

NEDINGAR: ANCESTORS

ISOBEL BEVIS AND LEANNE ZILM

ISBN (HB): 9781760992712

YEAR LEVEL: K-3

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

ABOUT THE BOOK

A young child wants to meet their Ancestors. They want to know them, and learn from them and follow their ways. Their mother gently explains that they have already met their Ancestors, yesterday, today and tomorrow, and that they are everywhere in Country, walking close behind them. This lyrical, dual-language picture book from two debut Noongar creators celebrates the beauty of Country and family.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Isobel Bevis is a Wilman, Ballardong Noongar woman, born and raised in Collie, in the south-west of Western Australia. Currently living on Bindjareb boodja with her husband and three daughters. Raised in a large Noongar family, growing up on Wilman Country with a strong connection to Minninup River where her Ancestors are resting.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Leanne Zilm is a descendant of the Wudjari and Goreng Noongar tribal groups, who was born in 1962 in Katanning, Western Australia, and currently lives in Rockingham. Leanne started painting in 2016 when her mother, who was a landscape artist, encouraged her to take up painting. Leanne works with acrylics, and the backgrounds for her paintings are created using an acrylic pour technique. Her art is inspired by the natural environment, the ocean, sunrises, sunsets, and the native flora and fauna that abounds in the Fitzgerald River National Park and Bremer Bay region in the South-West of Western Australia.

THEMES

- Identity and belonging
- Family
- ATSI cultures and stories
- Native animals
- Country

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

K-3 English

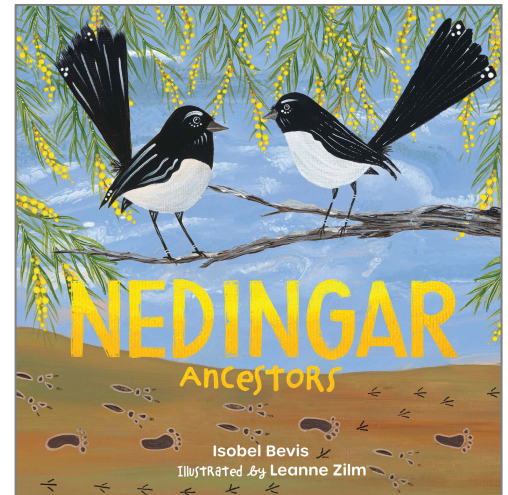
K-3 Science: Biological Sciences

K-3 Humanities and Social Sciences

K-3 Visual Art

USEFUL WEBSITES

- Watch author Isobel Bevis read the story in Noongar: fremantlepress.com.au/2023/06/23/video-isobel-bevis-reads-nedginar-ancestors-in-noongar
- AIATSIS Map of Indigenous Australia: aiatsis.gov.au/explore/map-indigenous-australia



CLASSROOM IDEAS

Discussion questions

1. Before reading, consider the front cover.
 - a. Where do you think the story is set?
 - b. What plants and animals can you identify?
 - c. Who do you think made the footprints?
 - d. What do you think the story will be about?
2. What was your favourite part of the story?
3. Which is your favourite illustration?
4. Watch the recording of author Isobel Bevis reading the story in Noongar, the language of her ancestors. Why do you think the author chose to include both the Noongar and English versions of the story?
5. How has the publisher made the text in each language look different? Why do you think they did this?
6. Ancestors are very important in Noongar culture. How do you think the Ancestors provide spirit and strength to the younger generations?
7. Do you know any stories about your ancestors?
8. The story starts and ends with a djidi djidi / willie wagtail family, but other animal families feature on other pages. What does this suggest about the different families?
9. Can you think of a word that rhymes with each of these words from the story: meet, know, go, trees, day, you, me.
10. What do you think is the main message of this story?
11. Would you recommend this book to a friend? Why?

Creative writing

1. According to the story, 'You hear [Ancestors] through the trees, in the whistling of the leaves ... You talk to them when you listen to the birds, the animals and the plants.' (pp. 20–23) Sit outside quietly and observe what you hear. Write a poem about your observations.
2. Write three questions you would like to ask your ancestors.

HASS

1. English and Noongar are two languages spoken in Australia. Do you or your family speak another language? Survey people in your family, school or community to collect data on the languages spoken. Create a bar graph to display your findings.
2. Make a list of words and phrases from the story that indicate time (e.g. 'From when I was a baby' and 'tomorrow'). How do the illustrations indicate time? (e.g. darker colours and nocturnal animals indicate night-time.)

Science

1. Choose an animal from the story and find out three facts about it, such as where the animal lives or what it eats. Create an informative poster to share your information, as well as an illustration of the animal. If you can, find out the Noongar name for the animal.
2. Identify Noongar Country on a map. Are the animals that feature in the story found in the same region?
3. List the ways the mother emu and baby emus look the same and how they look different.

Visual art

1. Choose three words to describe the illustrations.
2. Draw or paint your favourite part of the story.
3. Animal tracks can be seen in the illustrations. Create your own artwork using animal tracks to tell a story.
4. Collect some gum leaves, flowers and grasses, like those seen in the illustrations. Create a collage or rubbing. Remember to respect nature and other people's property when collecting.