

## THE TWO-HEARTED NUMBAT

AMBELIN & EZEKIEL KWAYMULLINA

ISBN (HB): 9781760994792

YEAR LEVEL: Y1–2

### ABOUT THE BOOK

*The Two-Hearted Numbat* is a beautiful First Nations picture book from the award-winning brother–sister team Ambelin and Ezekiel Kwaymullina, now in a new, small hardback edition.

There was once a numbat who had two hearts. Numbat's first heart was a feather, and when he wore it he felt soft and gentle. His second heart was a stone, and when he wore it he felt powerful and strong. But it was troublesome to have two hearts. Numbat decided it would be better to have only one – but which heart should he choose?

*The Two-Hearted Numbat* is an uplifting tale about identity, perfect for younger readers.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Ambelin Kwaymullina** and **Ezekiel Kwaymullina** are Aboriginal writer–illustrators who come from the Palyku people of the Pilbara region of Western Australia. Ambelin is the author and illustrator of a number of award-winning picture books as well as a YA dystopian series. Her books have been published in the United States, South Korea and China. Ambelin is a prolific commentator on diversity in children's literature and a law academic at the University of Western Australia.

### THEMES

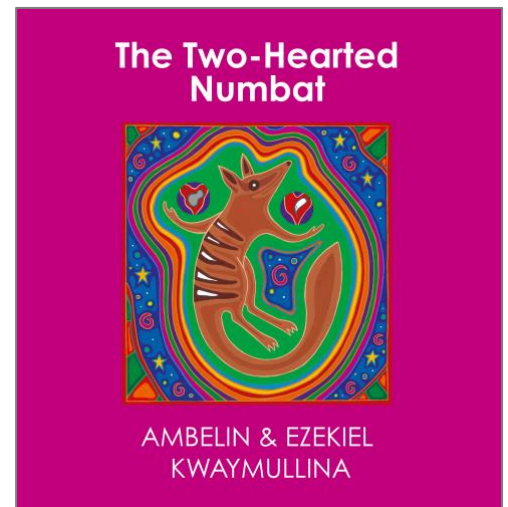
- Multiculturalism
- Identity
- Early learning concepts
- Friendship
- Self-worth
- Expectations
- Helping others
- Inner strengths

### AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures
- Sustainability

### USEFUL WEBSITES

- Author's website: [akauthor.com.au](http://akauthor.com.au)



## CLASSROOM IDEAS

### Discussion Questions

1. After reading, think about the story of *The Two-Hearted Numbat*.
  - a. Think of an alternative title for the book. Write your own blurb.
  - b. In groups, act out the story.
  - c. Substitute the numbat for another animal. Does it change the meaning of the book?
2. Examine the final illustration of the book. Can you find the dingo, the river, the berries and the magpie in the landscape surrounding Numbat?
3. The illustrations are very brightly coloured and made up of simple shapes without black outlines.
  - a. Paint a picture using similar techniques. It could be your own version of a scene from the book or your own original painting.
  - b. Discuss the importance of illustrations to the story. Would the story work just as well with different illustrations? Why or why not?
4. Why do you think it is important that Eldest Numbat watches over Numbat's journey?
5. Why do you think it is important that Numbat eventually has a heart of both stone and feather? What is wrong with just having a heart of stone, or just having a heart of feather?
6. What did the other numbats expect when Numbat wore his feather heart? What was wrong with these expectations?
7. What did the other numbats think of Numbat when he wore his stone heart? What was wrong with what they thought?
8. Numbats are endangered and there are many things to learn about them.
  - a. Research different species of Australian animals that are endangered. How many different kinds can you find out about? What kinds of habitats do they live in?
  - b. Why are these species endangered?
  - c. Write a poem or song about one of the animals you discovered.
  - d. Draw a picture of this animal and colour it in.
9. Discuss the role of teaching stories. Do other cultures use teaching stories? Do you know any other teaching stories?
10. Locate the Pilbara on a map of Australia. Find out more about the Palyku people and/or the First Nations people(s) from your area. Invite a spokesperson from your local community to speak to the class.
11. Write to the author of your favourite book or of this book (if to Ambelin or Ezekiel Kwaymullina, send the letter to c/o Fremantle Press) describing what you did and didn't like.