1. *Again Barn-Barn Barlala called, but now it seemed to come from the north. That bird was very clever.*
 - a. What type of bird is Barn-Barn Barlala? Where could you find this information?
 - b. When you have found out, use the link below to learn about this animal:
www.birdsinbackyards.net/species/Oreoica-gutturalis
Use this information to create a profile poster that includes a picture of this animal for display in the classroom. Include information such as:
 - Where it is found
 - What it eats
 - What it looks like
 - What its habits are
 - Its conservation status
2. Survival in the Australian outback:
 - a. Why is survival in the Australian outback so difficult? Discuss as a class some of the adaptations Australian animals have made to living in this environment.
 - b. If you were to be stranded in the outback, what would be the most important things to do and to have? Share your ideas with the class and, as a group, decide upon the top ten items you would need, and the top five things you should (or shouldn't) do.
 - c. Construct a pamphlet or movie that educates people travelling through the outback on how to survive should they become lost or stranded.

B. During reading

Science Understanding – Biological Sciences

3. *The next day, the children noticed that the birds were busy at the trees. They knew what that meant.*
The children know that the berries are ripe for eating when they see the birds eating them. Can you think of other examples when animals, insects, or other environmental changes indicate to us that something is ready for eating or using? Remember you must not use this method unless you know the plant is safe for humans to eat, because some animals can safely eat plants that are poisonous and even deadly to humans.

C. After reading

Science Understanding – Biological Sciences

4. In this story, Barn-Barn Barlala was able to use his call to confuse the children. Can you think of other animals that

use their sounds, colours, or bodies to confuse other animals? What is the purpose of this?

Science as Human Endeavour – Use and Influence of Science

5. Tracking is a very specialised skill that is still used when searching for people missing in the bush.
 - a. What indications did the boy in the story use to find his way home? Can you think of others that might be useful?
 - b. Work with a partner to have a go at tracking. While one person waits in the classroom, the other should walk a path to a destination, which their partner cannot see. In doing so, they are to lay out subtle (but not invisible!) tracks for their partner to follow. (For example, leave some footprints, drop a piece of clothing, change something you pass by.) See how long it takes to find your partner.
 - c. Look up images of the paws, claws or feet of the following animals:
 Human Kangaroo Emu Cockatoo Snake
 Think about the way they move, and if any other part of them touches the ground, and draw their tracks. Search the web to find real-life examples and check whether you were right.
 - d. Invite to your class a member of the Aboriginal group local to your area who can speak to the class about identifying and using animal tracks. If your school is close to a wetland or bushland, you may be able to observe these tracks in the environment.

ENGLISH

A. Before reading

Language – Expressing and Developing Ideas

1. What are the connotations of the word ‘trickster’? What kind of character do you think that Barn-Barn Barlala will be? How would it change your ideas if he was given a different name, like ‘the meddler’, ‘the destroyer’, or ‘the helper’?

B. During reading

Literature – Examining Literature

2. ‘You’re not afraid, are you?’ said one boy to his sister.
 What does the illustrator communicate to you about Barn-Barn Barlala through this illustration?

Literacy – Interpreting, Analysing, Evaluating

3. In what ways do the author and illustrator:
 - Inform you
 - Persuade you
 - Entertain you
 You might like to use this table to organise your ideas. Use one colour when referring to the author, and another when referring to the illustrator.

The story INFORMS me about: Informs – teaches – educates – tells – makes me understand	This story PERSUADES me about: Persuades – convinces – makes me believe	This story ENTERTAINS me by: Entertains – amuses – makes me feel

C. After reading

Literature – Responding to Literature

4. What skills have your parents taught you? Have you ever had to use these skills? What is your response to the actions of the children in this story?
5. What are the messages conveyed to readers of this story? Which do you think is the most important message, and why?
6. Consider the story critically:
 - a. With a partner, discuss what you think are the positives and negatives of this story.
 - b. Determine whether or not you would recommend this story to others, and why. Share your opinions with the class.
 - c. Write a review of this story that includes
 - The author's and illustrator's names
 - A description of the story
 - What you liked and disliked about the story
 - For whom this book would be appropriate
 - A star rating

Literature – Examining Literature

7. Compare the illustrations in this story to those in 'Why the emu can't fly'. In what ways are they similar? In what ways are they different? Why do you think the illustrator has drawn them this way? What does she communicate through her colours, style and pictures?
8. Compare this story to the others in *Bawoo Stories*. What do you notice is different in 'Barn-Barn Barlala, the bush trickster'? Does having people rather than animals as the main characters make the story:
 - More or less interesting
 - More or less effective in communicating its message
 - More or less enjoyableGive reasons for your answers.

Literature – Literature and Context

9. Can you think of any other myths, legends or stories that have a similar theme or plot? In what ways are they similar and different? How do the stories reflect the culture that produced them?
10. Why do you think the Wongutha people told this story to their children rather than simply telling them not to wander off without an adult? What might it tell you about the Wongutha way of life, beliefs, and values?
11. Why do you think the illustrator used so many shades of brown and orange when illustrating this story? What might it tell us about where the story originated? Would it be as effective if she had used brighter and more varied colours? Explain your opinion.

Language – Text Structure and Organisation

12. Without referring back to the text, complete Appendix G (attached at the back of these notes), demonstrating your understanding of the story. You do not have to use the same words as the story but it does still have to make sense!
13. Create and present a story:
 - a. Undertake the 'What Happens Next?' sequencing activity in Appendix H (attached at the back of these notes). Complete this activity in these steps:
 - STEP ONE: Colour in the pictures using appropriate colours.
 - STEP TWO: Cut them out, and put them in the correct order.

STEP THREE: Check with your teacher, then paste onto paper or card. Underneath the pictures, write the relevant part of the story.

STEP FOUR: Staple the pages together to form a book, and write your name in the space provided on the cover.

- b. Visit a class of younger students and pair up to read them your book. Explain to them who the Wongutha people are and where they live. Read your book clearly and slowly, stopping to show and explain the pictures to your partner.

Literacy – Creating Texts

14. Bring the story to life:

- a. Working in small groups, draft and rehearse a dramatic interpretation of this story without using speech. Think carefully about how you can effectively communicate to your audience without relying on words.
- b. After you have performed your play to the class, complete the following reflection questions:
 - The most difficult part of this task was ...
 - I am most pleased with the way my group ...
 - I am most disappointed by ...
 - If I were to repeat this activity I would change ...
 - I have learned from this activity that ...Give reasons and explanations for each of your answers.

Bawoo Stories – General activities and discussion starters

The following activities may be conducted before, during, and/or after reading to complement the study of individual stories or the text as a whole.

SCIENCE

Science Understanding – Biological Sciences

- When researching various animals and plants, you may notice that their 'Conservation Status' is often listed. This tells us how likely it is to remain alive in the wild and in captivity in the near future. Many factors are used to determine a species' conservation status: the number remaining, whether the population has been increasing or decreasing recently, breeding success, and known threats. The graph below illustrates the 'conservation status' range:



Use reference materials to complete the following table. The Perth Zoo Australian Animals webpage will be very helpful in completing this activity: www.perthzoo.wa.gov.au/animals-plants/australia

Australian animal	Conservation status	Habitat	Threats to survival
Red Kangaroo			
Numbat			
Southern Hairy-nosed Wombat			
Tasmanian Tiger			
Australian Tarantula			
Ghost Bat			
Northern Quoll			
Woylie			
Frilled Dragon			
Red-tailed Black Cockatoo			

- Plan a visit to the Perth Zoo or other wildlife park. In particular, view the Australian animals and complete the following table. Photocopy or transfer the table to a workbook to ensure you have enough room to write and draw. (If your zoo has other animals, adjust the table accordingly.)

Animal	Habitat	Diet	Physical features and adaptations	Picture
Kangaroo				
Koala				
Dugite				

Frilled Dragon				
Platypus				
Chuditch				
Green Tree Frog				
Western Ring Tail Possum				
Emu				
Short-beaked Echidna				

GEOGRAPHY

- Using Appendix I (attached at the back of these notes), mark and label on the blank map of Australia the traditional areas of as many Aboriginal groups as you can find. Use different colours or patterns for each, and label them clearly on the map or by using a legend.
- In which group's country do you live?
- Invite a local Aboriginal elder to your class to speak about local traditions, stories, and how the country has changed over time. Have students prepare a number of questions for the speaker in advance. A group of students could be responsible for (with permission) creating an audio recording of the speaker and transcribing it into an illustrated book for the class to refer back to in future.

ENGLISH

Literature – Literature and Context

- The tales in *Bawoo Stories* are those of the Wongutha people (sometimes spelled Wangkatha) of the Eastern Goldfields area in Western Australia. Read the author's and illustrators' biographies at the start of the book. Then look at the map of Wongutha country and the text opposite it. What are the main towns in this region today? Identify on the map the places where each of the book's creators was born.

Literature – Examining Literature

- Discuss the similarities and differences between traditional tales, folktales, myths and legends. Find examples of each.
Traditional stories are those that are handed down from generation to generation.
Folktales explain emotions and how good overcomes evil.
Myths are traditional folktales that attempt to explain the origin of some aspect of existence.
Legends are traditional folktales that, though unable to be proven, are believed to be based in truth.
Which of these categories (perhaps more than one) would Aboriginal teaching stories fit into? You might revisit this question after studying one or more of the *Bawoo Stories*.

Literature – Responding to Literature

- As a class, share your opinions about whether Aboriginal teaching stories, and other cultures' creation stories, are relevant in an age of scientific advancement and discovery. Are they still important? Can we still learn from them? Support your ideas with evidence and examples. Students may show a wide range of opinions on this topic, and should be encouraged to be respectful of each other's opinions.

Language – Sound and Letter Knowledge

- Become aware of the way sounds are made in our mouths when speaking. How are vowel sounds made? How are consonant sounds made? If there are speakers of other languages in the class, invite them to demonstrate how

different sounds are made for that language (be sure to ask the student privately in advance if they would like to do that). Reflect on why learning new languages may be difficult, even when written words are known and understood.

5. Use Appendix J (attached at the back of these notes) to study the way that sounds are made in Aboriginal languages. Practise speaking aloud the words that are part of the stories in *Bawoo Stories*, using the Pronunciation Glossary at the back of the book.

Literacy – Interpreting, Analysing, Evaluating

6. Model the construction of a plot graph using one of the *Bawoo Stories* or another myth that is well known to the class.
Begin by creating a graph that has the horizontal axis depicting plot development, and the vertical axis depicting tension or interest. As you read through the text with the class, identify key plot points and mark them on the graph – discuss with the class at each point how far along the plot development axis it should be marked (horizontal), and how tense or interesting it is (vertical). Join up the points.
In completing this activity, students should be able to see the way that a narrative is structured to incorporate an exposition/introduction, rising action, climax, and resolution. Discuss and mark these terms on the graph.
Have the class repeat this activity for one of the *Bawoo Stories*.
7. Identify the setting used in one of the *Bawoo Stories*.
 - a. How has the author used language to construct this setting (or settings) for the reader?
 - b. How has the illustrator constructed it visually?
 - c. Discuss the roles of the author and illustrator. Is one more important than the other? What factors must an illustrator take into account when creating the pictures for a story? Ask students to identify the ways in which the words and the images were each effective in conveying the story to them.
8. Why do you think the author has incorporated Wongutha language into each of the stories? How might this impact upon the way they:
 - Educate us
 - Persuade us
 - Entertain usDo you think that it was a good idea to do this? Why or why not? Share your ideas with the class.
9. Use Appendix K (attached at the back of these notes) to record details of the stories and personal impressions, both with *Bawoo Stories* and other myths studied in class. The students' responses on this sheet may provide a starting point for writing reviews of the stories they read.
10. Consider the book's illustrations:
 - a. View a variety of illustrations from one, or all, of the *Bawoo Stories*. Why do you think the illustrators have chosen those colour schemes? How have they communicated the emotions, thoughts, and ideas of the characters?
 - b. View some of the illustrations from 'Barn-Barn Barlala, the bush trickster' and 'How crows became black'. How can you tell that the illustrations were produced by different people? How are they different? Which illustrator's drawings are your favourites? Give reasons and explanations for your opinion.

Literacy – Interacting with Others

11. After reading each of the stories, choose your favourite and plan to read it to a junior student. You should make a plan about how you will:
 - Use your voice to ensure you are understood – pace, volume
 - Use your voice to communicate emotions – expression
 - Show the pictures to the person to whom you're reading
 - Draw attention to parts of the story and illustrations that are important or interestingPractise reading your chosen book with a partner in your own class and use their feedback to improve your performance.

Literacy – Creating Texts

12. Choose one of the stories as a focus for the class. Discuss the purpose of advertising. Examine the title chosen and nominate things that a potential reader might want to know about it, such as:

- The title
- The author
- The illustrator
- What the book is about
- The publisher
- The price
- Where to buy the book

Discuss what would best grab attention when you present this information on a poster. You might like to use some examples of effective and well-known advertisements to illustrate the concepts. Ask students to consider:

- What is the 'right' amount of writing
- How to best organise their information and images
- How images can support the print
- The overall design
- The fonts used
- The colours used
- Who the audience is and where they might see this poster

Draft and produce the advertisement for the story and display in prominent locations around the school.

13. After completing activities and reading the stories, consolidate your knowledge by creating a multimedia production – for example a PowerPoint or Keynote presentation, a large poster, a short film, a dance and song – to be presented to the class. You might like to work individually or in a group, depending on the scale of your production. Visit a class of younger students to present your projects.

Appendix A

How Crows Became Black

(pages 6-8)

Fill in the spaces so that the story makes sense.



Each morning, when the sun rose in the east, the crows soared lazily, high high in the sky. They flapped their wings occasionally, while they waited for strong gusts of _____. These gusts took them gliding over the hills and _____ below. As they flew, the sun touched their feathers _____ them sparkle and glitter. From below, the crows looked like _____ stars or something from outer space, moving in and _____ of the low and wispy clouds.

The crows _____ the bushland and soon knew every tree, hill, _____ and valley. They loved the freedom to fly over _____ they could see. Only one thing about their new _____ spoilt their happiness.

The other birds didn't like the _____ crows at all. They were jealous of the way the _____ feathers glistened and sparkled in the bright sunlight. They _____ missed an opportunity to make nasty remarks about the crows as they _____ them in the bush.

'Look at old shiny _____', they would jeer as the crows flew by. This _____ upset the crows.

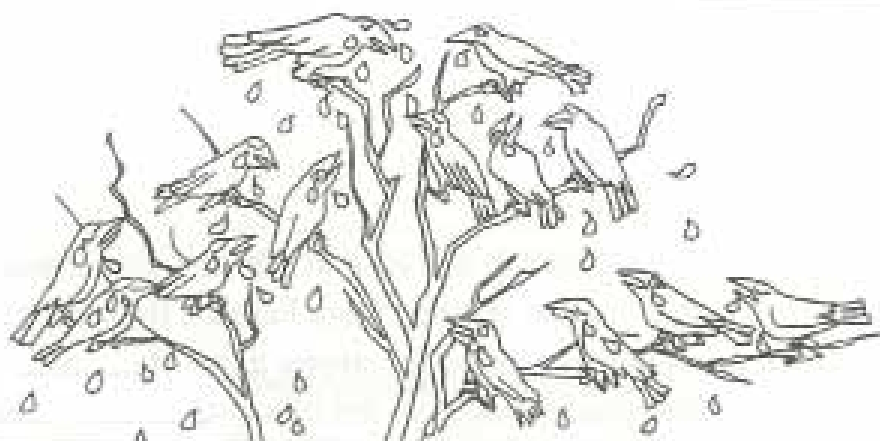
Appendix B

What Happens Next? (1)

(2 pages)

Cut into pages and make a book.

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How Crows Became Black

Words and arrangement by: _____

Original by May L. O'Brien



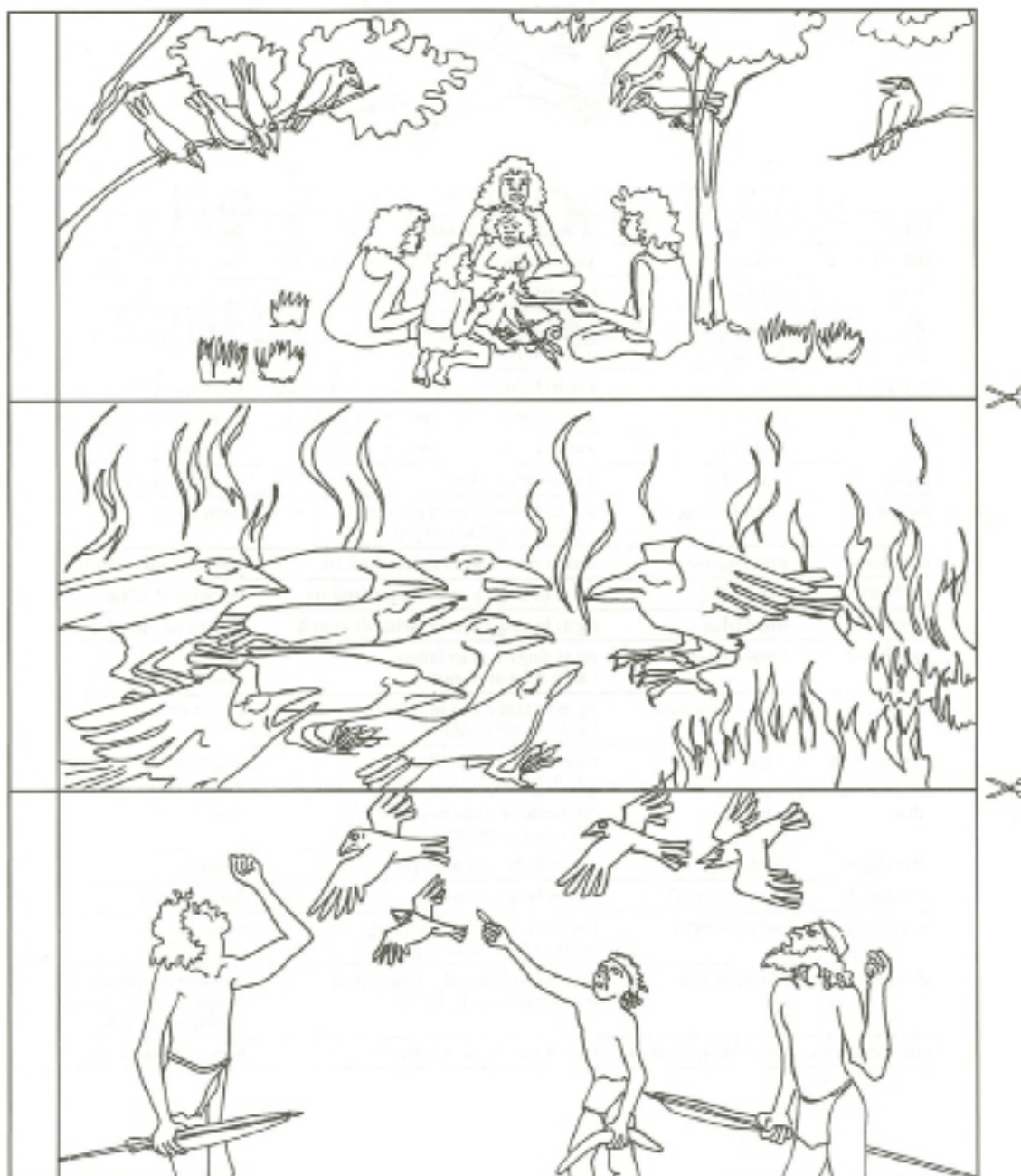
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What Happens Next? (2)

(2 pages)

Cut into pages and make a book.

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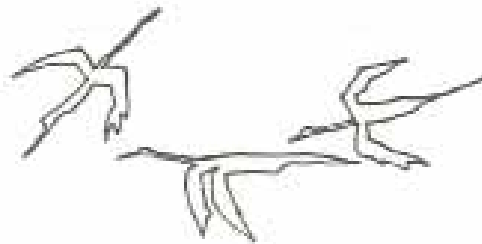
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Appendix C

Why The Emu Can't Fly

(page 21)

Fill in the spaces so that the story makes sense.



The small birds didn't have long to wait for the egg-laying season to begin. When it was time, each of the female emus _____ between six and nine big, beautiful, dark green eggs. _____ they flew off. It was the male emus' job _____ sit on the eggs.

'Did you see that? The _____ have all gone off and left their eggs to the _____,' said the surprised little birds.

Every day the _____ birds sat quietly and patiently in the trees and _____. They were waiting for the emus to take a _____ from sitting on the eggs. Finally, the break came. _____ emus stood up and stretched and moved away.

'Here's _____ chance,' said the anxious little birds. 'Quickly, get to the _____ and crack them all.' With one swoop, the small _____ flew down and stood by the large eggs. The _____ saw them and charged back. Terrified, the small birds _____ off.

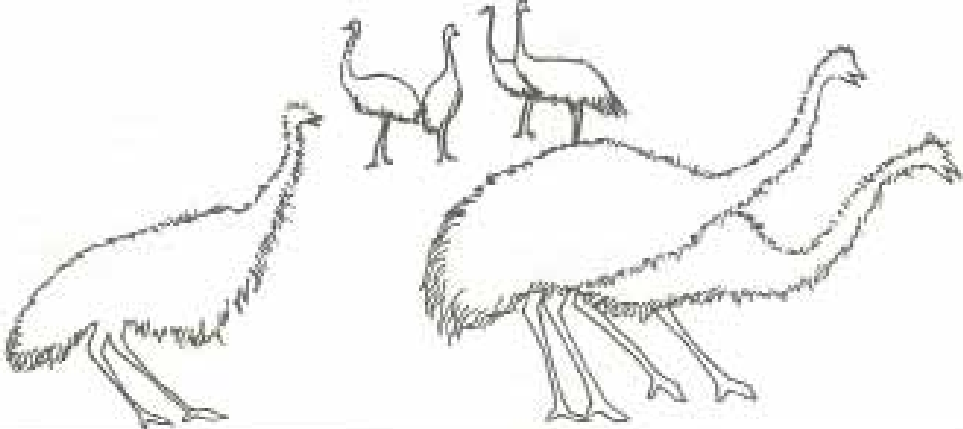
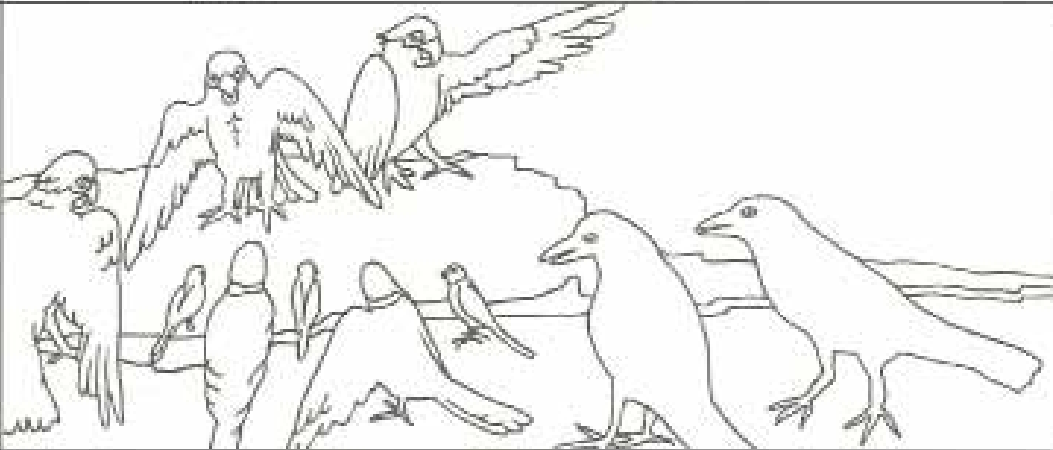


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Appendix D

What Happens Next? (1)
(2 pages)
Cut into pages and make a book.

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	<div>Why The Emu Can't Fly</div> <div>Words and arrangement by: _____ Original by May L. O'Brien</div>	

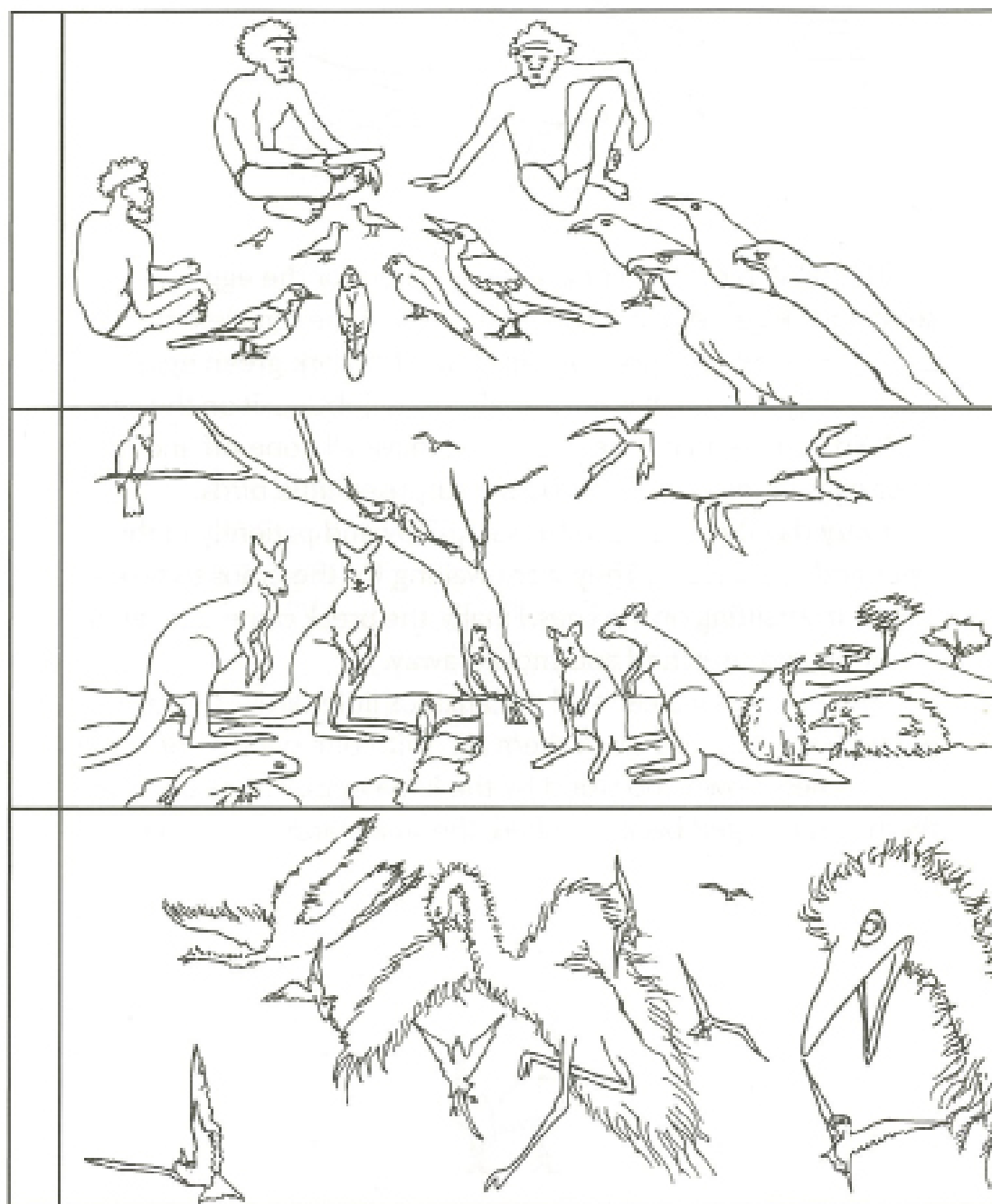
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What Happens Next? (2)

(2 pages)

Cut into pages and make a book.

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Appendix E

The Kangaroos Who Wanted To Be People

(page 28)

Fill in the spaces so that the story makes sense.

As the kangaroos stood listening to the haunting music, they slowly began to change. Their back legs and their tails grew longer and _____, while their front legs became smaller and smaller.

With ____ last note of the song, the head man went _____ the bushes and to his camp. For a long _____, the kangaroos stood still and silent. They felt _____ and strange.

Finally, they looked around. Where was the _____ man? Where were the other men? The kangaroos were _____. They stared at each other, trying to understand the _____ they saw. Then they turned, and together they hopped _____ to the tall trees. The bush and trees _____ to be their home now. Never again, would they _____ near people.

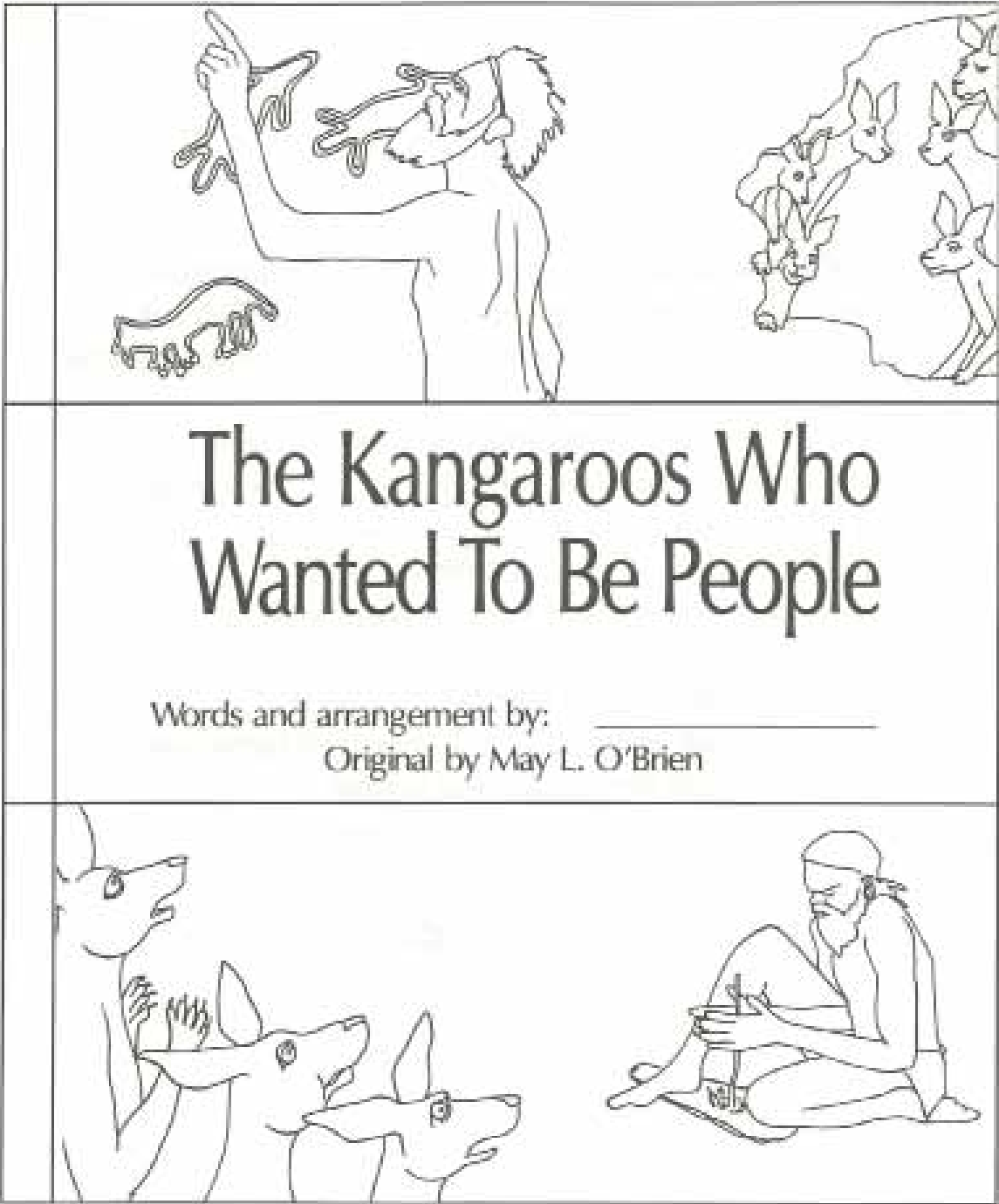


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Appendix F

What Happens Next? (1)
(2 pages)
Cut into pages and make a book.

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What Happens Next? (2)

(2 pages)

Cut into pages and make a book.

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Appendix G

Barn-Barn Barlala, The Bush Trickster

(pages 20-25)

Fill in the spaces so that the story makes sense.

Early next morning, the children woke and looked around.
They didn't know where they were. The bush looked different.

'I don't know this country.' The boy sounded _____.
'I've never been here before.'

'We're lost', his sister _____ 'and I'm hungry and thirsty.
We should never have _____ to Barn-Barn Barlala.'

'Don't worry', the boy was _____ to sound brave. 'I can
find our way _____.'

'How?' asked the little girl. 'This is all new _____ to us.'

'I know', came the reply, 'but I can _____ out the way we
came. Dad always told me to look _____ me as well as where
I'm going. While we were _____ Barn-Barn Barlala, I kept
looking back, Dad taught me to _____ for tracks on the ground
too.' When she heard this, his _____ felt much happier.

The two children began their long _____ home. The boy's
eyes moved everywhere. He kept pointing out the _____ and
rocks that they had passed the day before.





'_____ this tree with the broken branch, we saw that
_____.'

Quickly they walked through the bush. This time when
they _____ Barn-Barn Barlala's call, they did not stop and _____.

Appendix H

What Happens Next? (1)
(2 pages)
Cut into pages and make a book.

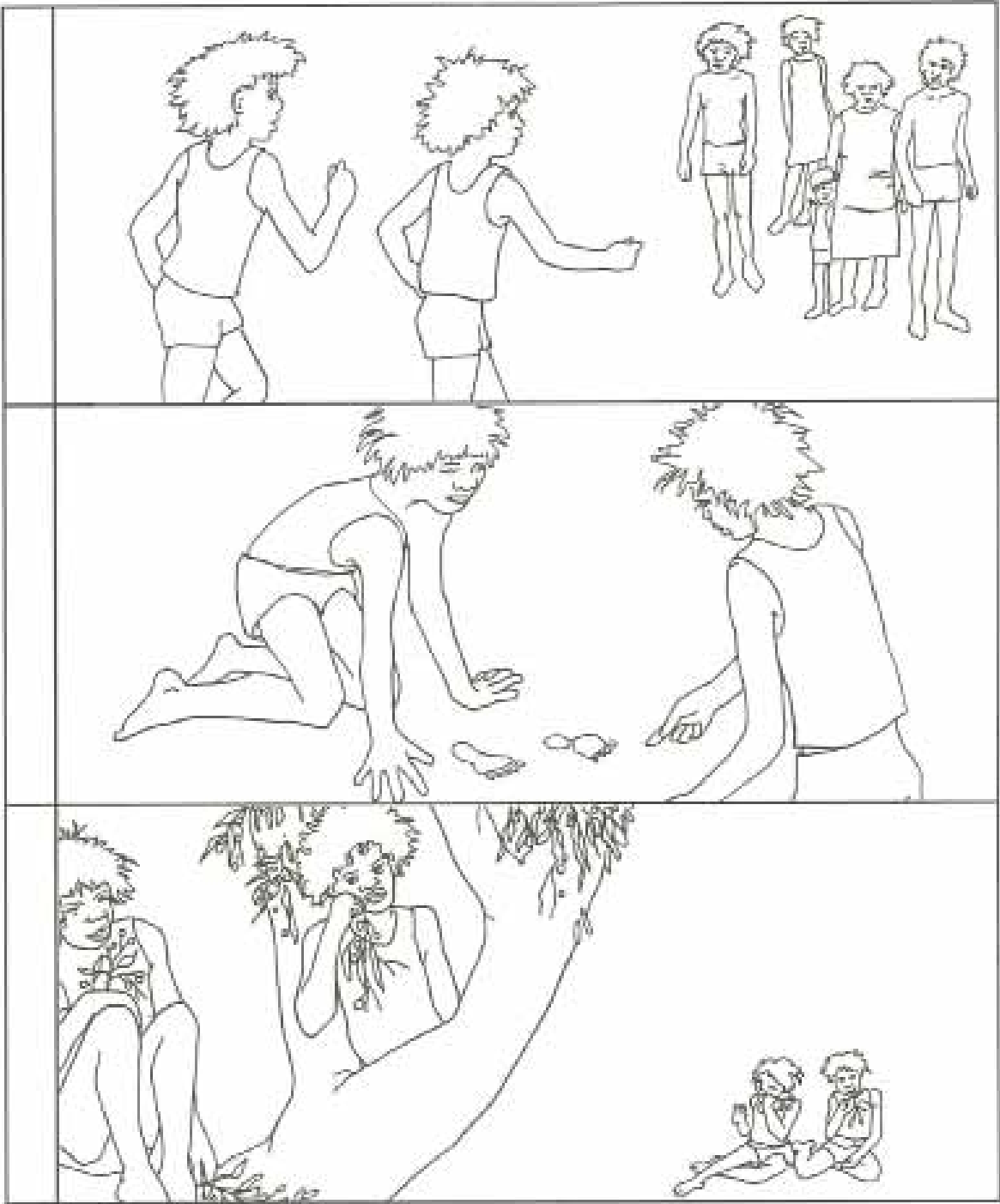
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<div>Barn-Barn Barlala, The Bush Trickster</div> <div>Words and arrangement by: _____ Original by May L. O'Brien</div>	
	

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What Happens Next? (2)
(2 pages)
Cut into pages and make a book.

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Appendix J

Writing and Speaking Aboriginal Languages

Introduction

Different languages use different sets of sounds and when we write these sounds we use different alphabets. Some sounds in Aboriginal languages and English are the same or very similar and we have no difficulty speaking both. For instance the letters *m*, *w*, *n*, *l*, *r*, *y* and *ng* are common. However some Aboriginal sounds are not used in English and vice versa. We try to use English letters wherever possible but for an alphabet to be true to Aboriginal sounds which are different from English sounds we need to use new combinations of letters and use them consistently. We also need to avoid letters which make Aboriginal words look long and clumsy.

The Vowels

There are three basic vowels in the Mount Margaret language which multiply to six because the vowels can be lengthened to form distinct sounds.

The three sounds are:

- i* as in **bina** (ear) like the English **litre**
- a* as in **wathanu** (told) like the English **father**
- u* as in **bulba** (cave) like the English **put**

The Consonants

The biggest differences between English and Aboriginal languages are found in the consonants. English has only one letter *l*, one *n*, and one *d*. The language spoken around the Mount Margaret area has four different *ls*, four *ns*, and four *ds*. One set of sounds are called **dentals** because they are made with the tongue in between or touching the teeth. Examples are **nhurra** (you) and **wathanu** (told). Dental consonants are indicated by the letter **h** — that is, **nh** **lh** and **th**.

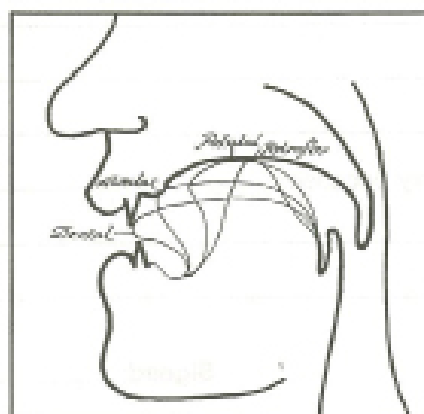
The second set of sounds are the **gum ridge** or **alveolar** sounds and these are the same as the English sounds *l*, *n*, and *d*.

The third set are the **palatal** sounds where the tongue touches or is close to the hard palate of the roof of the mouth. These are the sounds **ny** **ly** and **j** as in the words **jina** (foot) and **nyagu** (to see).

The fourth set of sounds are those made by turning the tongue towards the back of the mouth — the **retroflex** sounds. These are **rl** as in **marlu** (red kangaroo), **rd** as in **gurda** (older brother) and **rn** as in **barna** (ground).

The Mount Margaret language also has two *r* sounds. One is made by flapping or trilling the tongue on the gum ridge, e.g. **ngurra** (camp). The other is an *r* made with the tongue curled backward (retroflex) as in the word **gamuru** (mother's brother).

This chart shows the parts of the mouth referred to in the above description.



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Appendix K

My Thoughts and Feelings

Book Facts:

The book's title: _____

Author: _____

Illustrator: _____

Publisher: _____

Date read by me: _____

My Opinions:

Its main message is _____

Was this a good way to get across the message? _____

If, no, what would have been a better way? _____

I like / don't like the illustrations because _____

They help the story by _____

I liked / didn't like this story because _____

Signed: _____

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