

LUCKY THAMU

Cheryl Kickett-Tucker and Jaylon Tucker

Illustrations by Sally Morgan and Tracey Gibbs

ISBN (PB): 9781925161304

Themes: family, gold prospecting, going bush

Year level: Y2 to 5

Cross-curriculum priority: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

ABOUT THE WAARDA SERIES

Waarda, Nyungar for talking and sharing stories and information, is an exciting new Indigenous children's series. Edited by Sally Morgan, the series is designed to support the literacy needs of Indigenous children in primary school, by making available to them stories written by Indigenous authors. At the same time, it will introduce non-Indigenous children to the richness and depth of Indigenous storytelling. Above all, it is a collection of fun, interesting and diverse first chapter books for new readers.

ABOUT THE BOOK

It's the school holidays and Eli is off to visit his Thamu (grandfather). They're going camping and prospecting too. Eli loves listening to Thamu's stories and learning about country. Thamu knows lots about everything. But does he know where to find gold, and will Eli strike it lucky?

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Cheryl Kickett-Tucker belongs to three areas of the Noongar people – Wadjuk (Swan River), Balladong (Wheatbelt) and Yued (Moora). This story was inspired by the tales she tells her children, and also by the legends her mother has passed on to her.

Jaylon Tucker identifies as a Wongi-Noongar. He was born on Wadjuk Noongar country and via his father he belongs to the Ngullundharra and Walyan Aboriginal people of the north-east goldfields in Western Australia. This story is based on his time exploring the bush with his real-life Thamu.

STUDY NOTES

LITERACY: COMPREHENDING TEXTS THROUGH LISTENING, READING AND VIEWING

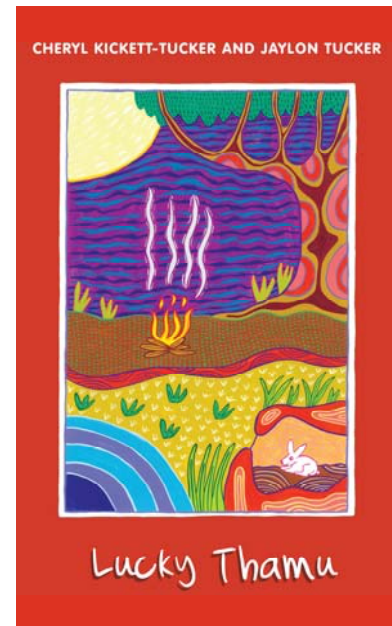
(A) Before Reading

Predicting

1. Explore the blurb, title and front cover. Create a class prediction chart detailing what students think may happen in the story. (Note: It is often interesting to keep this chart to look over at the end – amusing false predictions inevitably arise!)
2. Ask children to explain the difference between an 'author' and an 'illustrator'.
3. Have students read the blurb aloud to a partner. Does the blurb make them want to read the book? Why/why not?

Considering the context of the book

4. Do any students know what language the word 'Thamu' belongs to? What does 'Thamu' mean?
5. As a class, locate Kalgoorlie-Boulder on the following map illustrating the regions of Western Australia: http://rda.gov.au/system/files/public/rda_map_westernaustralia.pdf



6. *Ten-year-old Eli was a Noongar-Wongji kid. His mum was a Noongar from the south-west of Western Australia and his dad was a Wongji from the north-eastern Goldfields.* (pp. 5–6). Look at the map of Western Australia on page 47 and locate Noongar Country and Wongutha Country.
7. *Lucky Thamú* is set in Wongutha Country near Kalgoorlie. Have any students in your class visited Kalgoorlie? Create a list of similarities and differences between Kalgoorlie and the town/city in which your school is located.
8. Have students research the history and culture of the Aboriginal traditional owners of the area where you live (cross-curricular link: Technologies – ICT). You may like to use the following headings:
 - a. Name of Aboriginal group
 - b. Geographic area
 - c. Laws
 - d. Spiritual beliefs
 - e. Traditional diet
 - f. Shelter
 - g. Hunting/gathering tools and techniques

(B) During Reading

Comprehension strategies

Lucky Thamú can be used for several different reading sessions including:

- Modelled reading as a whole class
- Shared reading in student pairs
- Guided reading in small groups
- Independent reading

Comprehension strategies to practise (Y2 to 3)

- Sounding out words aloud (not only in your head)
- Phonics (blending and segmenting)
- Using illustrations to help predict unknown words
- Predicting words by recognising familiar letter patterns
- Re-reading to crosscheck graphophonic information

Comprehension strategies to practise (Y3 to 5)

- Slowing reading rate for comprehension
- Self-monitoring for understanding
- Inferring
- Summarising
- Identifying key ideas/themes

Expanding vocabulary

Some students may be unfamiliar with some of the Noongar and Wongutha (Wongji) terminology incorporated throughout the story. Have them record the meanings of the following words in a table like the one below.

First Mention	Word	Meaning
p. 6	bunthar	look out
p. 6	moorditj	solid
p. 6	inni	yes
p. 6	thamu	grandfather
p. 6	garbarli	grandmother
p. 7	burnna yurral	red dirt
p. 10	oohba	kiss
p. 11	dyuwarr	dry sticks
p. 15	curangu	crow
p. 26	yor	wind break
p. 26	waru	fire
p. 26	marlu	kangaroo

p. 27	bungarra	racehorse goanna
p. 27	buntha	watch out
p. 34	myee	food
p. 36	warda	wood

Comprehension questions

9. Why is Kalgoorlie called 'Karguli' by the local Aboriginal people? (p. 7)
10. How long does it take Eli to drive from Perth to Kalgoorlie? (p. 8)
11. *Eli always paid great attention when Thamu spoke because his stories helped Eli understand his part in the family and his role in looking after others, his land and his culture.* (p. 12) In what ways do you think Thamu's stories help Eli understand such things?
12. *On the back were two jerry cans full of fresh water – because you can't go bush without water – some food and swags.* (p. 19)
 - a. What does the phrase 'go bush' mean?
 - b. What are 'jerry cans'?
 - c. What are 'swags'?
13. *'Thamu is the greatest storyteller ever!' thought Eli ...* (p. 28)
 - a. What do you think makes a great storyteller?
 - b. What are some ways you can make storytelling more exciting? In groups of four, have students brainstorm a list (e.g. varying your volume and expression, incorporating different accents, speaking slowly and clearly, using sound effects, visual aids and props).
 - c. In the same group of four, have students take turns to be the storyteller, sharing a tale about a special place their own family likes to visit (like Eli and Thamu like to journey to White Rabbit Patch). Students should be encouraged to incorporate one or more of the suggestions above to make their story engaging for listeners.
14. *For the best part of the day, Eli walked alongside Thamu who showed him how to speck for gold. This involved lots of walking and looking on the ground for special rocks.* (p. 31) Research the process of 'specking' or 'gold prospecting'. What does it involve?

Discussion: visual art as a storytelling medium

15. What do the illustrations add to the story? Do you think it would be just as engaging without them? Why/why not?
16. What style has the illustrator used to draw the characters – realistic, cartoon, artistic, fantasy? Why do you think this is?
17. Where has the illustrator positioned objects on the page and what effect does this create?

LITERACY: COMPOSING TEXTS THROUGH SPEAKING, WRITING AND CREATING

(C) After Reading

Spelling and vocabulary

18. Have children practise the correct spelling of common sight words included in the book e.g. *the, and, we, are, you, for, in, all, when, our, your, family, food, my, end, than, any, about, his, name, time, most, much, him, even, day, end, only, really, from, their, home, they, little, to, look, wanted, that, very, come, could, still, over, off, be, big.*
19. Use the book as a resource for teaching the correct spellings of long vowel sounds and diphthongs present in the story. For example:
 - a. long vowel sounds – ee, ea, e-e, y, ay, o-e, ow
 - b. diphthongs – ou, aw, au, oy

20. Have students keep a personal dictionary (adding new words they encounter under the letter of the alphabet with which they start). Students can then refer back to this resource to spell the word correctly in their own creative story writing. Have students add the following words to their personal dictionaries as they read in small groups:

- adventure
- boomerang
- burrows
- campfire
- colourful
- creek
- damper
- determined
- disappear
- embers
- excitement
- explore
- favourite
- gold
- heavy
- hobby
- hole
- jumped
- lucky charm
- marshmallows
- nugget
- pesky
- prospect
- rabbit
- radiated
- speck
- stomach
- storyteller
- warren
- yarns

Recount writing

21. Have students write a recount of the events in *Lucky Thamú* paying careful attention to sequencing and simple punctuation (full stops and capital letters).

Creative writing: practising simple punctuation, planning, editing and redrafting

Invite students to choose one of the following ideas to plan and draft a short story:

22. Imagine you are about to embark on a camping trip with family and friends. Where will you go? Who will you invite? Will you sleep under the stars like Eli and Thamú, or will you sleep in a tent? What kinds of food will you eat? What kinds of games will you play? Write a short story about your camping adventure!
23. Write a short story about prospecting for gold. What tools will you use and where will you look? Will you strike it rich, or go home empty-handed?
24. Do you have a lucky charm? Write a short story about how a lucky charm has brought you good luck, or how an unlucky charm has brought you misfortune!
25. Eli treasures spending time with his Thamú. Write a short story about a special time you have shared with your own thamú (grandfather) or garbarli (grandmother).

Grammatical elements to explore in the narrative genre:

- past tense
- descriptive language to create imagery – adjectives
- connectives

Punctuation skills to model, practise and assess:

- capital letters
- full stops
- question marks
- speech marks (appropriate for more advanced writers)

The writing sequence:

- *Modelled writing* (teacher only) – the teacher ‘thinks aloud’ as he/she writes a story on the whiteboard while the class watch.
- *Shared writing* – the teacher has the pen and continues to ‘think aloud’, but also asks for children’s input and ideas. Children are invited to come and help write/make corrections on the whiteboard.
- *Guided writing* – children can plan their writing in pairs using a narrative planning sheet with the following subheadings: character description, setting, conflict, climax, resolution.
- *Independent writing* – children write their own piece and engage in editing and redrafting.
- *Presentation to audience* – children create an illustration to accompany their story and share with one another in small groups.
- *Editing: you be the teacher!* – students swap their draft with a partner. Partners correct spelling/punctuation in a red.

Diary Writing

26. Imagine you have gone back in time to the Western Australian Gold Rush of the 1890s. Research the living conditions for miners. Write a diary entry about a day in the life of a miner prospecting for gold!

Report writing

27. Research and write a report on the Western Australian Gold Rush of the 1890s using the following subheadings:
- Who was involved?
 - When did it happen?
 - Where did it happen?
 - Why did it begin?
 - How was gold located/extracted for profit? (Note: there were several methods)
 - Why did the rush end?
 - How is gold mined in Australia today?

Speaking and listening

28. *'Thamu is the greatest storyteller ever!' thought Eli ...* (p. 28)
- What do you think makes a great storyteller?
 - What are some ways you can make storytelling more exciting? In groups of four, have students brainstorm a list (e.g. varying your volume and expression, incorporating different accents, speaking slowly and clearly, using sound effects, visual aids and props).
 - In the same group of four, have students take turns to be the storyteller, sharing a tale about a special place their own family likes to visit (like Eli and his Thamu like to visit White Rabbit Patch). Students should be encouraged to incorporate one or more of the suggestions above to make their story engaging for listeners.

CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

History and Geography

29. Have students research the history and culture of the Aboriginal traditional owners of the area where you live (cross-curricular link: Technologies – ICT). You may like to use the following headings:
- Name of Aboriginal group
 - Geographic area
 - Laws
 - Spiritual beliefs
 - Traditional diet
 - Shelter
 - Hunting/gathering tools and techniques
30. Research the history of gold prospecting in Australia and America. Write a report comparing and contrasting the Western Australian gold rush to that of Northern California.

Art

31. Research famous Indigenous artists from Kalgoorlie-Boulder. Arrange a visit to an artwork exhibited in your state gallery. Create class artworks that allow children to experiment with the subject matter and techniques modelled.

Science

32. Research the properties and uses of gold using the following website:
www.australianminesatlas.gov.au/education/fact_sheets/gold.html
33. How is gold mined and used in Australia today?
34. Make your own metal detector and explore your school in search of gold! (see www.sciencekids.co.nz/videos/howto/metaldetector.html)

35. Research and write a report on rabbits using the following subheadings:
- Habitat
 - Diet
 - Physical characteristics
 - Life cycle
 - Conservation status
 - Are rabbits native to Australia?
 - How/why were they introduced?
 - What difficulties have they created for native species?
 - Research the history of attempts to control the rabbit population in Australia (e.g. the Rabbit-Proof Fence in 1901).

Suggested excursion

36. Visit a Gold Rush or mint museum in your region to see exciting gold exhibits, learn about coining factories or calculate your weight in gold! For example, the Perth Mint in Western Australia (www.perthmint.com.au/visit_the_mint_perth_mint_school_groups.aspx) or Old Treasury Building in Melbourne (www.oldtreasurybuilding.org.au/school-tours).

ADDITIONAL USEFUL RESOURCES

Western Australian Museum – Kalgoorlie-Boulder: <http://museum.wa.gov.au/museums/kalgoorlie-boulder>

Western Australian Department of Education – Aboriginal Perspectives Across the Curriculum (APAC) – Goldfields region: www.det.wa.edu.au/aboriginaleducation/apac/detcms/navigation/regional-websites/goldfields/lesson-plans

Information on Kalgoorlie-Boulder's history, heritage and goldmining: www.kalgoorlietourism.com/school-project-info

ABC Goldfields – history, videos and images: www.abc.net.au/goldfields/history/?section=photo

Western Australian Department of Education – Aboriginal Education Portal: www.det.wa.edu.au/aboriginaleducation/apac/detcms/portal

Aussie Educator (scroll down to 'Western Australia'):
www.aussieeducator.org.au/education/specificareas/indigenous.html

Science Kids – gold and precious metals: www.sciencekids.co.nz/metals.html

Reliable information about gold and goldmining in specific states and regions of Australia is abundantly available online through such websites as Museum Victoria.



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