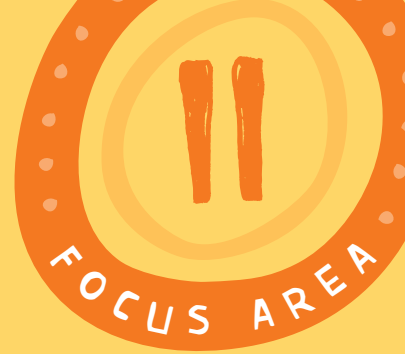
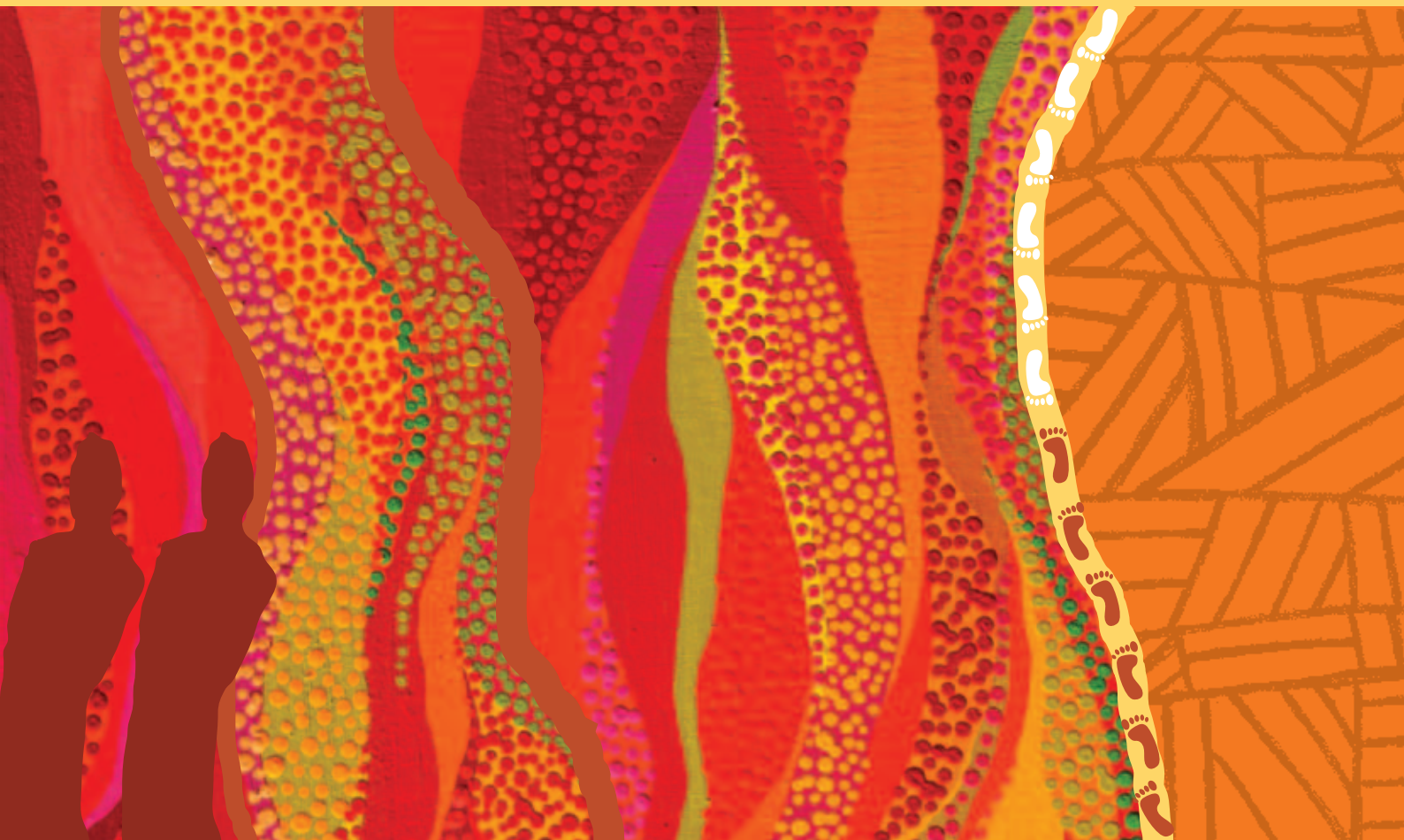




Department of **Education**  
Department of **Training  
and Workforce Development**



# Tracks to Two-Way Learning



*HEARIN' THE VOICES*



Tell me your story


First published 2012


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# Tracks to Two-Way Learning

## FOCUS AREA 11

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### ***HEARIN' THE VOICES***

Tell me your story  
(including ten storybooks)

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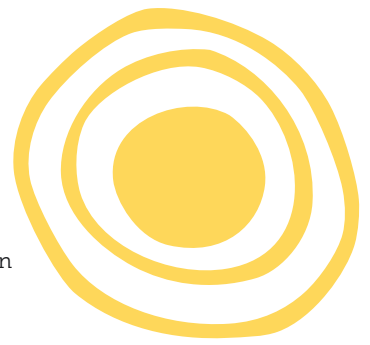
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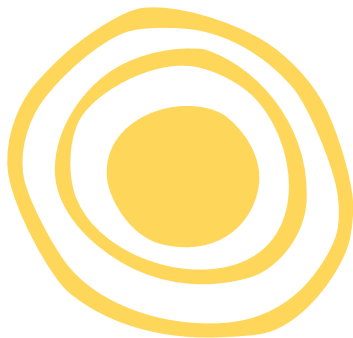
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# THE TRACKS TO TWO-WAY LEARNING PACKAGE



- Includes electronic version on CD



## Understanding language and dialect

*Our dialects, our lives*



## Our views, our ways

*Aboriginal knowledge, beliefs, today*



## The grammar of dialect difference

*Difference, talking, hearing, understanding*



## How we shape experience

*Yarning, seeing, watching, doing*



## How we represent our world

*Art, symbols, gestures, opportunity  
Manners, reading, knowledge, time limits*



## Language and inclusivity

*How we include and how we exclude*



## Making texts work

*... in a Two-Way learning environment*



## From speaking to writing

*What's right and what's wrong*



## How we talk

*How we talk, when we can talk*



## Making a difference for learners

*We can do it like this  
Show me what*



## Hearin' the voices

*Tell me your story  
(includes ten storybooks)*



## Toolkit for teaching

*What we do with our mob*



- Includes three sample workshops

# THE TRACKS TO TWO-WAY LEARNING PACKAGE

This Focus Area, together with the other 11 Focus Areas, forms the second part of the *Tracks to Two-Way Learning* package.

Each Focus Area has a title and a descriptor. The Standard Australian English titles and descriptors are set roman, while those for Aboriginal English are set in *italics*.

The Focus Area contains a background reading section and professional learning modules intended to help Two-Way Teams to design and facilitate workshops for their colleagues and other stakeholders. All modules include workshop activities with information and materials for facilitators.

The main structure of the package is shown in the diagram on the left. There are three major parts, including the 12 Focus Areas which form Part 2.

The *Tracks to Two-Way Learning* package has been written for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal educators working together in pairs (Two-Way Teams) to improve the quality of teaching and learning for Aboriginal children and adults.

The advice and involvement of Aboriginal people are critical to bringing about this improvement in education and contribute to making education and training organisations more knowledgeable about and more responsive to the aspirations of the Aboriginal community. For more general information and explanations about the principle of Two-Way, see the 'Introduction' to the *Facilitators Guide*.

It is recommended that Two-Way Teams evaluate their own education or training sites before they use the material provided in any Focus Area. This will enable them to decide which modules are relevant to the staff at their locations. 'Tracking Needs' in the *Facilitators Guide* provides advice on how to evaluate a site.

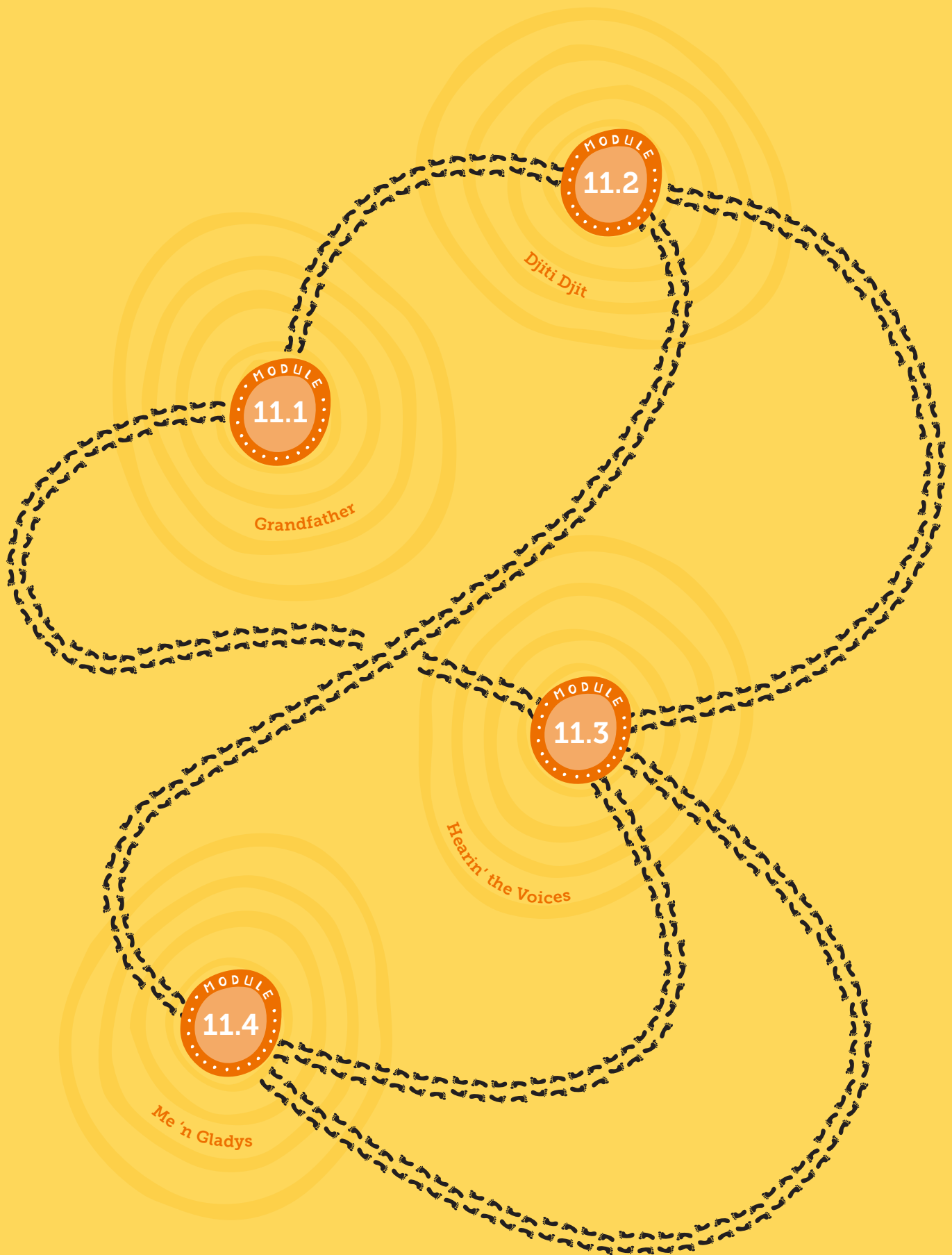
Two-Way Teams are encouraged to select material from across the Focus Areas when designing their professional development workshops.

In summary, to use the material in this learning package effectively it is advisable to:

- work as Two-Way Team
- perform a site evaluation before beginning to organise workshops (refer to 'Tracking Needs' in the *Facilitators Guide*)
- select suitable modules (refer to the outcomes of the site evaluation)
- read the relevant background reading(s)
- mix and match modules from different Focus Areas according to the outcomes of your site evaluation
- be creative and critical; adapt materials to make them appropriate for your location and the participants in your workshop(s)
- if required, use the section 'Developing Organisational Capacity' in the *Facilitators Guide* for more information on the process of organising workshops
- use the *Sample Workshops Guide* for more detailed information about how to plan and facilitate workshops.

The content of this Focus Area is also on CD (attached to the *Facilitators Guide*). It can be used in electronic form and handouts, worksheets and powerpoints can be edited as required (see 'Workshop preparation' in the *Sample Workshops Guide* for more information).







# FOCUS AREA 11

## *HEARIN' THE VOICES*

### TELL ME YOUR STORY

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## BACKGROUND READING

### HEARIN' THE VOICES

#### TELL ME YOUR STORY

This Focus Area presents four stories, or 'yarns', written in Aboriginal English. These have been published in the form of booklets. Together with six other storybooks, they form part of this Focus Area. All ten Aboriginal English storybooks are provided in a separate folder as a part of the *Tracks to Two-Way Learning* package.

The yarns come from the living culture and reach back into the past. The yarns also provide a record of the continuity of Aboriginal experience for people living now and for future generations.

The yarns come from different parts of Western Australia and, as with all stories, these yarns help to elaborate and define identity: they establish the importance of family and place for Aboriginal people.

In the context of literacy education, these storybooks can be used to develop and strengthen interest and skills in reading.

Because the reading material is both linguistically and culturally familiar to Aboriginal readers, these yarns have proven to be both interesting and pleasurable for them.

Without such reading material readily available, learners may struggle to find an interest in reading, a key element in developing literacy skills (refer to Focus Area 6 for additional information).

The storybooks may also be used with all learners to generate discussion about Aboriginal experience, history and culture, including language practice and narrative themes and structures.

These storybooks aim to accomplish two objectives: firstly, they recognise the aspirations of Aboriginal people to tell their

stories, maintain their social and cultural values and pass on knowledge from one generation to another. The story in print means that the language Aboriginal people use to fulfil these aspirations can gain the respect it deserves.

Secondly, the storybooks provide examples of Aboriginal English being used purposefully and can lead non-Aboriginal readers to an understanding of a different world view, as well as to an appreciation of different linguistic features and cultural conceptualisations. The storybooks recognise and celebrate the varieties of Aboriginal English practised by different members of the Aboriginal Australian community.

The storybooks examined here are:

- *Grandfather*
- *Djiti Djit*
- *Hearin' the Voices*
- *Me 'n Gladys*.

The other titles in the series are:

- *Candles and Gilgies*
- *Wangkatjunga*
- *Shadow Man*
- *Bardis, Fire and Gilgies*
- *Crow*
- *A Day in the Park* (for senior learners).







## Yarning

Aboriginal storytelling or *yarning* is mainly an oral tradition. Yarning fulfils a number of roles in Aboriginal culture. A yarn can be:

- a method of instruction and teaching
- an explanation about the world, its origins, laws and causality
- a means of locating the storyteller within a family network (past, present and future)
- a means of establishing identity and relationship to land
- a mapping device through accounts of journeys
- a source of advice about location of food and seasons
- a warning device
- an explanation of spiritual entities and realities
- a record of an event or social practice
- a strategy that can be used in problem solving.

A yarn is never an individual's work of fiction. It is always owned by someone who identifies themselves as a member of a family group. The *yarn* and the *yarner* cannot really be considered as separate entities: this makes yarns very personal in a way that is different from other stories in the Western tradition, in which stories are now shared widely through print and other media.

The writer is not really 'present' for the reader of most Western fiction. A yarn usually belongs to a family, not an individual person. Sometimes a yarn can only be shared with selected people.

The yarns in this series of books have been offered for anybody to read. The yarns may tell travelling or hunting tales from desert or South-West communities. They may retell tales told by elders or 'grannies', first heard as children and recast in new shapes. They may recount the experience of urban children

visiting their country and finding their family lines. All of them reflect the importance of family, identity, place and time in Aboriginal yarning.

Writing yarns for publication is one way of sharing beliefs, history, experience and traditional and family practices with each other and with the wider community. Books such as these illustrate features of culture and social practice and they demonstrate the importance of Aboriginal English in maintaining Aboriginal culture.

## How these books can be used to support literacy learning

The storybooks support the three principles of the *ABC of Two-Way Literacy and Learning Project*:

- A, for acceptance of Aboriginal English
- B, for bridging to Standard Australian English
- C, for cultivating Aboriginal ways of approaching experience and knowledge.

Aboriginal English is important to Aboriginal people as a marker of identity and for the purposes of cultural maintenance. These books can be used by teachers, trainers and learners and by the broader community to learn more about Aboriginal English and some of its differences from Standard Australian English (SAE). If the stories provide enjoyment and learning for readers of all kinds, then the place of Aboriginal English may be accepted and understood more easily.

When people are taught reading and writing skills, whether as children or as adults, this is most often done with reference to standard forms of the language, because it is these forms that are most often found in print and most often used for writing.

This means that those people who have learnt to speak another variety, a dialect of the language, have to try to learn a new language





(dialect) *at the same time as they are trying to learn skills for reading and writing.*

There is a substantial amount of very clear research evidence to suggest that literacy learning is more effective if it can be done with the learner's first language or dialect (see Focus Area 12).

Literacy skills can be transferred to the use of the second language or dialect as the learner becomes more competent in its use.

These books therefore provide teachers with resources to teach reading and writing using the dialect that most of their Aboriginal learners already know. This should enhance the learners' progress in acquiring literacy skills. Because these books offer points of comparison, they can be used for explicit teaching of SAE, first as a spoken and then as a written language.

These stories can also be used to generate understanding of the way in which different cultures formulate knowledge, since they encompass Aboriginal world views, history and experience.

One highly-significant difference may be in the way that Aboriginal English uses narrative forms to structure understanding, pass knowledge from one generation to the next and preserve social norms and values.

Differences in narrative forms are particularly important for literacy learning because narrative is such a central part of most literacy curriculums.

One obvious difference between stories and yarns is in the structure of the narrative.

Stories generally have a linear shape (orientation, complication, resolution), whereas yarns have a shape that is more like a spiral serving to bind together past, present and future.

For more information about the genres and schemas of Aboriginal stories, see Focus Areas 4 and 5.

## Learning from the books

The books encourage readers – learners, teachers and people in the community – to compare SAE and other varieties of language within narrative forms.

Language and literacy teachers can learn from these texts as, for example, with help from their students, they can improve their knowledge about the subtle and not so subtle differences between Standard and Aboriginal English language practices.

These differences include:

- differences in sounds
- word choices
- grammatical structures
- conventions of language use
- genres and text structures
- meanings and interpretations
- cultural conceptualisations.

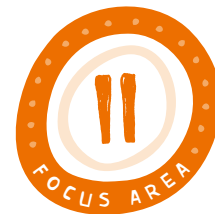
The books provide literacy teachers with the opportunity to reflect on the kind of understanding and knowledge about language that is needed to help their learners learn a new and additional dialect or variety of English<sup>1</sup>. It is important that teachers recognise legitimate features of Aboriginal English if their teaching is to serve the needs of beginning readers and writers struggling to learn literacy skills in a new (standard) dialect that they have not yet mastered in a spoken form.

The books may help teachers to explicitly teach:

- phonics
- vocabulary
- concepts
- aspects of grammar

1 This is particularly important, as research by Sharifian et al. (2011) has shown that there are dramatic differences in the interpretation of texts between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal learners and this affects the way in which information is recalled.





- concepts of punctuation
- text conventions
- application of prediction skills
- text analysis skills

and to further explore:

- Aboriginal English conventions
- Aboriginal schemas
- cultural conceptualisations
- language features for developing increased code-switching skills.

It may be that these books also provide teachers with opportunities to introduce Aboriginal content into literacy lessons; they may be an example of what is currently missing from the curriculum.

The books could be useful in encouraging members of the community to contribute to learning. They may like to read the books and talk about the stories to groups of learners.

These books may encourage other young and adult Aboriginal people to write more yarns using the language in which they feel most at home.

## Preparing stories for publication

In preparing these stories for publication, every effort has been made to preserve some of the spoken qualities of Aboriginal yarning.

We wanted to apply the standard conventions of spelling and punctuation without compromising the storytellers' intended meanings. The spelling sometimes deviates from that of SAE to represent the sounds that are typical of Aboriginal English, and the sentence breaks and punctuation are based on the structure and rhythms of spoken language.

The written text tries to capture the 'voice' of the storyteller. Line length has been used as a device to emphasise rhythm or to serve as a punctuation mark separating grammatical (and conceptual) units.

Full stops and capital letters are used less frequently than in SAE because of the preference in Aboriginal discourses for linking (often visual) details to build an uninterrupted composite image or impression.

A set of principles for the spelling and punctuation of Aboriginal English writing informs the conventions applied here.

Refer to the *Guidelines for learners to choose for spelling and punctuation in Aboriginal English* (Focus Area 8).

Each story was either written or dictated by an Aboriginal person. Each author prepared his or her story with the help of an Aboriginal English Consultant.

In some cases, the author also produced illustrations for his or her story. The stories are dramatic in that there is an emphasis, in Aboriginal English, on doing and saying and both direct and reported speech are used to relate interactions between people and to move the narrative along.

Readers of the stories will notice immediately that the blocks of text and lines are quite short, leaving a lot of white space on the page. These devices are similar to those used in writing poetry and, as with poetry, both sound and images are important aspects of these yarns.

Devices such as parallelism, repetition and even rhyme are used, many of them being normal features of Aboriginal English yarns.

The illustrations provide not only the physical detail associated with place, but also record the feelings associated with the action. Some parts of the illustrations also have symbolic resonance. The illustrations support the narrative structure of Aboriginal storytelling and move the story in what is often a circular or spiral progression.

These stories are short and may, from a non-Aboriginal perspective, seem to have left details out.





However, this is also a regular feature of Aboriginal English, which is heavily contextualised and functions well in a shared cultural context.

Non-Aboriginal readers, who may not share this context, will therefore need to use their own imagination (based on their own cultural knowledge) to complete a story.

However, as seen in previous workshops on cultural conceptualisation, this can lead to misunderstanding (Focus Area 4). A good strategy is to engage Aboriginal readers in discussions about the meaning of the text. This helps non-Aboriginal people to understand the text better and such discussions may also assist the Aboriginal readers to develop understandings of how misunderstanding happens with non-Aboriginal people<sup>2</sup>.

An interesting aspect of these stories is the 'stories within the stories': that is, the stories about how the yarners came to hear the stories.

*Grandfather* begins with the grandfather telling lots of stories about the dreamtime, the family and country and the story told in the book is one of those stories.

*Djiti djit* begins with the context of the storytelling, at night around the camp fire. The writer of this story is remembering the yarn told by her grandmother and the illustrations depict these occasions of storytelling when she was a child, locating her within the family and in a particular place.

In all the stories, the illustrations are at least as important as the words and have their own stories to tell.

<sup>2</sup> Research by Sharifian et al. (2004) through the *Improving Understanding of Aboriginal Literacy: Factors in Text Comprehension* research project showed that non-Aboriginal educators misunderstand their Aboriginal students because they do not share the same cultural knowledge.





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- Quartermaine, T. (2005). *Djiti Djit*. Perth: Department of Education and Training.
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- Rochecouste, J. and Malcolm, I. G. (2003). *Aboriginal English Genres in the Yamatji Lands of Western Australia*. Perth: Edith Cowan University.
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- Sharifian, F., Rochecouste, J., Malcolm, I. G., Königsberg, P. and Collard, G. (2004). *Improving Understanding of Aboriginal Literacy: Factors in Text Comprehension*. Perth: Department of Education and Training.
- Sharifian, F., Truscott, A., Königsberg, P., Malcolm, I. G. and Collard, G. (2011). *Understanding Stories My Way: Aboriginal-English Speaking Students' (Mis)understanding of School Literacy Materials in Australian English*. Perth: Department of Education.

### Please note:

For a list of additional published Aboriginal autobiographies, see [http://epress.anu.edu.au/aborig\\_history/indigenous\\_biog/mobile\\_devices/ch01s04.html](http://epress.anu.edu.au/aborig_history/indigenous_biog/mobile_devices/ch01s04.html).



## MODULE 11.1 GRANDFATHER – OVERVIEW

### Learning objectives

This module will help educators to:

- experience storytelling in Aboriginal English (AE)
- analyse Aboriginal English texts for teaching points, discourse structure and conceptual differences.

### Activity description

In this activity, participants will refer to their copies of the text *Grandfather* and work in groups to identify teaching points relating to AE linguistic conventions.

The text also provides an opportunity for participants to familiarise themselves with the cultural conceptualisations and schemas relevant to Aboriginal culture. A common schema in this story is the 'family' schema, which refers to family connections and responsibilities.

Ensure the availability of Focus Areas 3 and Modules 4.2, 4.3, 5.2.2, 5.4, 5.5.3 and 8.4 for this activity.

### Facilitators notes

Materials required:

- Storybook: *Grandfather* (one for each participant)<sup>3</sup>
  - Handout: *What you should look for* (provided)
  - Explanatory notes: *Grandfather* (provided)
  - Access to (and/or previous workshop on) Focus Area 3 and Modules 4.2, 4.3, 5.2.2, 5.4, 5.5.3 and 8.4
  - Writing materials.
1. As a Two-Way Team, familiarise yourself with the story, discuss the explanatory notes and possibly add your own ideas and personal experiences.
  2. Organise participants into groups using a strategy from Module 12.7.1 or one of your own.
  3. Distribute storybooks and handouts.
  4. Allow considerable time for participants to 'research' the forms, schemas, etc in their materials.
  5. Invite conclusions for each of the four tasks from each group and discuss what miscommunication might occur in an educational context in the light of the features of this story.

<sup>3</sup> One copy of the storybook *Grandfather* is included in this Focus Area. Additional copies of all ten storybooks can be obtained from the Department of Training and Workforce Development, Western Australia.



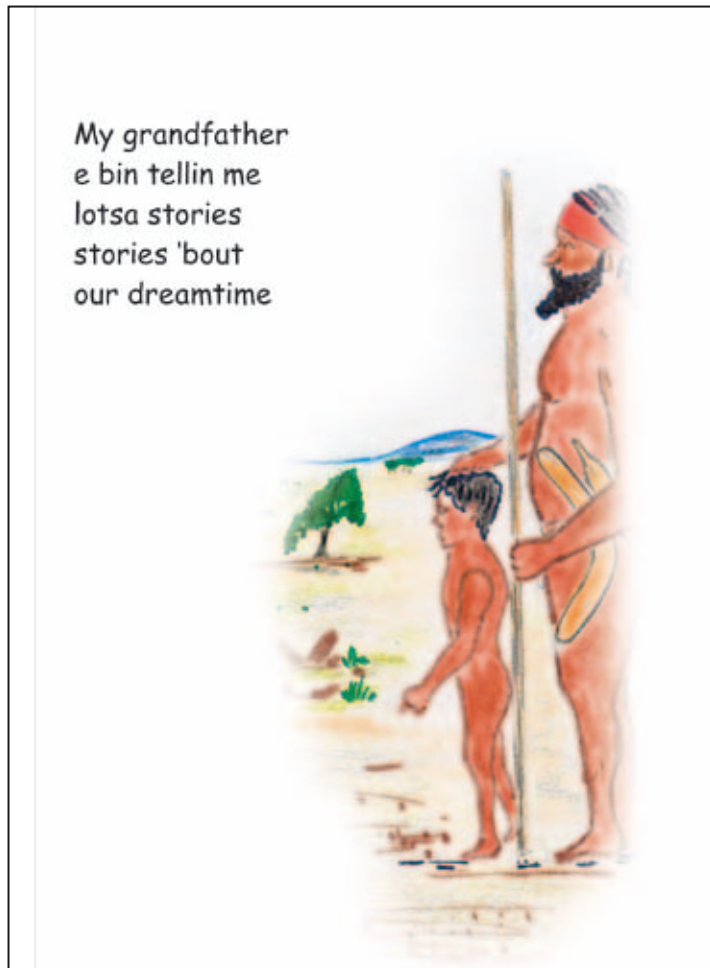
# MODULE 11.1 GRANDFATHER – HANDOUT

## What you should look for

1. Referring to the main grammatical differences between Aboriginal English (AE) and Standard Australian English (SAE) described in the Background reading in Focus Area 3, identify teaching points, that will help learners to bridge from AE to SAE.
2. With the help of the handouts on pronunciation in Module 8.4, identify any forms that suggest expression of spoken AE.
3. Using Modules 4.2 and 4.3, discuss the cultural conceptualisations that are embedded in the story.
4. Using Modules 5.2.2, 5.4 and 5.5.3, look at the structure of the story and discuss any similarities with or differences from SAE stories. You might note particular elements of discourse that make it a story, such as emphasis, etc.



## MODULE 11.1 GRANDFATHER – EXPLANATORY NOTES



### Language

- Note the double subject ('e' refers to 'Grandfather'). Note also that 'e' is not marked for gender.
- Note 'bin' as a past tense marker.
- In Aboriginal English, the initial unstressed vowel syllable in a word is often deleted, eg 'bout.
- Aboriginal English often changes the 'ing' ending to an 'in' ending.
- Note the indefinite quantifier 'lotsa' (also 'lotta'). Though this is derived from 'lots of', it cannot be segmented, as in Aboriginal English the function of 'of' here has been lost.

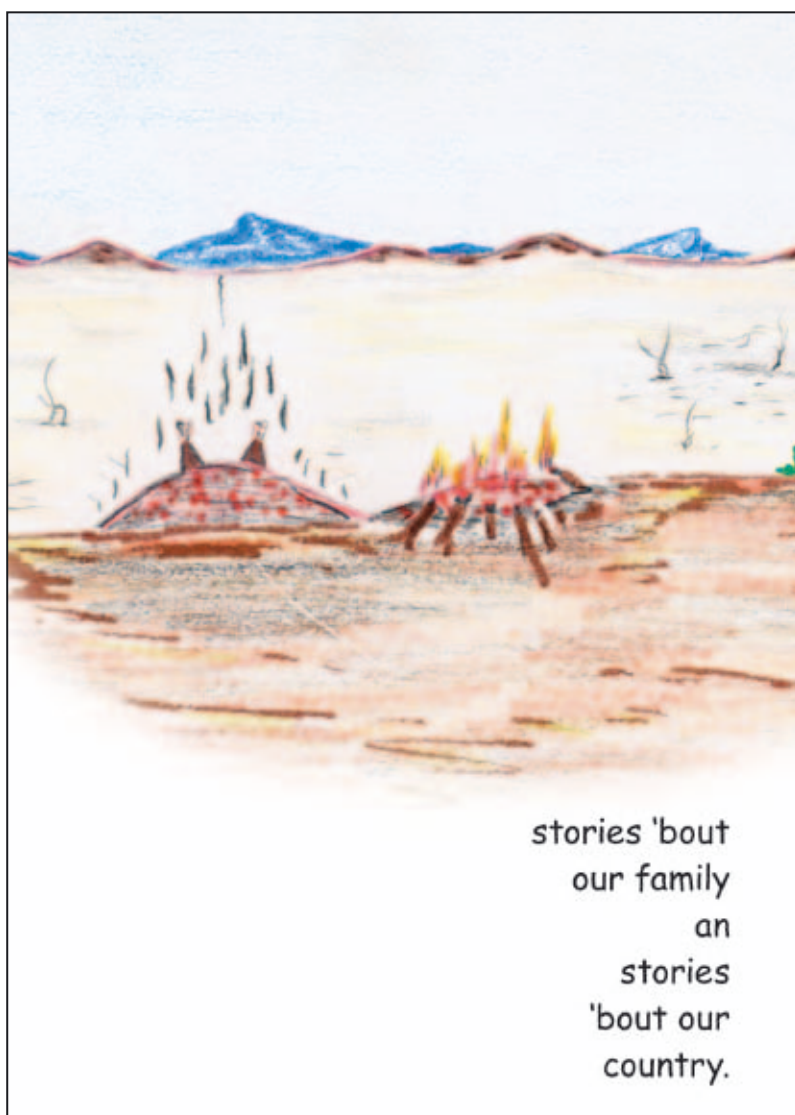
### Story discourse elements

- The word 'stories' has been repeated. Repetitions like this are not uncommon in Aboriginal English narratives.

### Cultural conceptualisations

- This story evokes a family schema.





## Language

- 'And' is reduced to 'an' on the basis of simplification of the consonant cluster 'nd'. In Aboriginal English, the initial unstressed vowel syllable in a word is often deleted.

## Story discourse elements

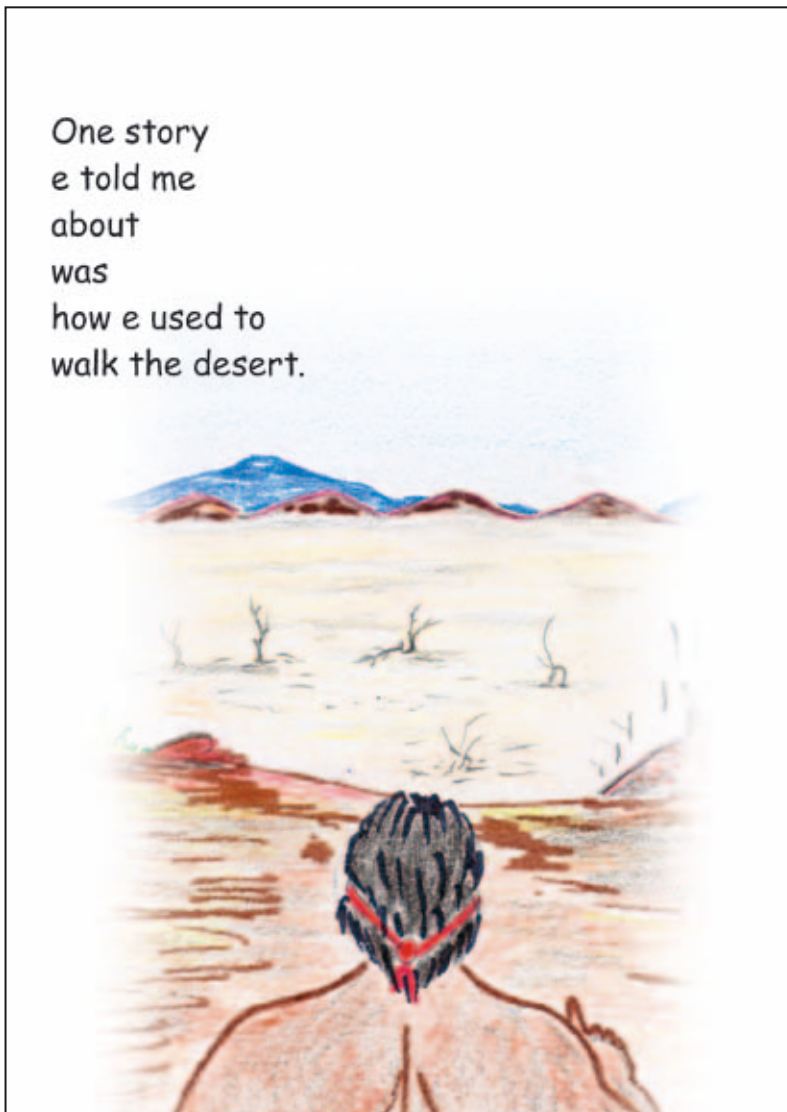
- Note the structural repetition: 'stories 'bout our family', 'stories 'bout our country'. The first line has the same structure and most of the vocabulary as the previous line. This is a common feature of Aboriginal English oral narratives and provides emphasis.

## Cultural conceptualisations

- Note the customary role of elders to ensure the continuation of Aboriginal knowledge through oral story telling.



One story  
e told me  
about  
was  
how e used to  
walk the desert.



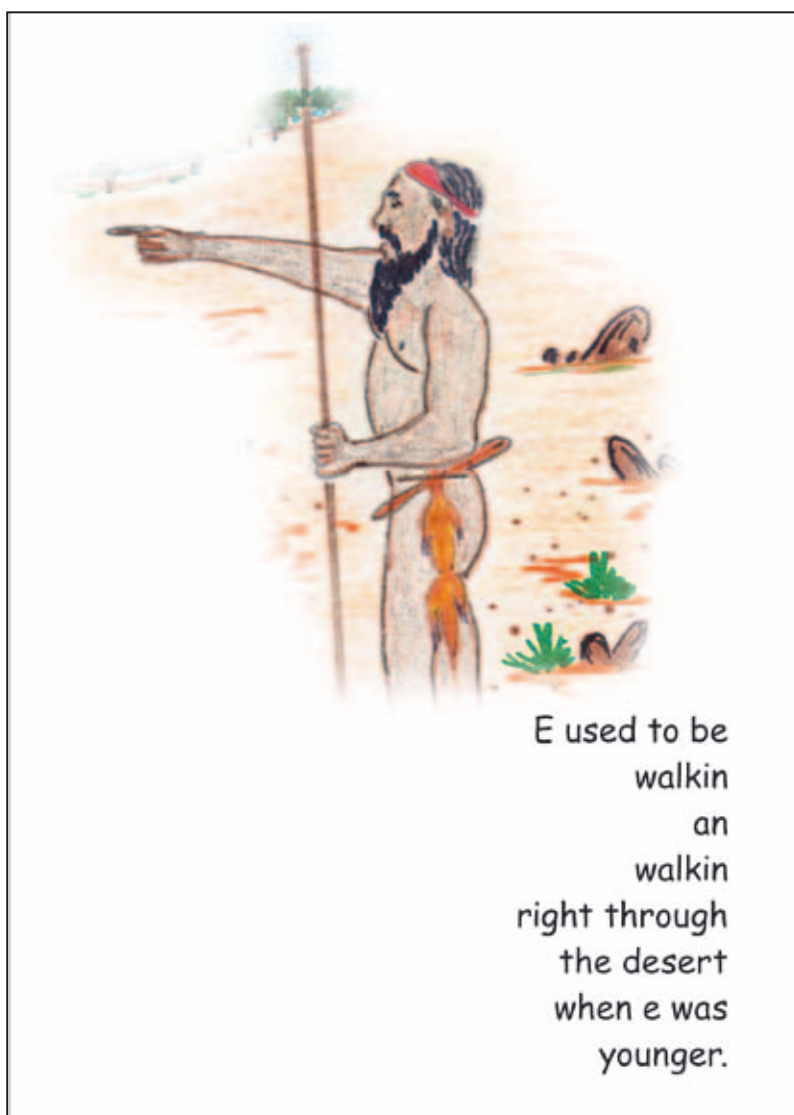
### Language

- Aboriginal English varies from light to heavy varieties. Sometimes a 'light' form of Aboriginal English will be structurally close to Standard English.
- Here the only evidence of Aboriginal English would be the use of 'e' for 'he'.

### Cultural conceptualisation

- A travelling schema is introduced with 'walk the desert'. The expression 'walk the desert' as opposed to 'walk in the desert' has also a cultural significance, as it signifies the cultural conceptualisation of the intrinsic link between man (woman) and country.





## Language

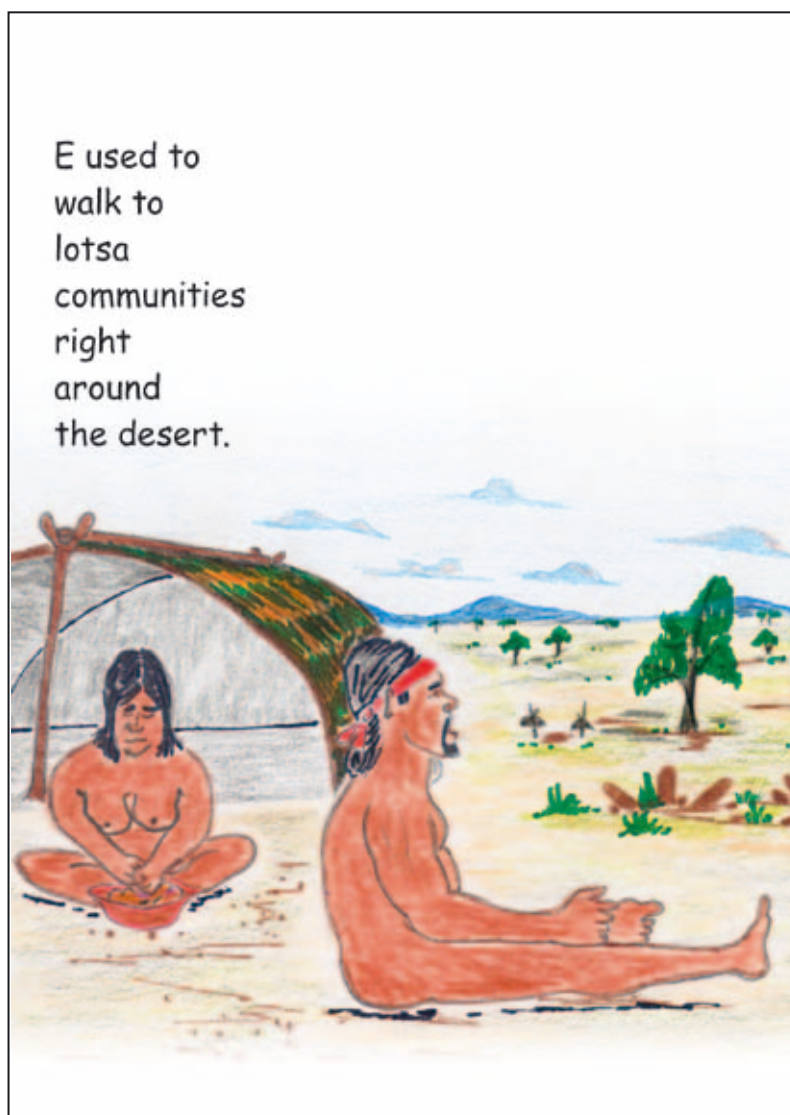
- Again there is the loss of 'h' in 'he' and the avoidance of word final consonant clusters in 'an' for 'and'.

## Story discourse elements

- The author is giving added emphasis to the habitual nature of the walking by saying 'be walkin'. The continuity of this activity is also expressed with the repetition 'walkin an walkin'.







## Language

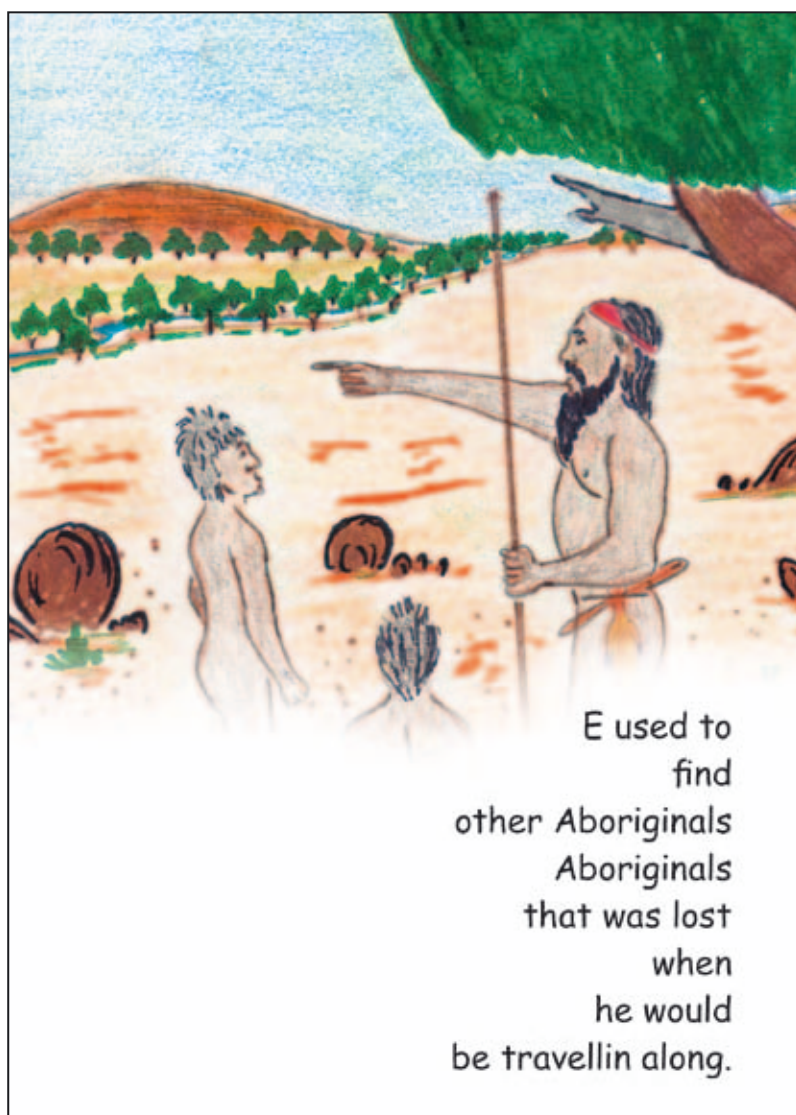
- Indefinite quantifier 'lotsa' (also 'lotta'). As seen previously, although this is derived from 'lots of', it cannot be segmented, as in Aboriginal English the function of 'of' here has been lost.

## Cultural conceptualisations

- Note the reference to (traditional) community structures, before the arrival of Europeans – part of handing down the knowledge.







## Language

- Standard Australian English (SAE) would require 'were' rather than 'was' here, but Aboriginal English uses the same past tense form of the verb 'to be' for singular and plural subjects.
- SAE would also require 'who' here, instead of 'that'. This, however, is changing in informal Standard English.

## Story discourse elements

- Note the repetition of 'Aboriginals': the same structural feature as pointed out above.

## Cultural conceptualisations

- The expression 'travellin along', which would be uttered in an elongated higher pitch, invokes the travel schema.
- See here reference to the skills of the elders in knowing the desert (reading the land) and being able to help those who were lost.



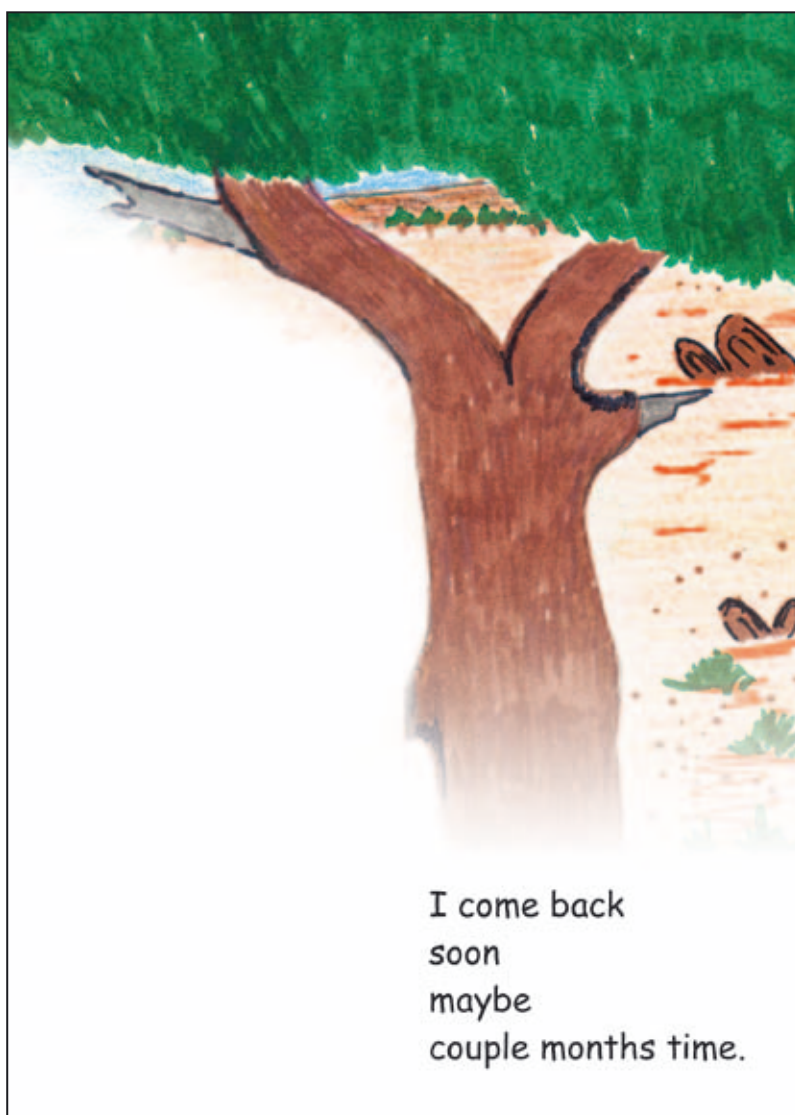
E would take em  
mostly down  
the river.  
E used to  
tell em....  
Wait 'ere.



## Language

- Here we are introduced to direct speech: 'Wait 'ere'. Aboriginal English narratives move readily into and out of direct speech.





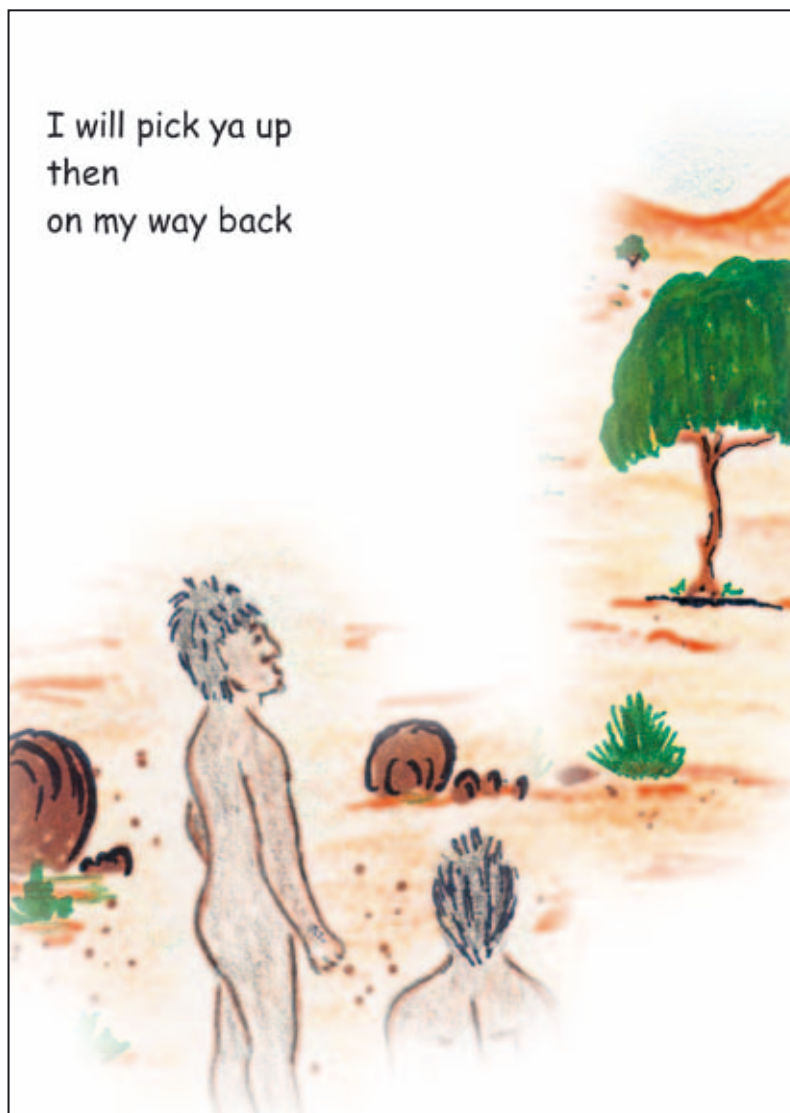
## Language

- The future tense is not marked on the verb here but is evident from the context: 'couple months time'.
- Again the article 'a' and preposition 'of' are redundant to the story.

## Cultural conceptualisations

- The travelling schema – out and back – is reinforced.





### Language

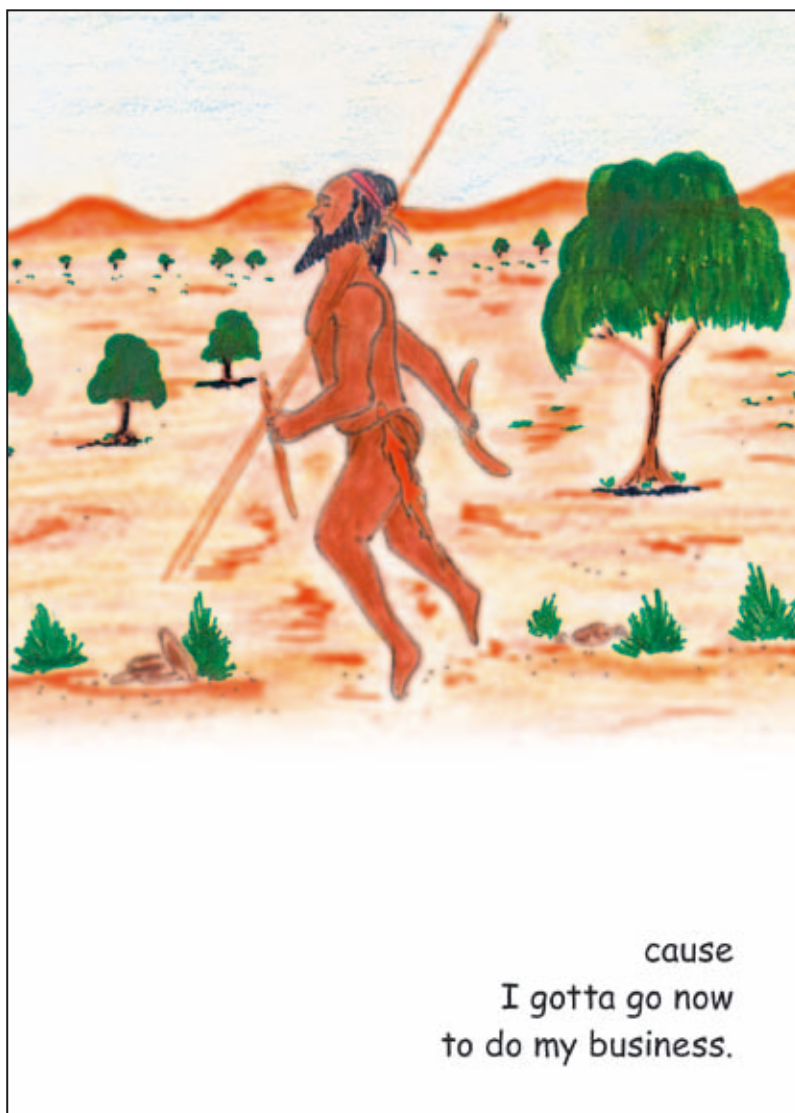
- Aboriginal English is less likely to put liaison between two vowels than SAE, which would pronounce this like 'youwup'.

### Cultural conceptualisations

- The travelling schema is reinforced.







## Language

- 'Gotta go' is an alternative modal form not used in formal SAE but frequent in casual SAE speech. The same applies to 'cause'.

## Cultural conceptualisations

- Note the commitment to cultural responsibilities: 'I gotta go now to do my business'.



## MODULE 11.2 DJITI DJIT – OVERVIEW

### Learning objectives

This module will help educators to:

- experience storytelling in Aboriginal English (AE)
- analyse AE texts for teaching points, discourse structure and conceptual differences.

### Activity description

A common schema in AE narrative is 'control', which has the purpose of entertainment but also of warning against natural and spiritual dangers. *Djiti Djit* is this type of story.

In this activity, participants will look at the story from a conceptual point of view and develop teaching points for their learners from an Aboriginal perspective, ie adapt what the story teaches Aboriginal children for teaching all learners about Aboriginal conceptualisation.

Additional teaching points can also be developed from the rhyming sequences in the text. For example, brainstorm for more words that rhyme with these as a vocabulary building exercise.

### Facilitators notes

Materials required:

- Storybook: *Djiti Djit* (one for each participant)<sup>4</sup>
  - Worksheet: *Cultural conceptualisations and schemas* (provided)
  - Explanatory notes: *Djiti Djit* (provided)
  - Access to the Background reading in Focus Area 2 and access to (and/or previous workshop on) Modules 4.3, 4.4, 5.2.1, 5.2.2 and 6.3
  - Writing materials, whiteboard.
1. As a Two-Way Team, familiarise yourself with the story, discuss the explanatory notes and possibly add your own ideas and personal experiences.
  2. Organise participants into groups using a strategy from Module 12.7.1 or one of your own.
  3. Distribute storybooks and worksheets.
  4. **Important:** explain that in this activity we are not concerned with the forms of Aboriginal English compared with *Standard* Australian English. Here we are looking only at the conceptualisation of Aboriginal experience as reflected in the story.
  5. Allow considerable time for participants to 'research' the conceptualisations and schemas in the materials.
  6. Invite groups to share their findings and, using a whiteboard, construct a definitive list of conceptualisations and schemas to accompany the use of this story in an educational context.

4 One copy of the storybook *Djiti Djit* is included in this Focus Area. Additional copies of all ten storybooks can be obtained from the Department of Training and Workforce Development, Western Australia.

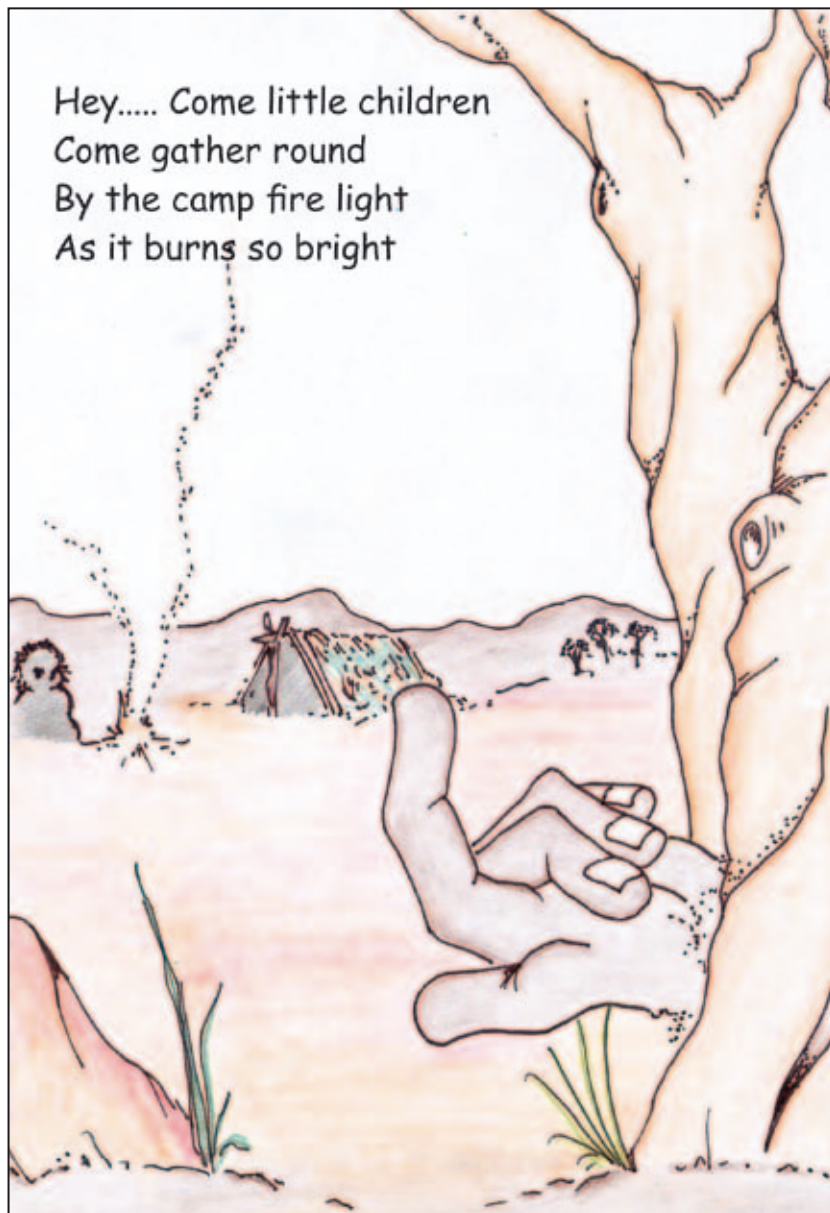


## Cultural conceptualisations and schemas

Cultural conceptualisations identified	Example/evidence from text 'quote' and page number	Schemas



## MODULE 11.2 DJITI DJIT – EXPLANATORY NOTES



### Cultural conceptualisations

- Children are invited to the camp fire to hear a story. A frequent activity in Aboriginal culture, night-time gathering introduces family schema.





### Cultural conceptualisations

- Reference to the Aboriginal cultural practice of telling stories by a camp fire at night.





### Cultural conceptualisations

- Introduces tradition of knowledge kept by old people.







### Cultural conceptualisations

- The story telling invokes a control situation – an educational situation.





### Cultural conceptualisations

- Identifies the focus of the story – the Willy-Wagtail or Djiti Djiti (in Nyungar).







### Cultural conceptualisations

- Children are taught to listen for the sound – an imitation of the bird's chirp.





### Cultural conceptualisations

- Educates about the typical behaviour of this bird.

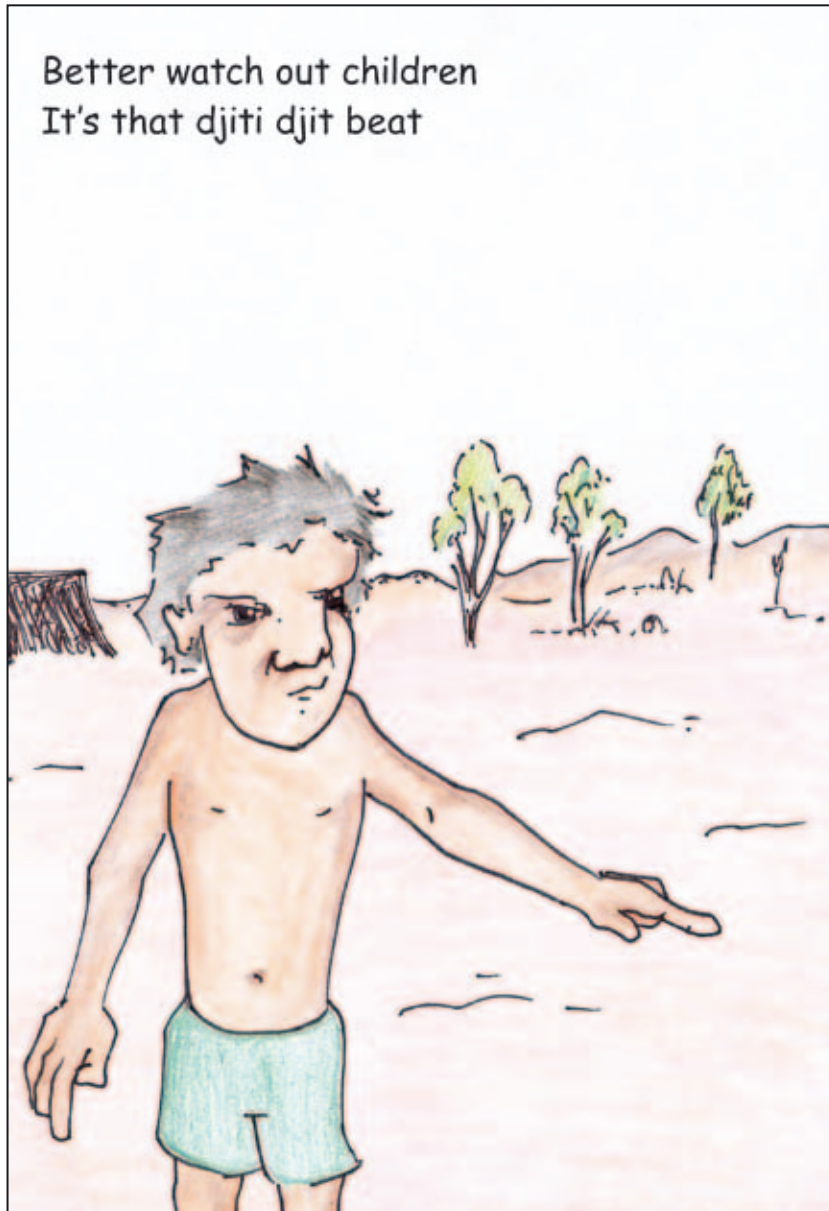




### Cultural conceptualisations

- Educates about the typical behaviour of this bird.



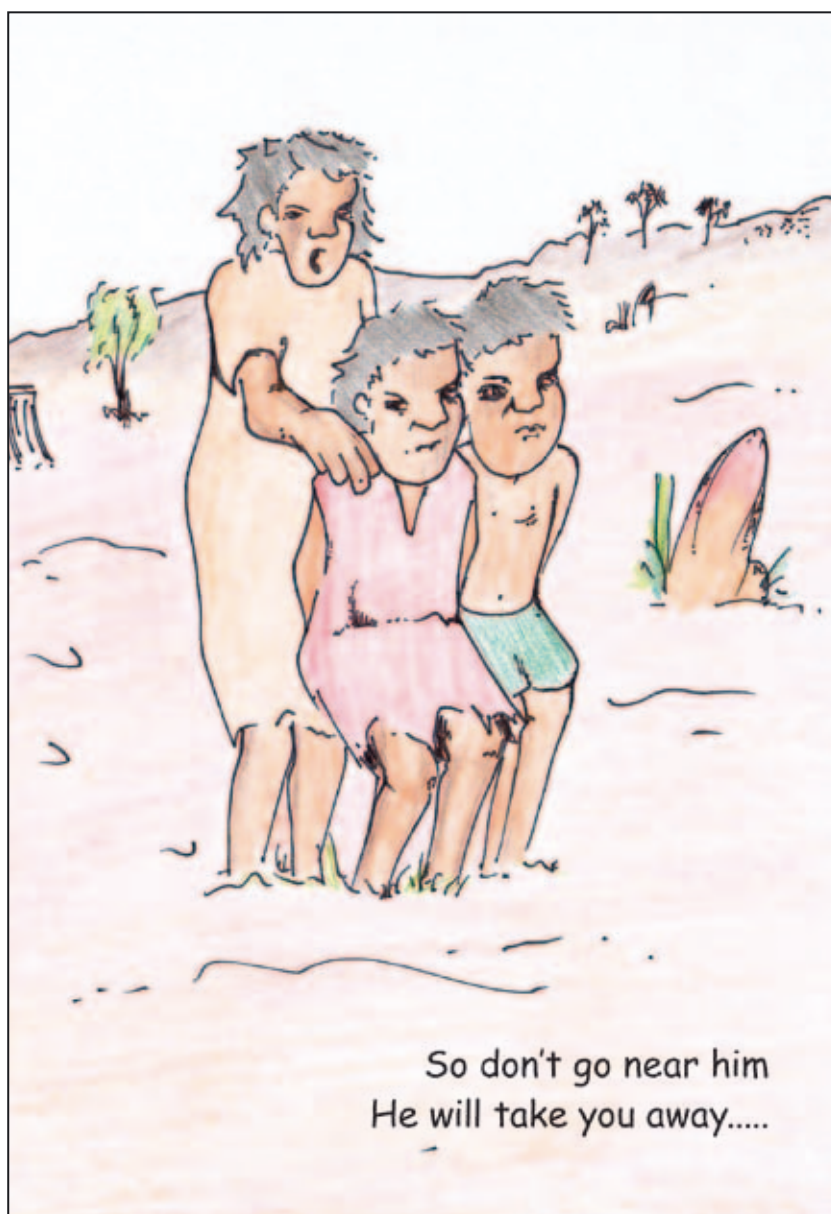


### Cultural conceptualisations

- Warns the children about the typical behaviour of this bird.







### Cultural conceptualisations

- Note how the bird is referred to with the pronouns 'he/him', which in Standard Australian English imply a human being. Aboriginal culture views birds and animals as being able to exercise spiritual powers.
- The listeners are warned of the bird's powers.







### Cultural conceptualisations

- Children are advised to respect the elders' knowledge about these things.

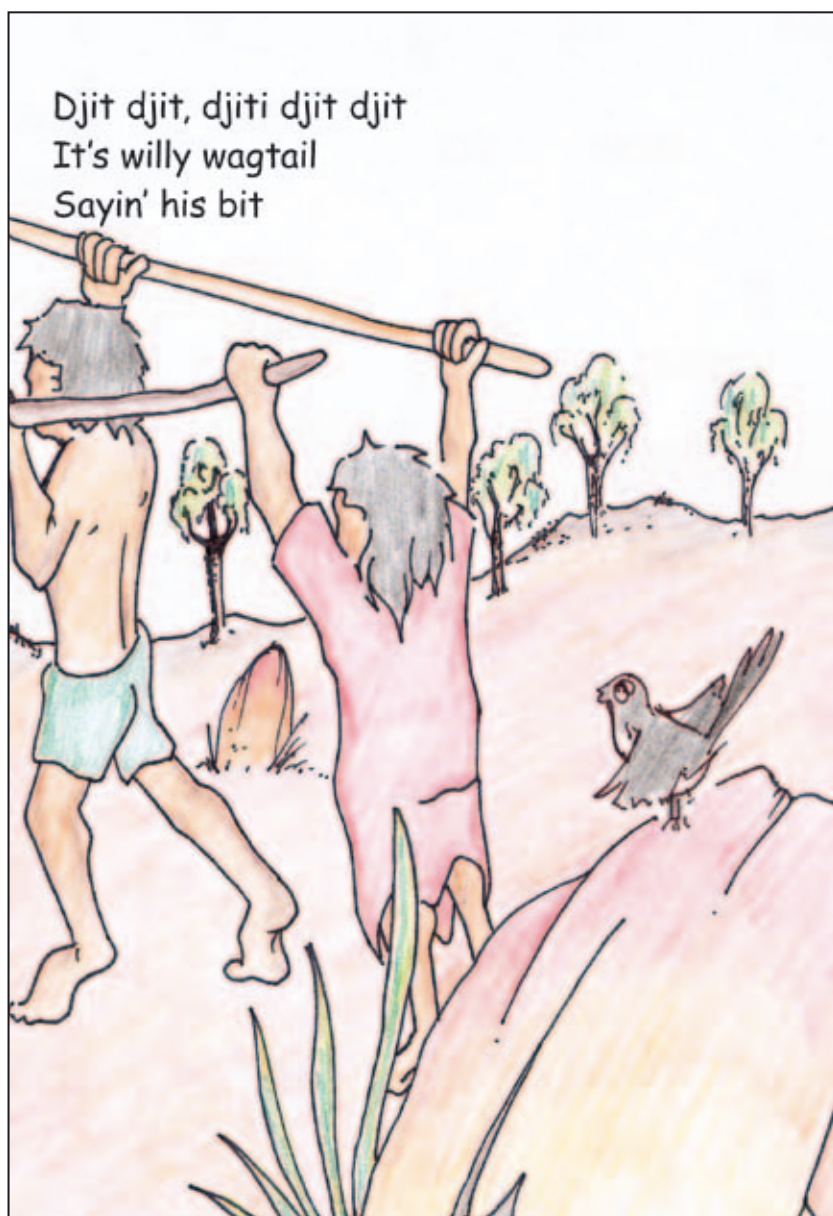




### Cultural conceptualisations

- Knowledge about the environment and this bird in particular.



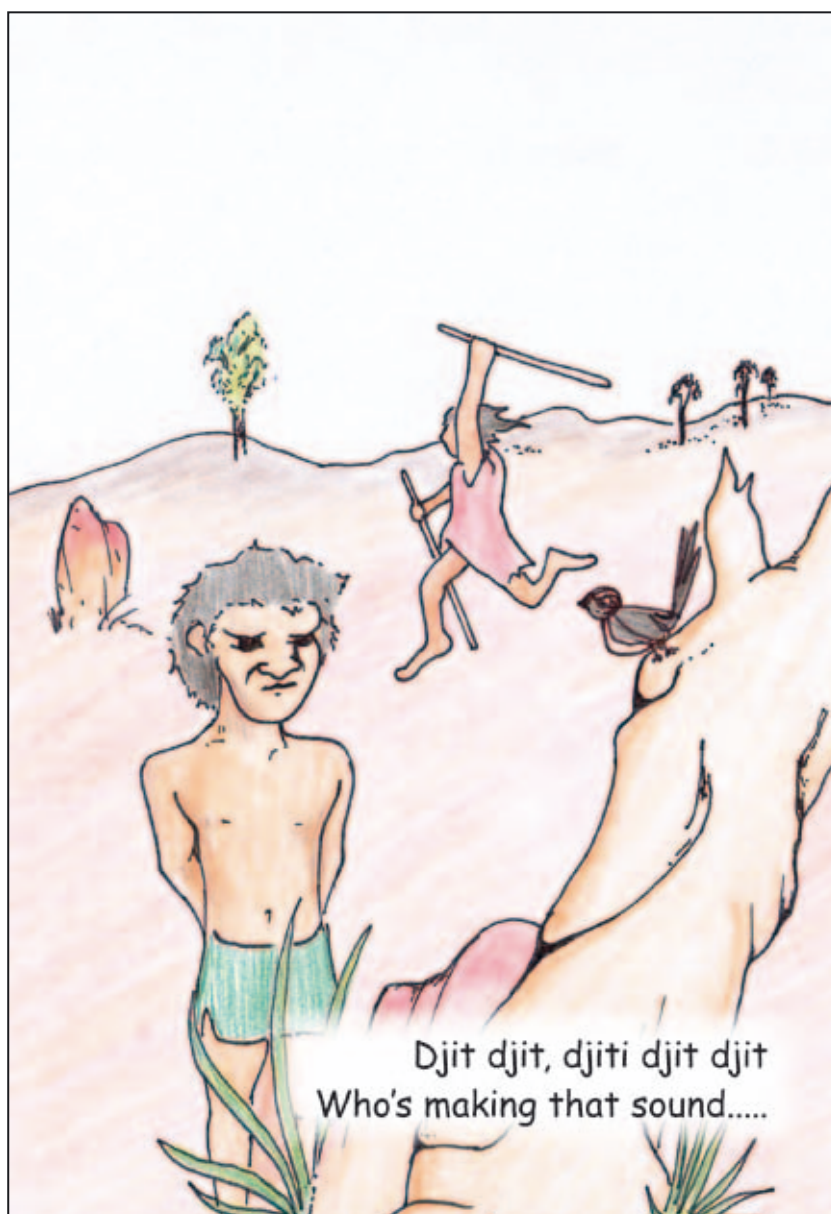


### Cultural conceptualisations

- The powers of the Djiti Djit are reinforced.



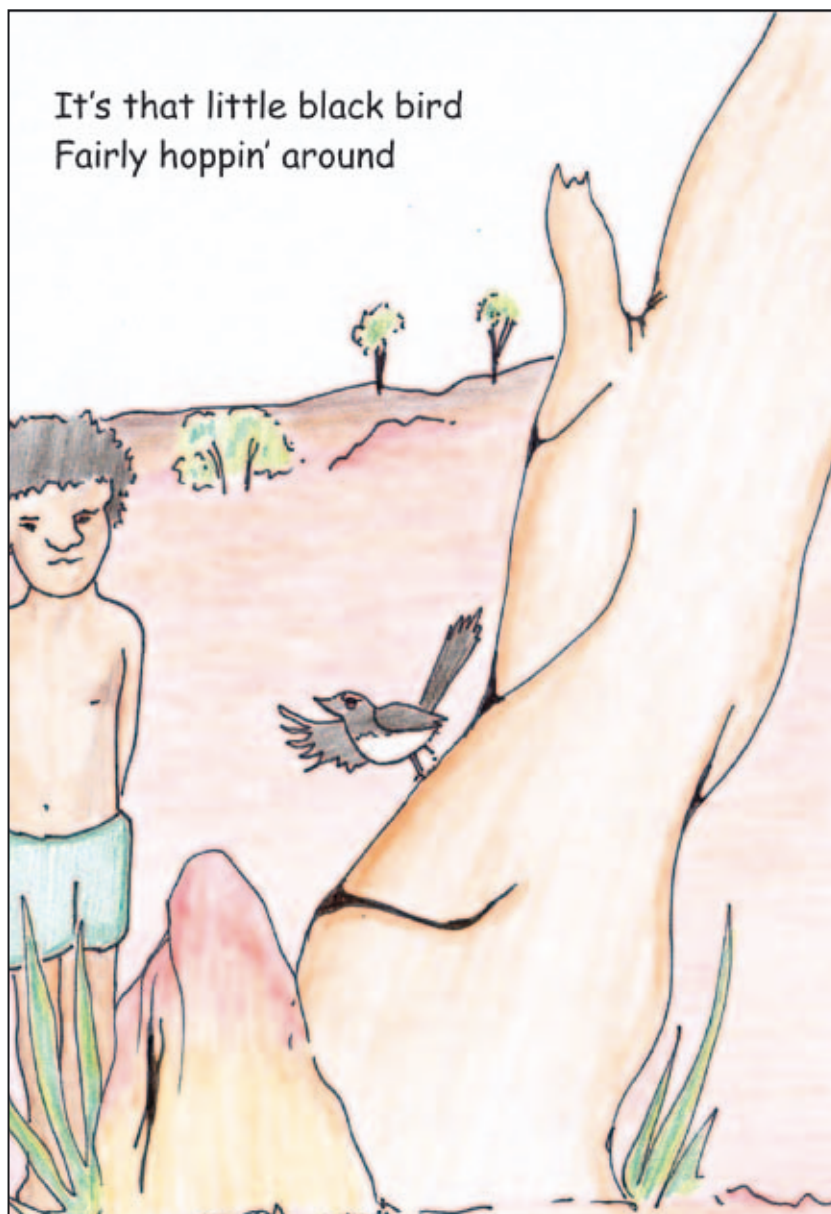




### Cultural conceptualisations

- The need to recognise the bird is reinforced by using the story discourse element of repetition.



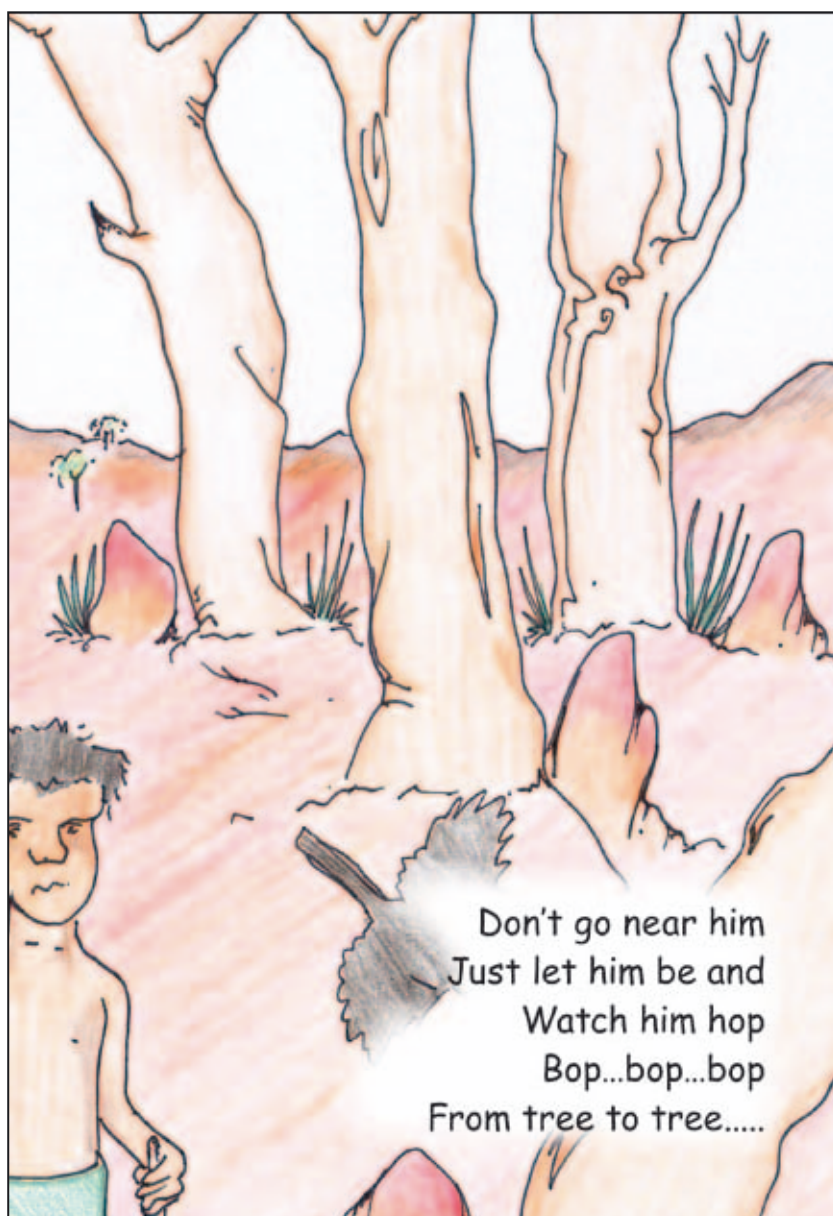


### Cultural conceptualisations

- The need to recognise the bird is further reinforced by using the story discourse element of repetition.







### Cultural conceptualisations

- Explicit warning to not interfere with this bird reinforces the 'control' function of the story.





### Cultural conceptualisations

- The bird possesses spiritual powers over humans. The story also includes a spiritual schema.
- Spiritual schemas are significant in Aboriginal culture and often create difficulties for non-Aboriginal readers.





### Cultural conceptualisations

- The spiritual powers of the Djiti Djiti are introduced and children are warned not to follow the bird.







### Cultural conceptualisations

- The bird is identified and its attraction for children is stressed.





### Cultural conceptualisations

- The bird is identified and its chirp is stressed.





## MODULE 11.3 HEARIN' THE VOICES – OVERVIEW

### Learning objectives

This module will help educators to:

- analyse Aboriginal English texts for schemas and conceptual differences
- develop texts that are culturally inclusive.

### Activity description

The storybook *Hearin' the Voices* includes a number of schemas as it tells a story of traditional ways: travel, hunting, observing, family and dreamtime yarns.

In this activity participants are asked to work in pairs to write a summary (see Handout) of the story in Standard Australian English. It is important that the same acknowledgement of the cultural conceptualisation is maintained: that is, to avoid expressions such as *Aboriginal people do this... Aboriginal people do that...*

This activity is also suitable for upper-secondary and adult learners.

### Facilitators notes

Materials required:

- Storybook: *Hearin' the Voices* (one for each participant)<sup>5</sup>
  - Handout: *How to write a summary* (provided)
  - Writing materials, sticky notes
  - Access to the Background reading in Focus Area 4 and access to (and/or previous workshops on) Modules 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.7.4.
1. As a Two-Way Team, familiarise yourself with the story, discuss the explanatory notes and possibly add your own ideas and personal experiences.
  2. Organise the participants into pairs using a strategy from Module 12.7.1 or one of your own.
  3. Explain the task (as above) and distribute the storybook *Hearin' the Voices* and Handout: *How to write a summary*.
  4. Allow time for pairs to read, make notes and write their summaries.
  5. Ask pairs to display their summaries on the walls and invite all participants to review the texts and add comments with their sticky notes.
  6. You might like to introduce an evaluation system (for example, marks out of five) for participants to evaluate the texts. A tally can be done at the end of the session to find the 'most admired' text.

<sup>5</sup> One copy of the storybook *Hearin' the Voices* is included in this Focus Area. Additional copies of all ten storybooks can be obtained from the Department of Training and Workforce Development, Western Australia.

# MODULE 11.3 HEARIN' THE VOICES – HANDOUT

## How to write a summary

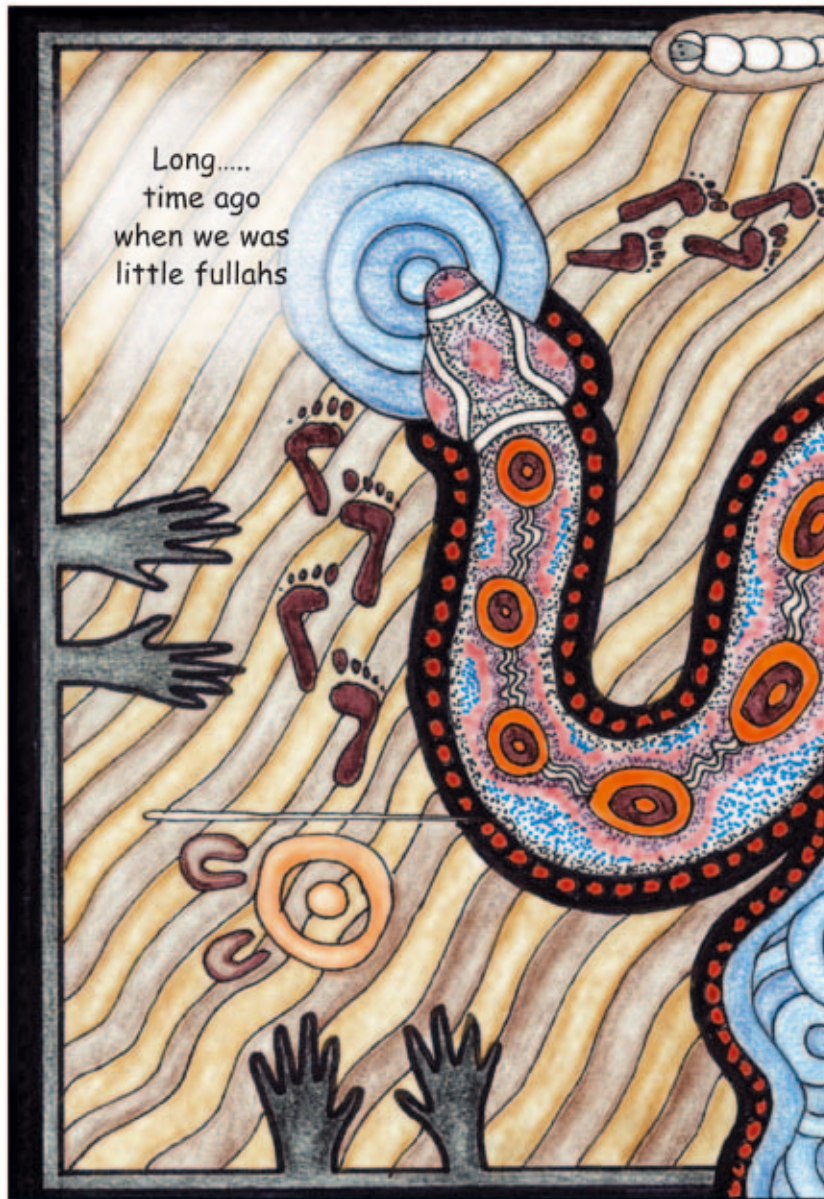
- A summary is not a personal interpretation of a text or an expression of personal opinions about the ideas presented. A summary explains what a text is about.
- First, an understanding of the complete text is needed to identify the central ideas and express them accurately and completely.
- A summary shows that its writer has *assimilated* the central ideas of the text, ie he or she can relate to them. It tells readers exactly what the text is about, in less space.
- The key word here is *assimilation*. When reading a text, it is probable that readers will understand only those parts that have associations within their own experience (intellectual, emotional, physical, etc).
- How a writer actually goes about the process of writing a summary depends on the ability to restate the central ideas from the text in his or her own words.

## Here are the rules of the game:

1. Read the story several times very carefully.
2. Make notes of the main points.
3. Organise and rewrite the points into a clear and cohesive text.
4. Do not copy sentences exactly from the story. But you can use some key words and phrases to keep accuracy.



## MODULE 11.3 HEARIN' THE VOICES – EXPLANATORY NOTES

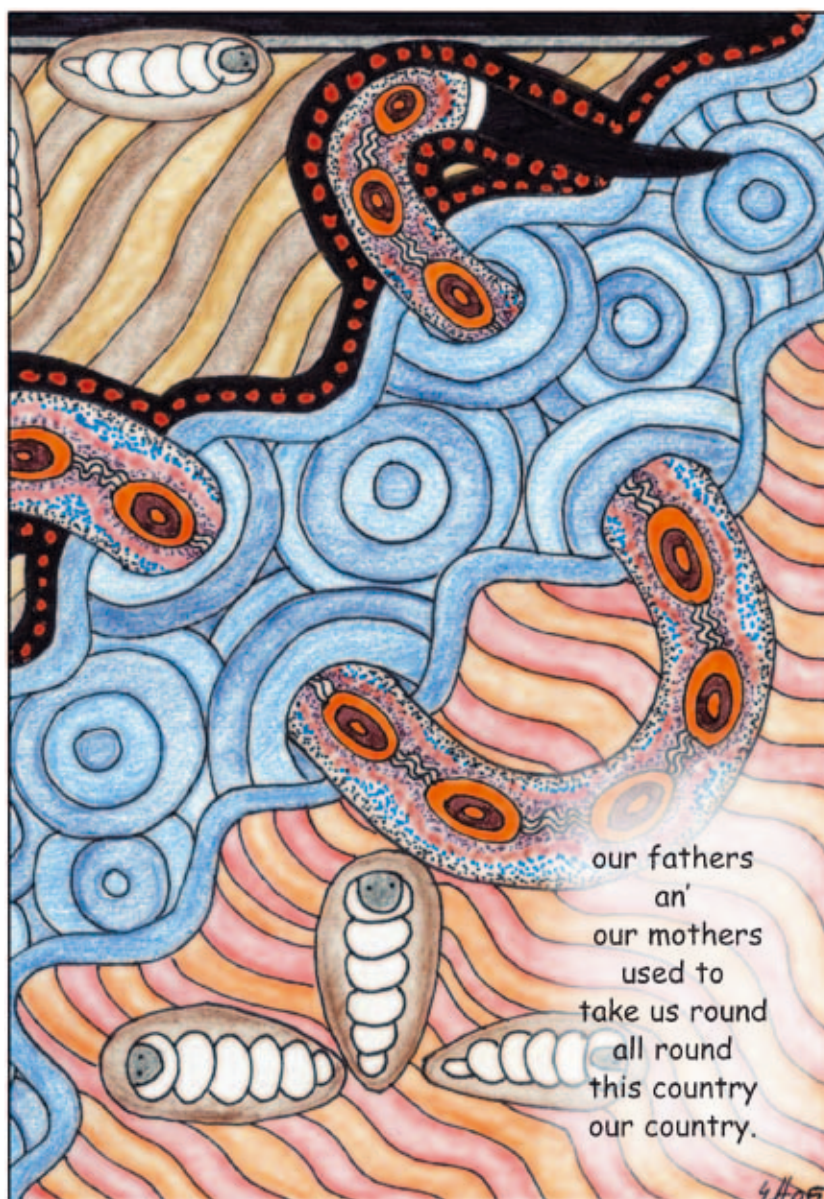


### Cultural reference

- It's a story recalled from childhood.





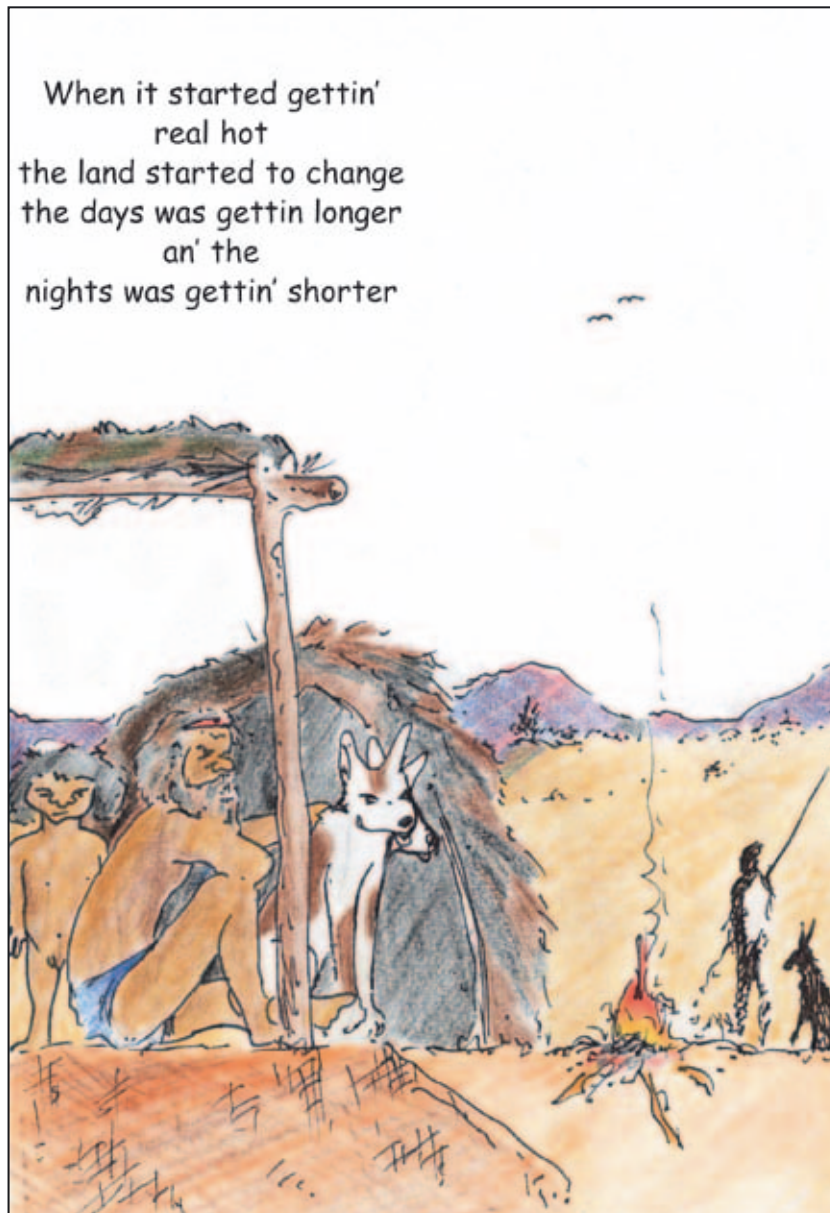


### Cultural reference

- The story recalls instruction on country from parents, etc (family schema).







### Cultural reference

- There is reference to seasonal change.





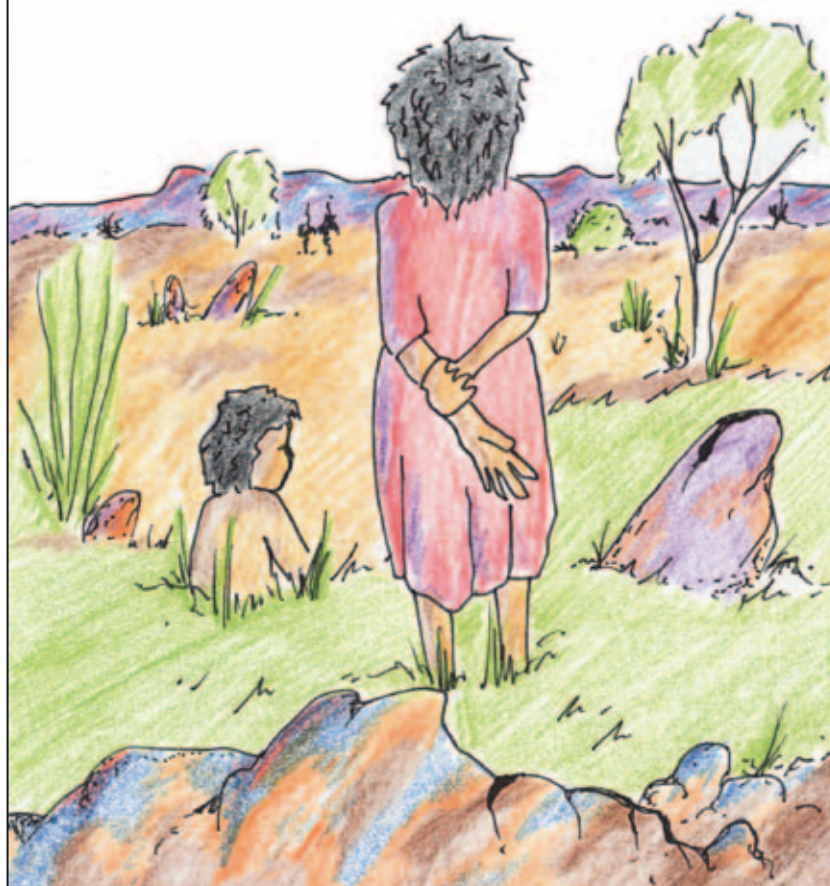
### Cultural reference

- The movement of Aboriginal groups was determined by environmental changes, so in dry seasons they moved to water and food sources (a travel schema).





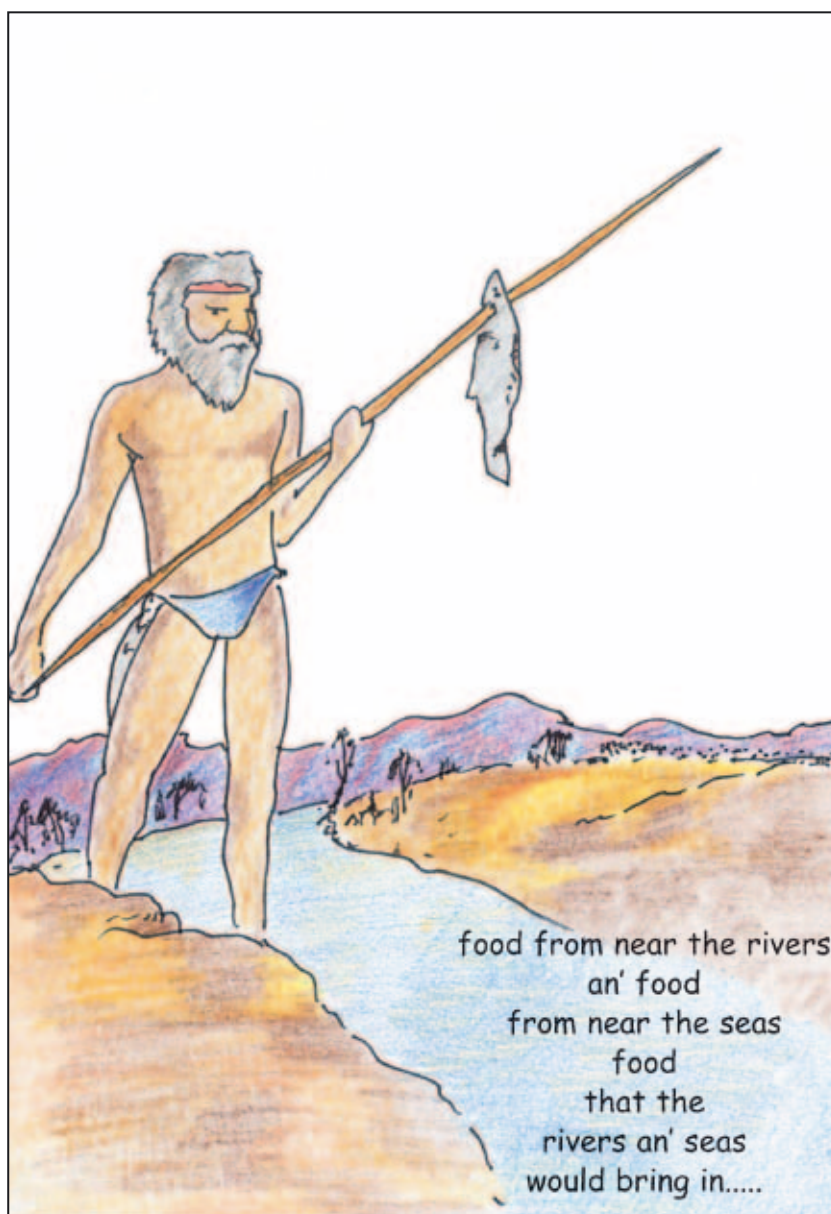
We'd start lookin'  
for foods  
lots of  
food  
food that lives  
an'  
food that grows



### Cultural reference

- This recalls ways of living on animals and plants.





### Cultural reference

- Especially food accessible near water (hunting schema).





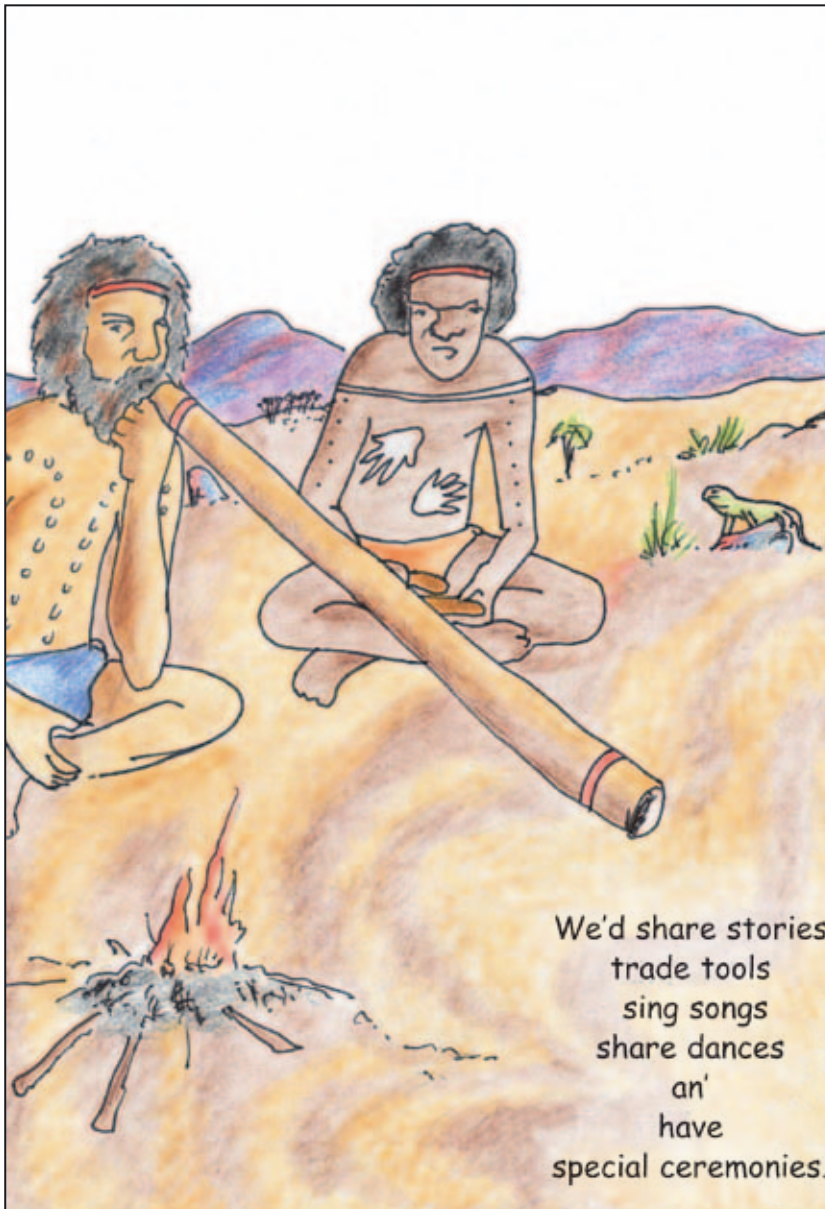
gatherin' food  
for when  
we would meet up  
with other  
Nyungar families.



### Cultural reference

- Movement from drier climates to water meant family groups came together, finding and sharing food (gathering schema).

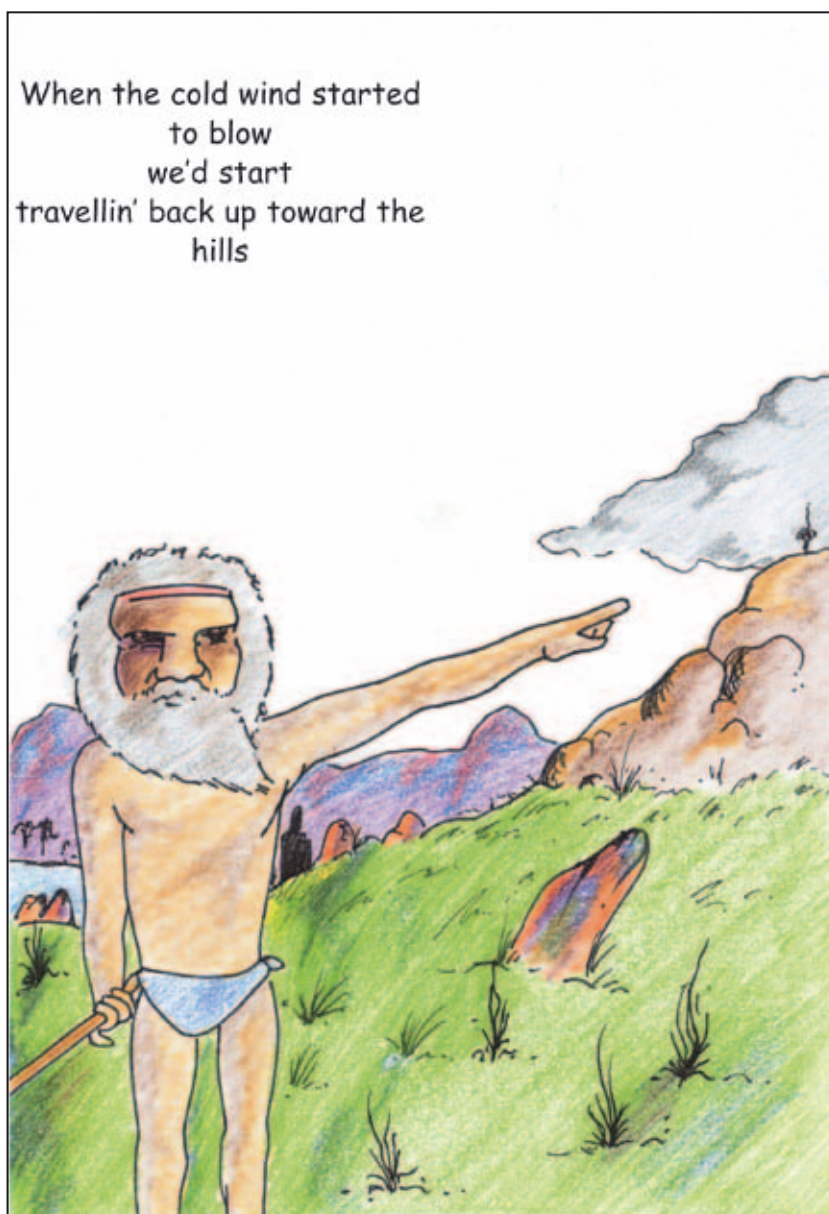




### Cultural reference

- These occasions involved meeting and conducting special ceremonies.



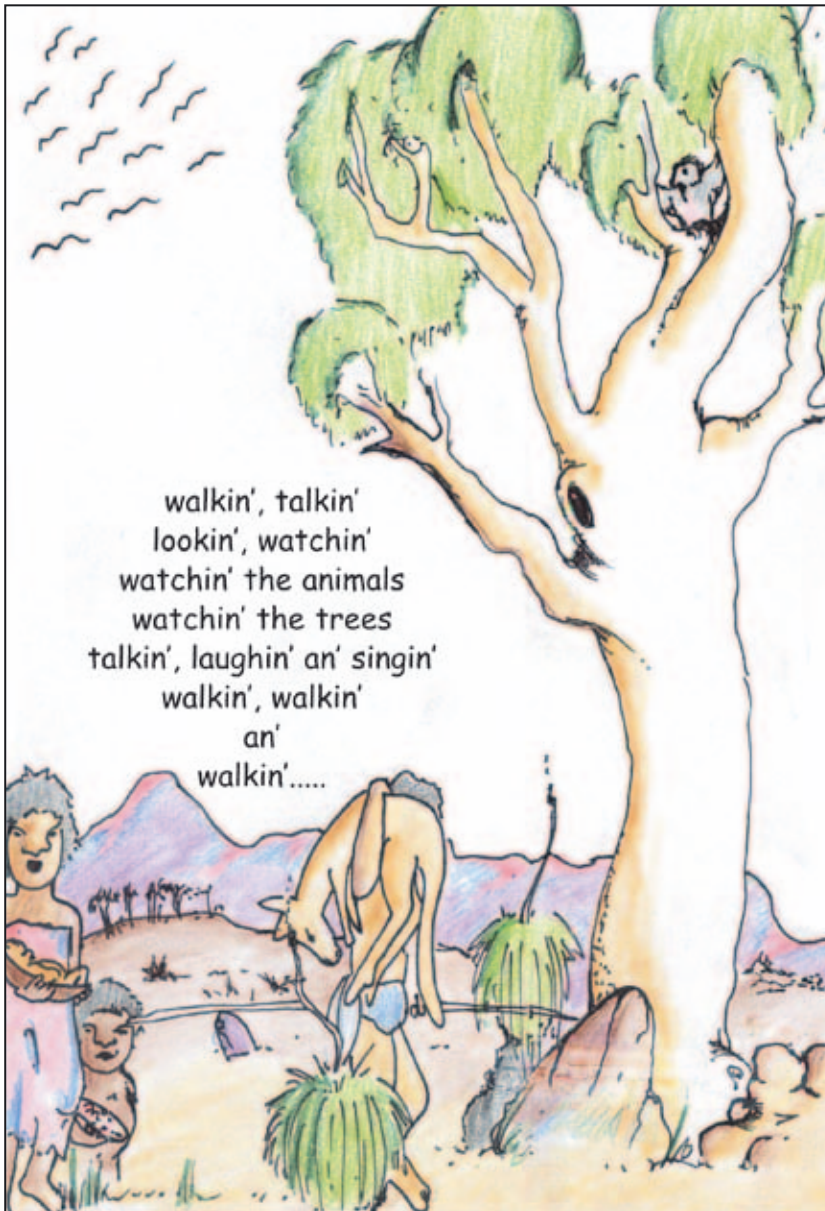


### Cultural reference

- The temporary nature of these gatherings was determined by changes in seasons and movement back to more sheltered or warmer country (travel schema).







### Cultural reference

- Travelling was not considered tedious; it was a time for shared communication and for observation (observing schema).



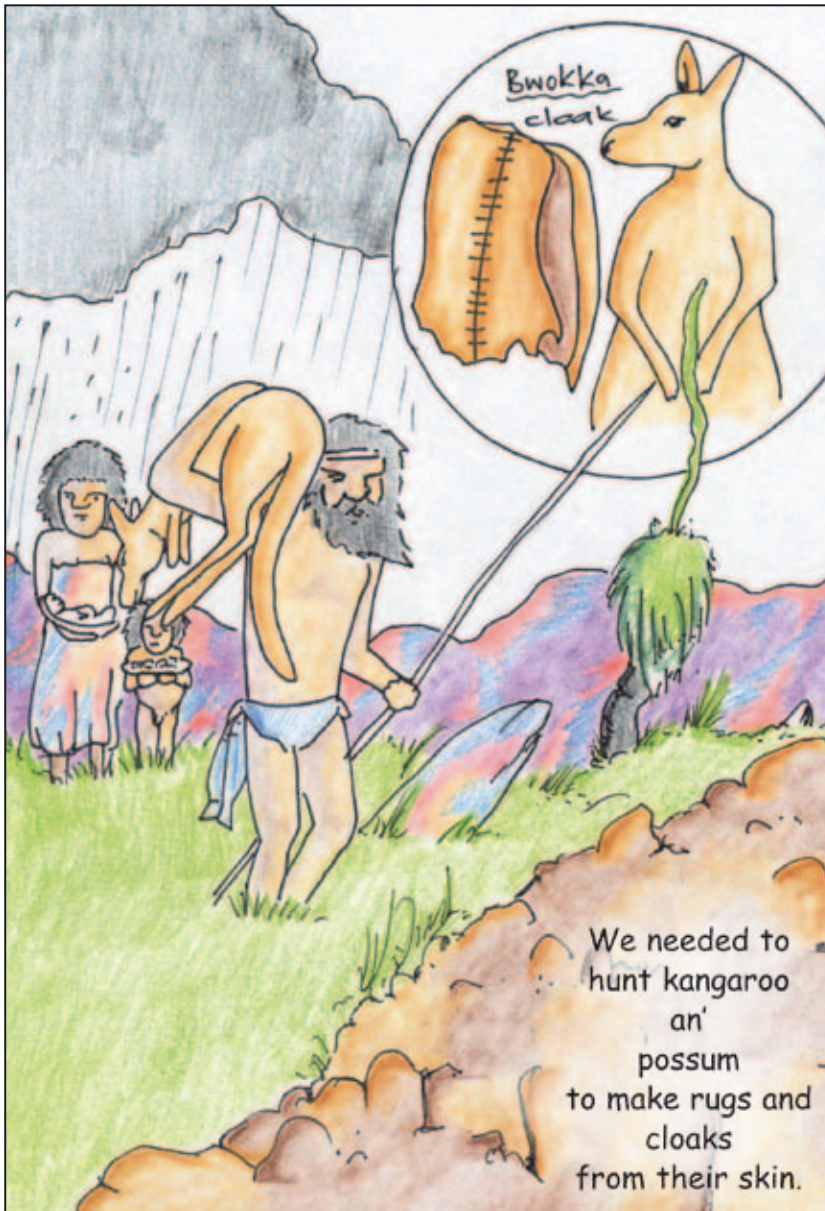




### Cultural reference

- Seasonal change determined movement and lifestyle.





### Cultural reference

- Seasonal change meant hunting for animals and preparing fur for warm cloaks.





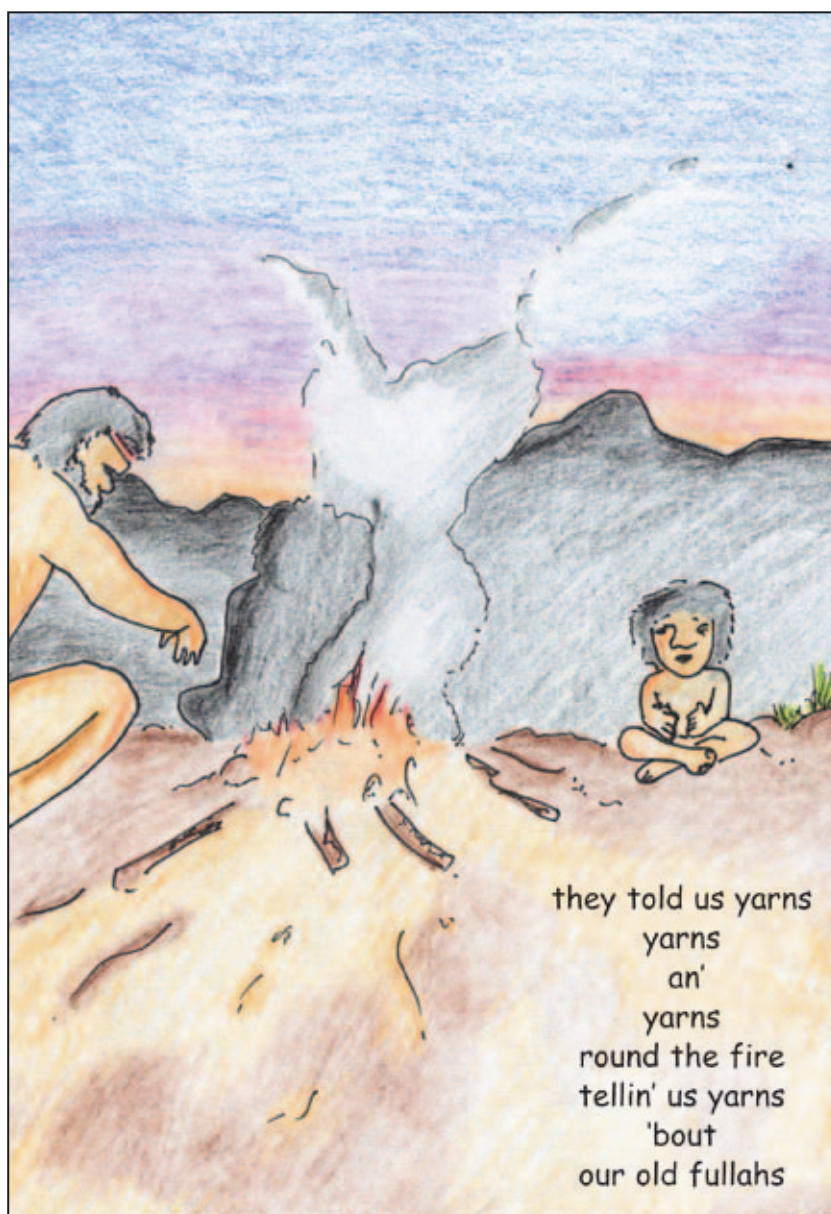
We'd spend time  
at different places  
longer.....  
when the old fullahs  
did their business



### Cultural reference

- The seasonal abundance of food meant less movement and more time for social and spiritual activities.



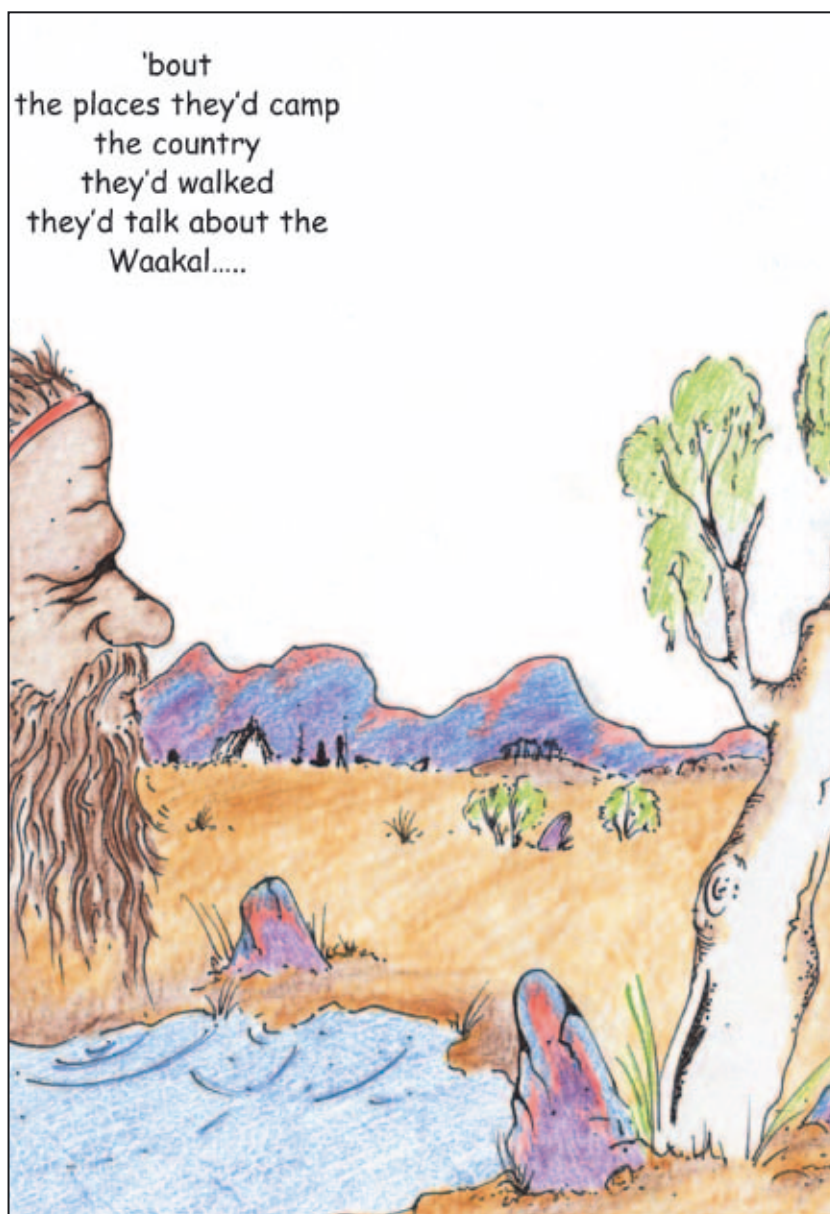


### Cultural reference

- Stopping points and camps enabled storytelling about the past to occur.



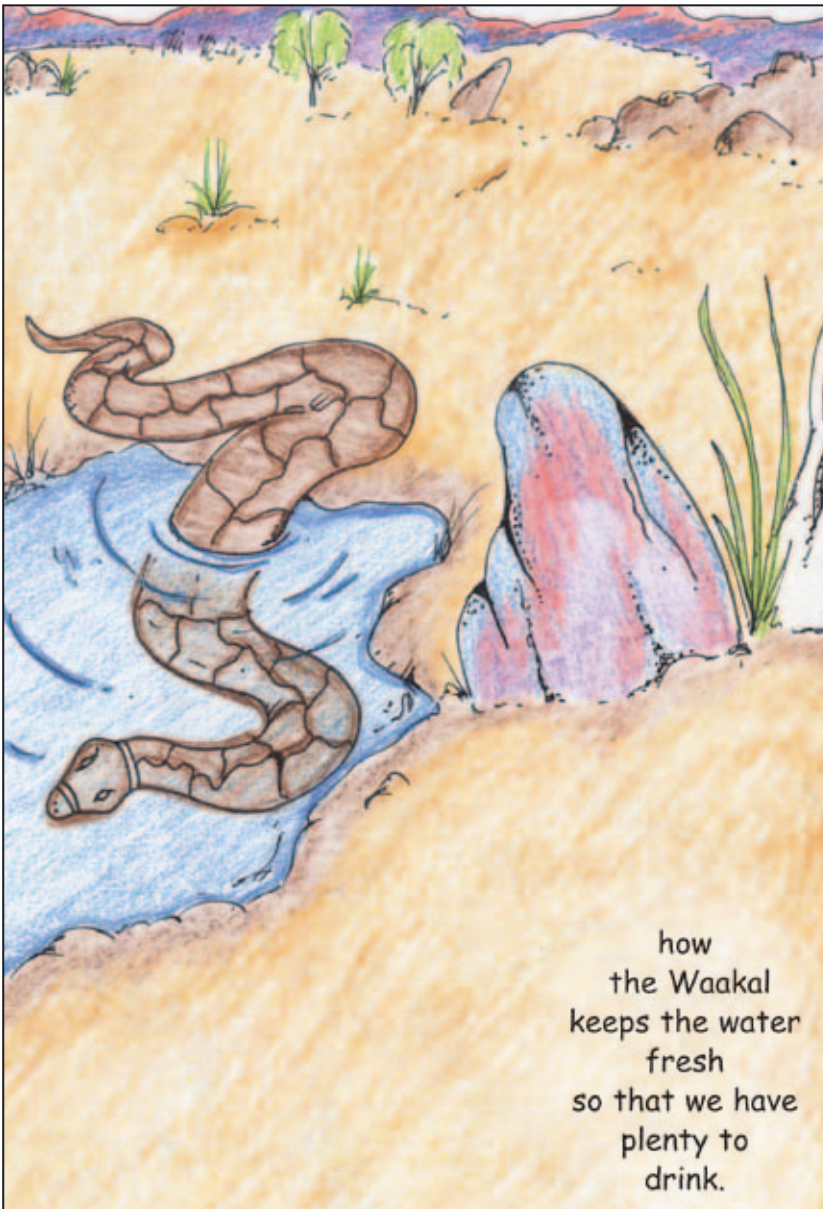




### Cultural reference

- This storytelling enabled the passing on of spiritual and cultural knowledge such as the *Waakal*, the serpent creator (see the Background reading in Focus Area 2).





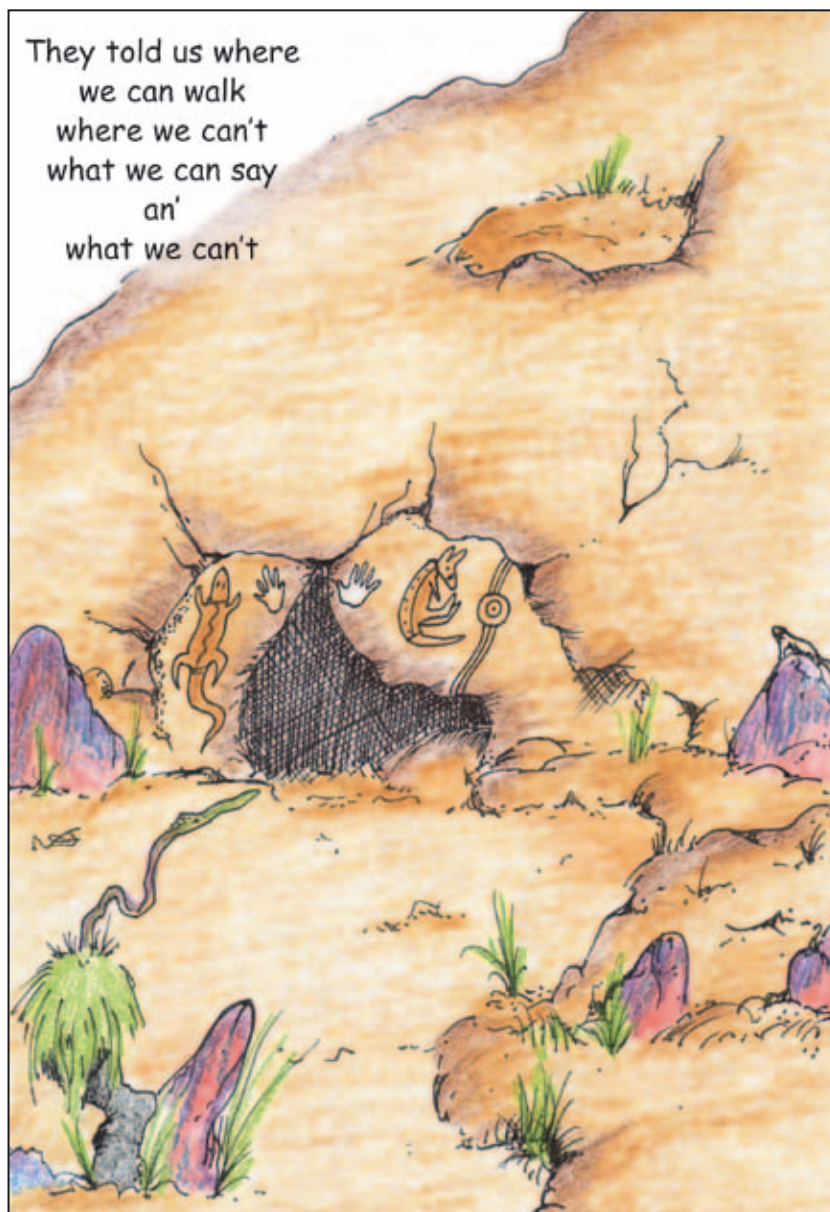
how  
the Waakal  
keeps the water  
fresh  
so that we have  
plenty to  
drink.

### Cultural reference

- These stories handed down knowledge about *Waakal* and the spiritual beings who cared for the environment.



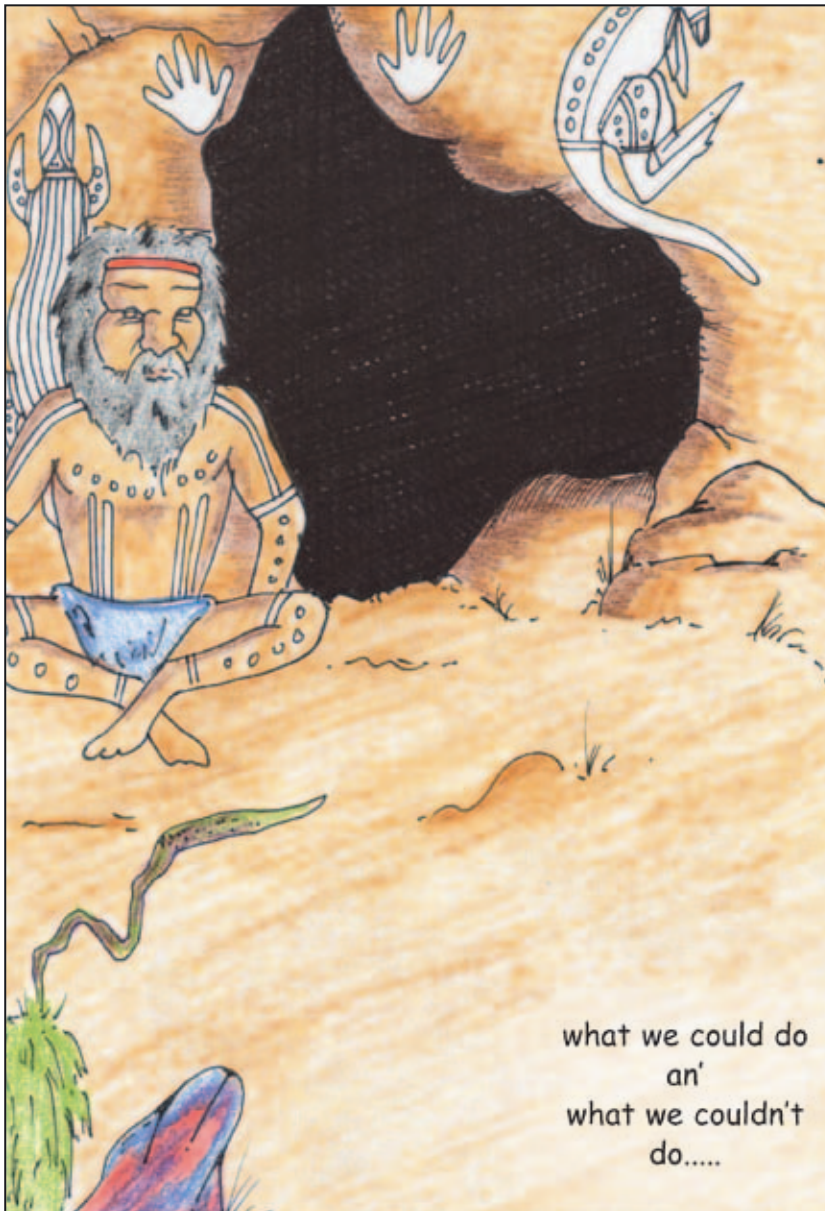




### Cultural reference

- Knowledge about cultural taboos and protocols was also handed down.





### Cultural reference

- These taboos taught appropriate behaviours.



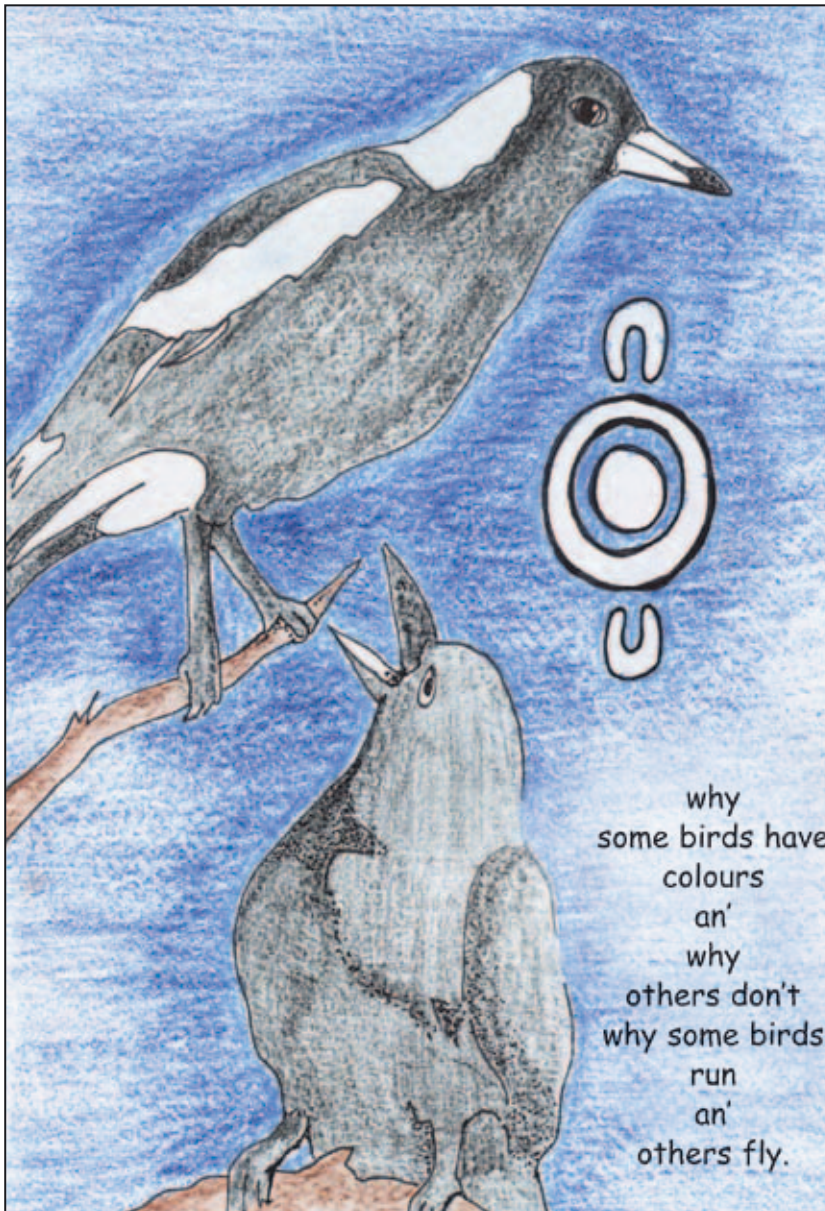




### Cultural reference

- Children were helped to form an Aboriginal world view with respect to the roles of various birds and animals and their particular circumstances.



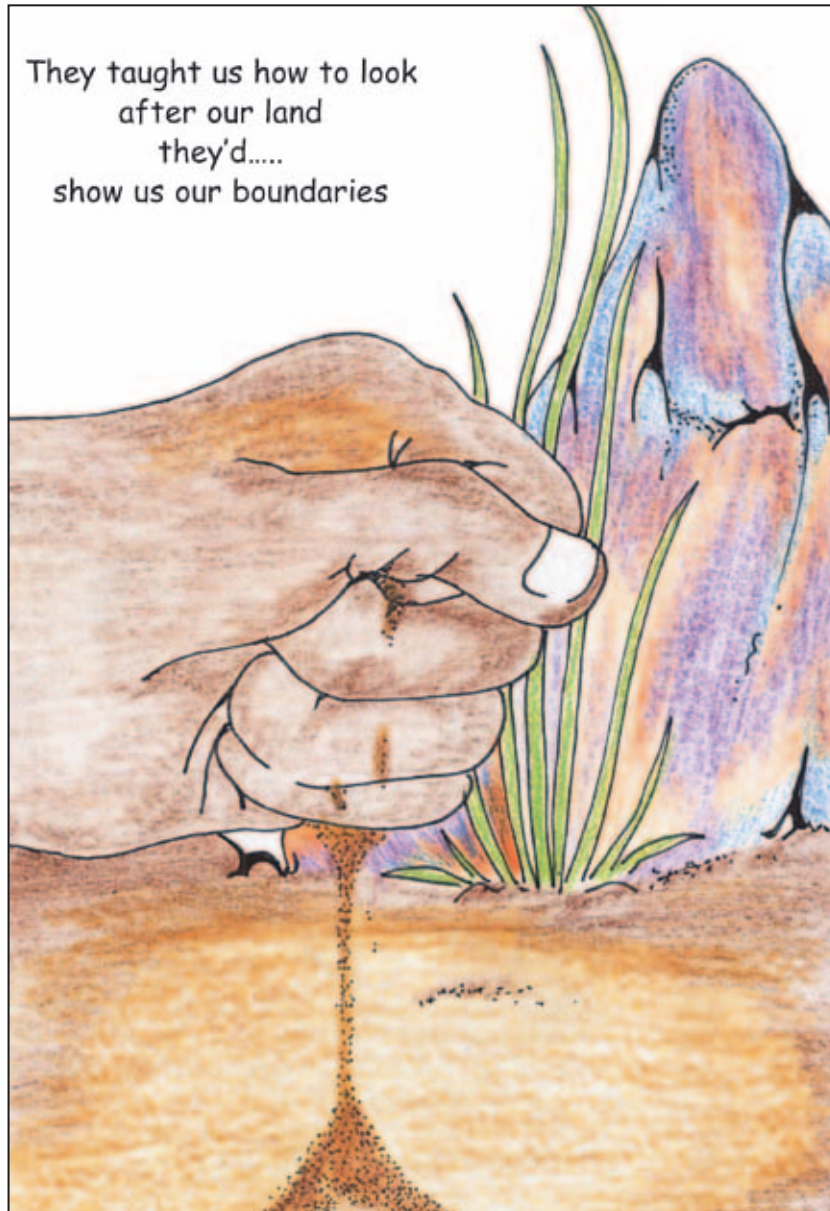


### Cultural reference

- This knowledge was transferred through storytelling.



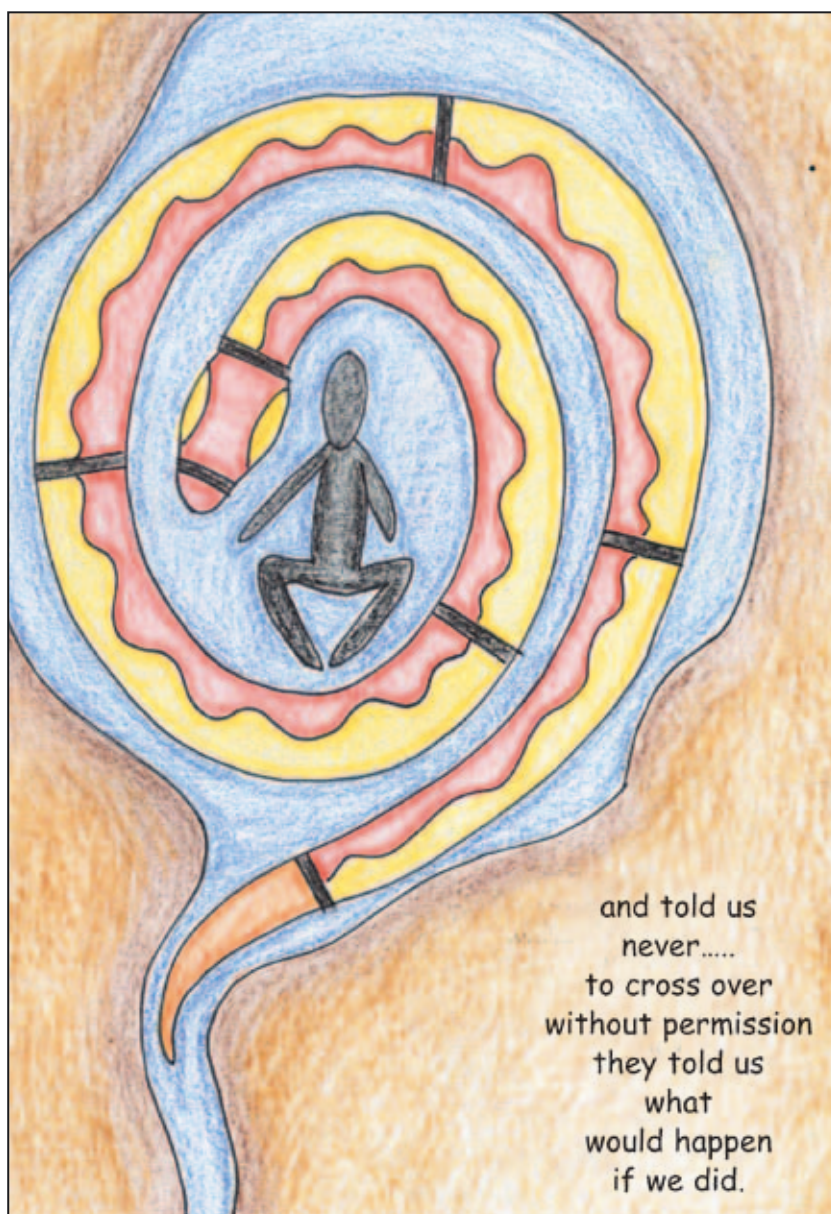




### Cultural reference

- This education included knowledge of one's own country and its boundaries.



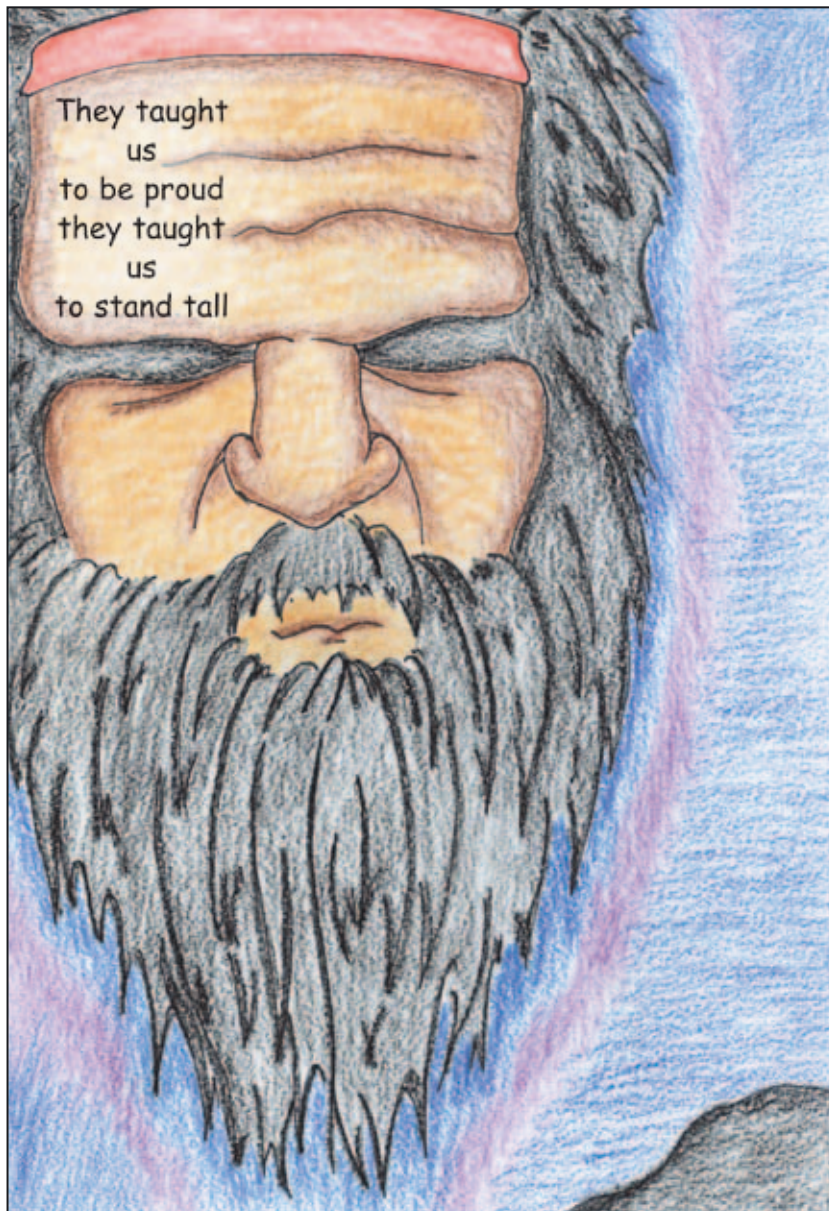


### Cultural reference

- The education included knowing how to get permission to move to different country and the dangers of not doing so.







### Cultural reference

- This education included building pride in oneself and one's people.





### Cultural reference

- This education taught the intrinsic relationship with the land.





## MODULE 11.4 ME 'N GLADYS – OVERVIEW

### Learning objective

This module will help educators to:

- learn about and acknowledge the life experiences of many Aboriginal people.

### Activity description

The storybook *Me 'n Gladys* is an autobiography. The experiences in this text will relate closely to many Aboriginal participants' own experiences. Therefore it is a good text for stimulating discussion about Aboriginal life experiences and building relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants. It is also important to value this story for its content (a familiar experience among Aboriginal people) rather than analysing it objectively with little recognition of its meaning for participants.

### Facilitators notes

Materials required:

- Storybook: *Me 'n Gladys* (one for each participant)<sup>6</sup>
  - Handout: *Questions for discussion* (provided).
1. As a Two-Way Team, familiarise yourself with the story, discuss the explanatory notes and possibly add your own ideas and personal experiences.
  2. Set up groups, ensuring that at least one and possibly two Aboriginal participants are in each group.
  3. Distribute the storybook *Me 'n Gladys* and the Handout: *Questions for discussion*. Some of these questions may be more relevant for the non-Aboriginal group members to ask, but Aboriginal group members can provide additional information and raise awareness of their own life experiences, which are likely to differ markedly from those of non-Aboriginal participants.
  4. Instruct participants to read *Me 'n Gladys* and to consider the questions on the list – are there any that they need to ask to expand their understanding of Aboriginal experience? Can the Aboriginal participants in the groups help expand non-Aboriginal understandings?

<sup>6</sup> One copy of the storybook *Me 'n Gladys* is included in this Focus Area. Additional copies of all ten storybooks can be obtained from the Department of Training and Workforce Development, Western Australia.

## MODULE 11.4 ME 'N GLADYS – HANDOUT

### Questions for discussion

1. Why does the storyteller give both her names?
2. Where is the storyteller now, as she is telling this story?
3. What might have been the circumstances whereby Gladys and her sister 'were taken' up there'?
4. What is the significance of the footprints in the illustration?
5. The story suggests that Dorrington was only a first stopping point, but they didn't seem to travel on from there - that is where they met the rest of the family. Why is Dorrington called the first stopping place?
6. Why are the grandparents given different family names?
7. Why does the storyteller include the aunt's husband?
8. Was 'down the road' to the house (a driveway) or going past it?
9. Why would the old lady be wearing underwear?
10. Who told them that the old lady was their grandmother?
11. What does the storyteller mean by a 'clean up'?
12. What is the meaning of 'Dad sang out...' 'Be quiet now...'?
13. What does the 'wall side of the dam' mean?
14. Is this the first time that the girls have seen kangaroos?
15. Why is the house called 'the camp'?
16. Why do the girls think the uncle would be lonely?
17. Explain what happened during the encounter between the girls and their dad's father's brother?
18. Why would the girls be sleeping outside?
19. Is there a message behind this story?
20. Any other comments?





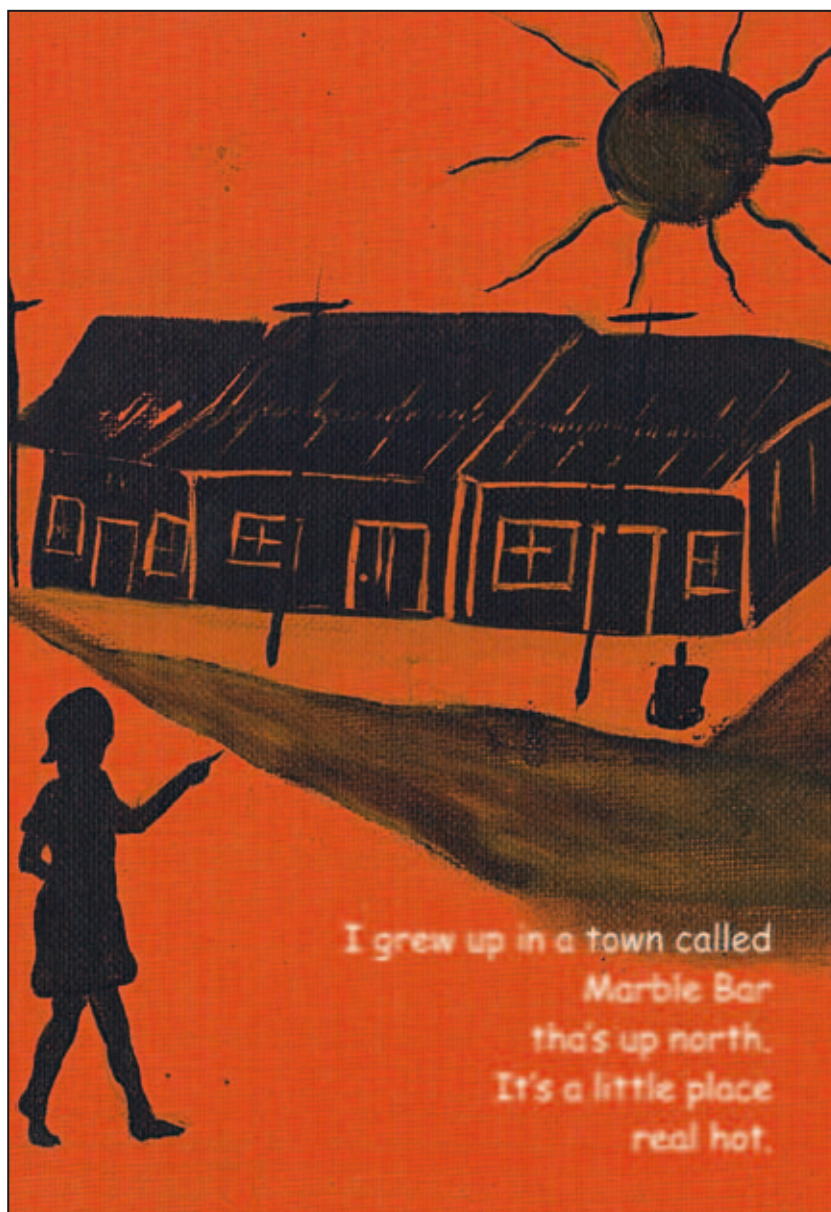
## MODULE 11.4 ME 'N GLADYS – EXPLANATORY NOTES



### Cultural reference

- These stories handed down knowledge about 'Wagyl' and the spiritual. The different names of the main character in the story are introduced. In this way the storyteller places herself within the contexts of the Aboriginal families which she is part of.





### Cultural reference

- The storyteller provides personal history to make family connections and country clear to the reader.







### Cultural reference

- Family members sharing the experience are named. Passive construction 'were taken up there' suggests a movement of family members.



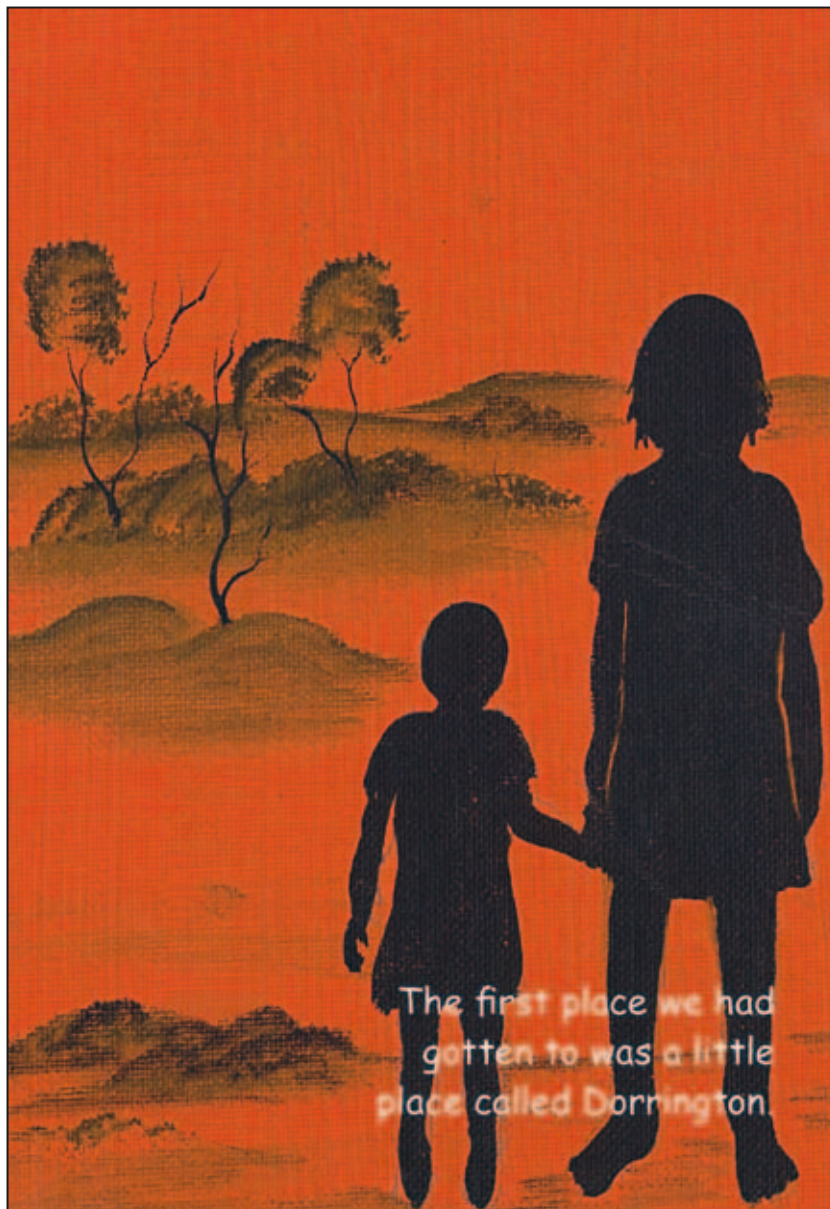


### Cultural reference

- More information is provided to establish the writer's origins.



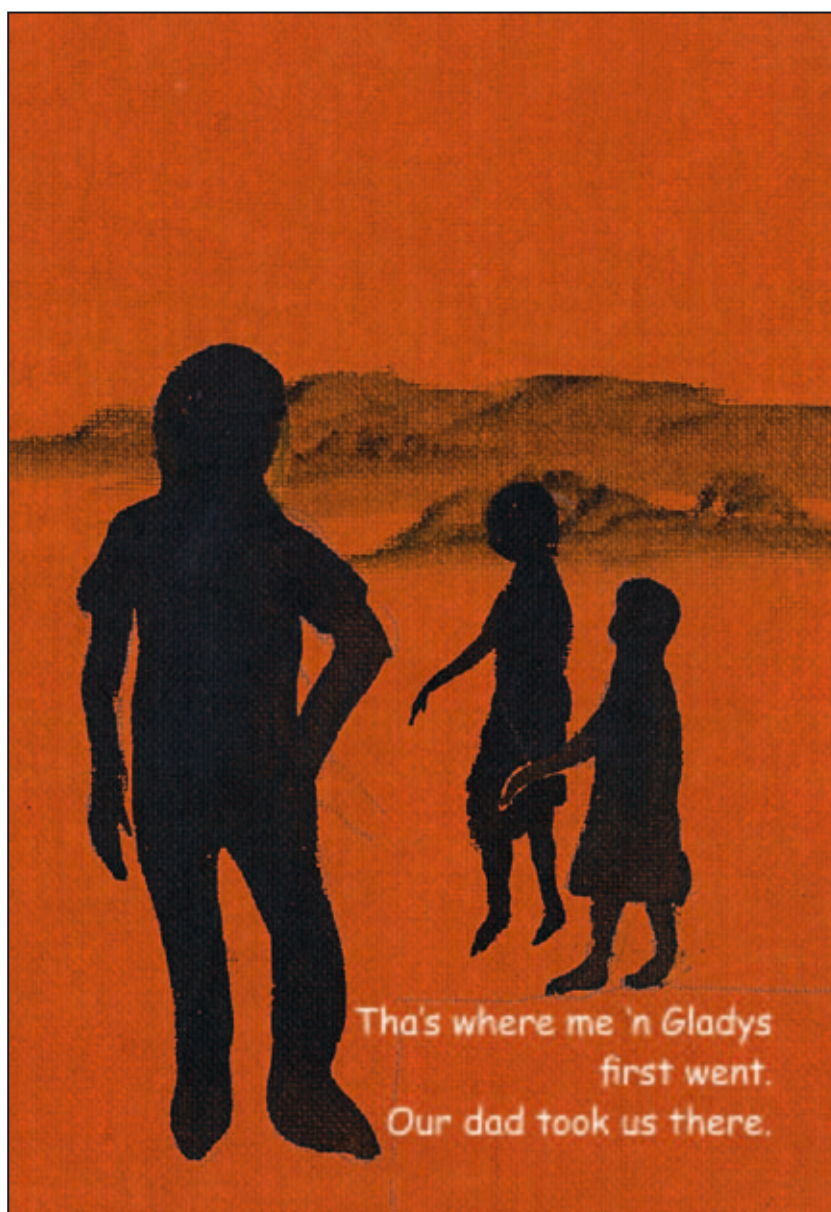




### Cultural conceptualisations

- A travel schema is introduced with the first stopping point.



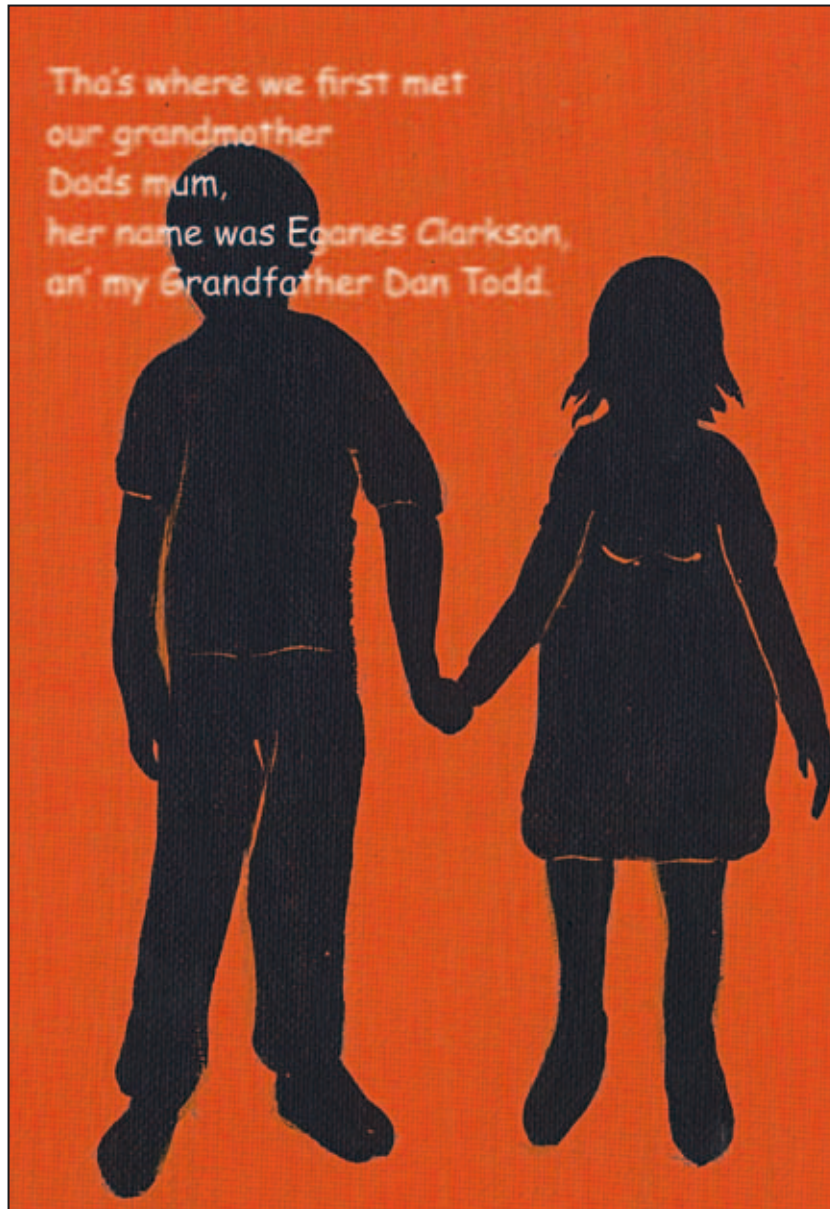


### Cultural conceptualisations

- Other family members begin to be included, evoking a family schema.





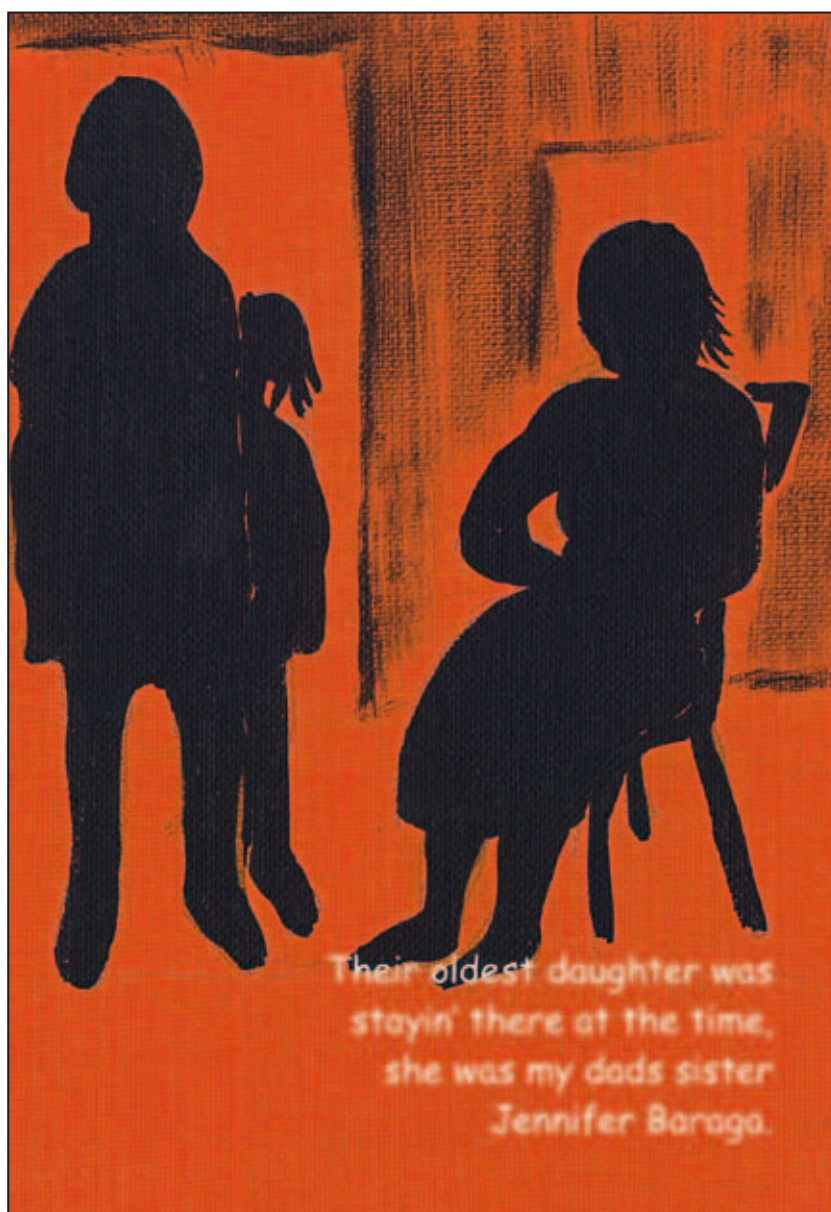


### Cultural conceptualisations

- More family members and their names and relationships place the writer within the extended family group.
- A family schema is demonstrated that provides connections and contextualisation.



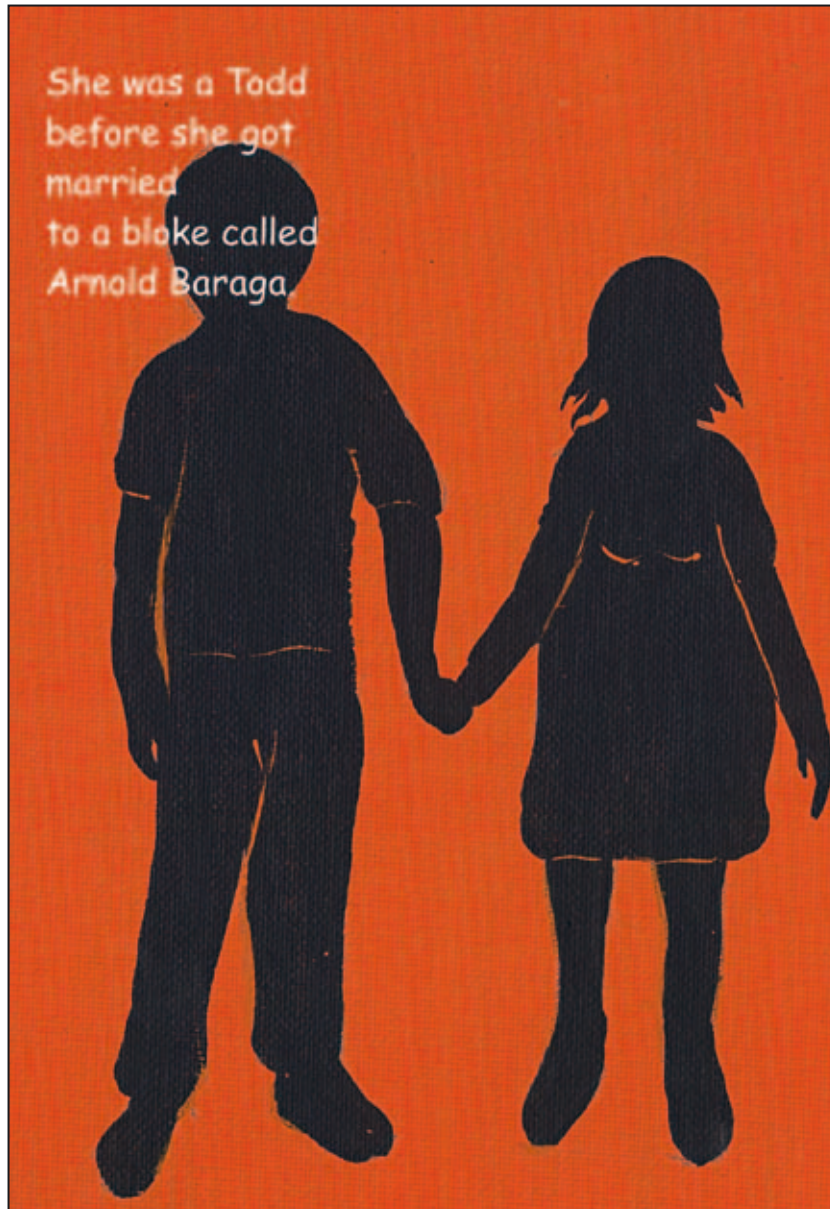




### Cultural conceptualisations

- More family members are identified and their relationship to the writer is established.



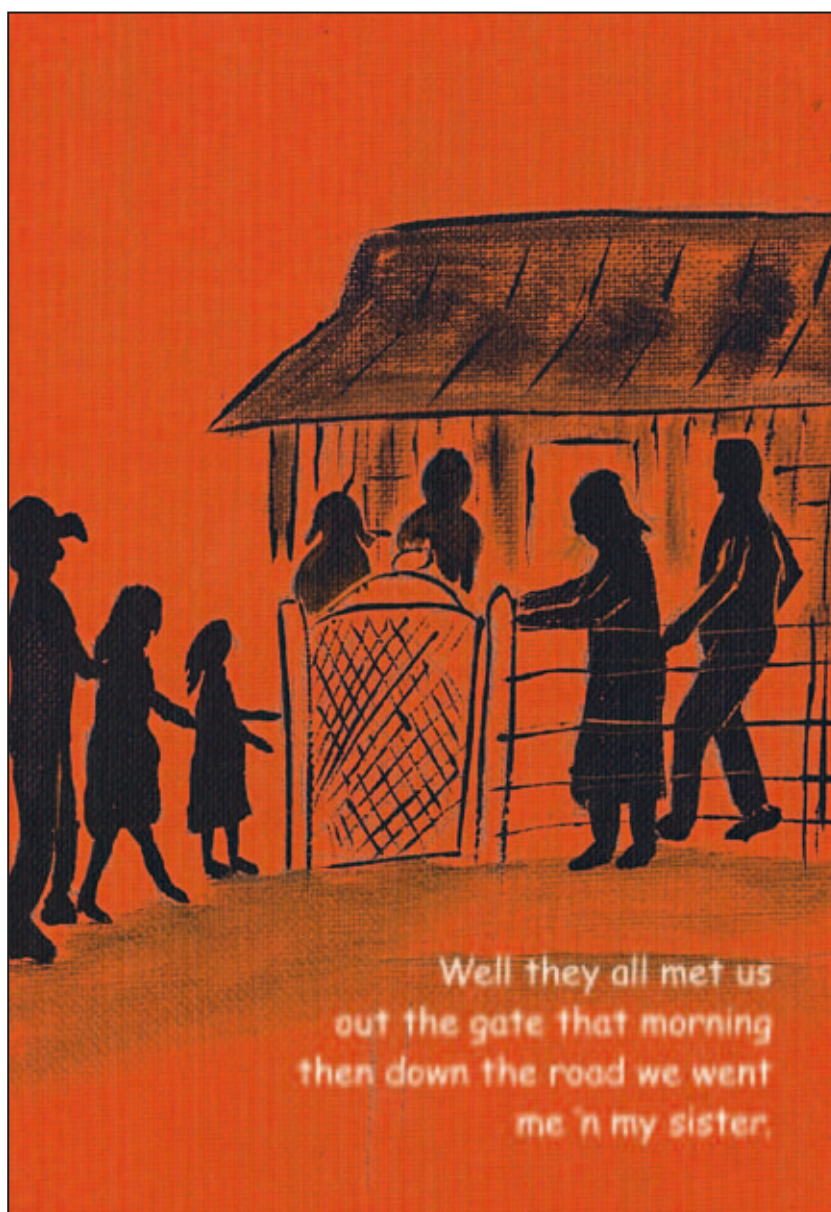


### Cultural conceptualisations

- The family schema enables the storyteller to describe further relationships and connections with aunts, etc.
- The family schema extends to the histories or origins of other family members.





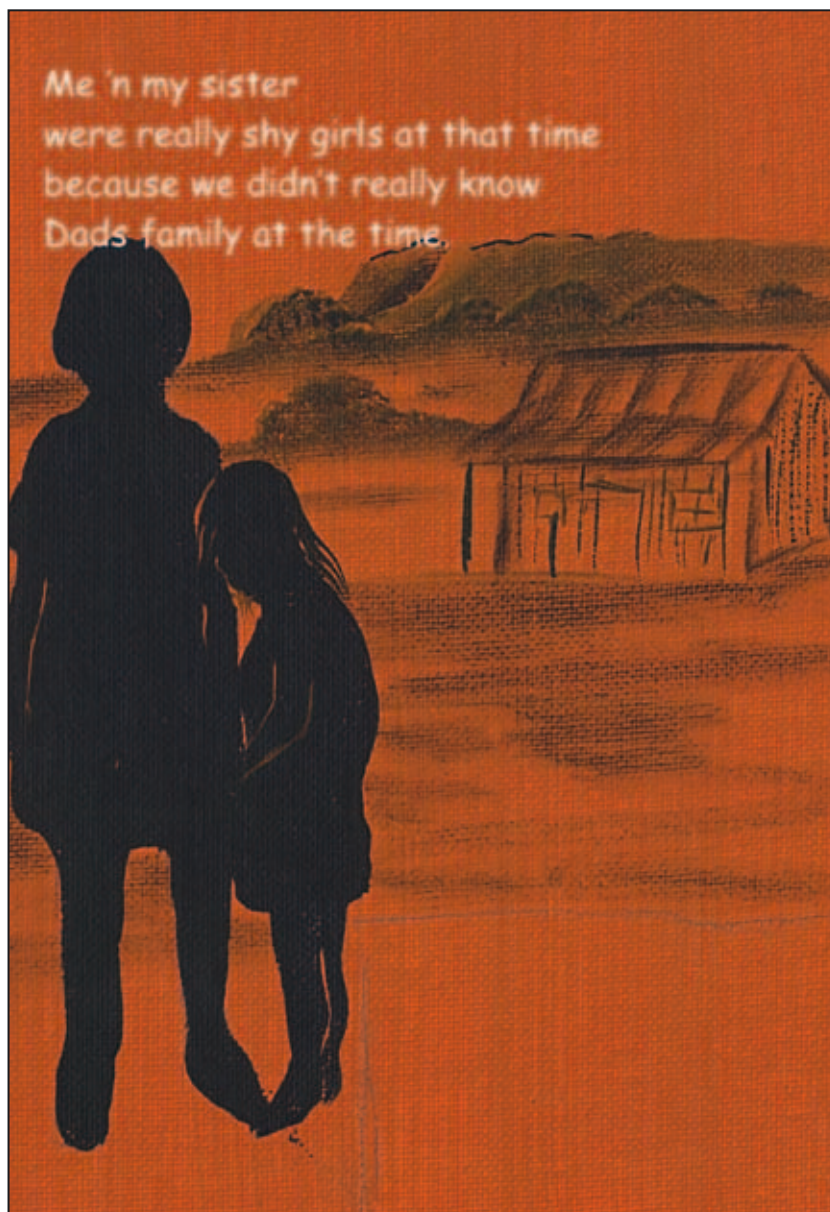


### Cultural conceptualisations

- Having established the family connections using a family schema, the story continues.



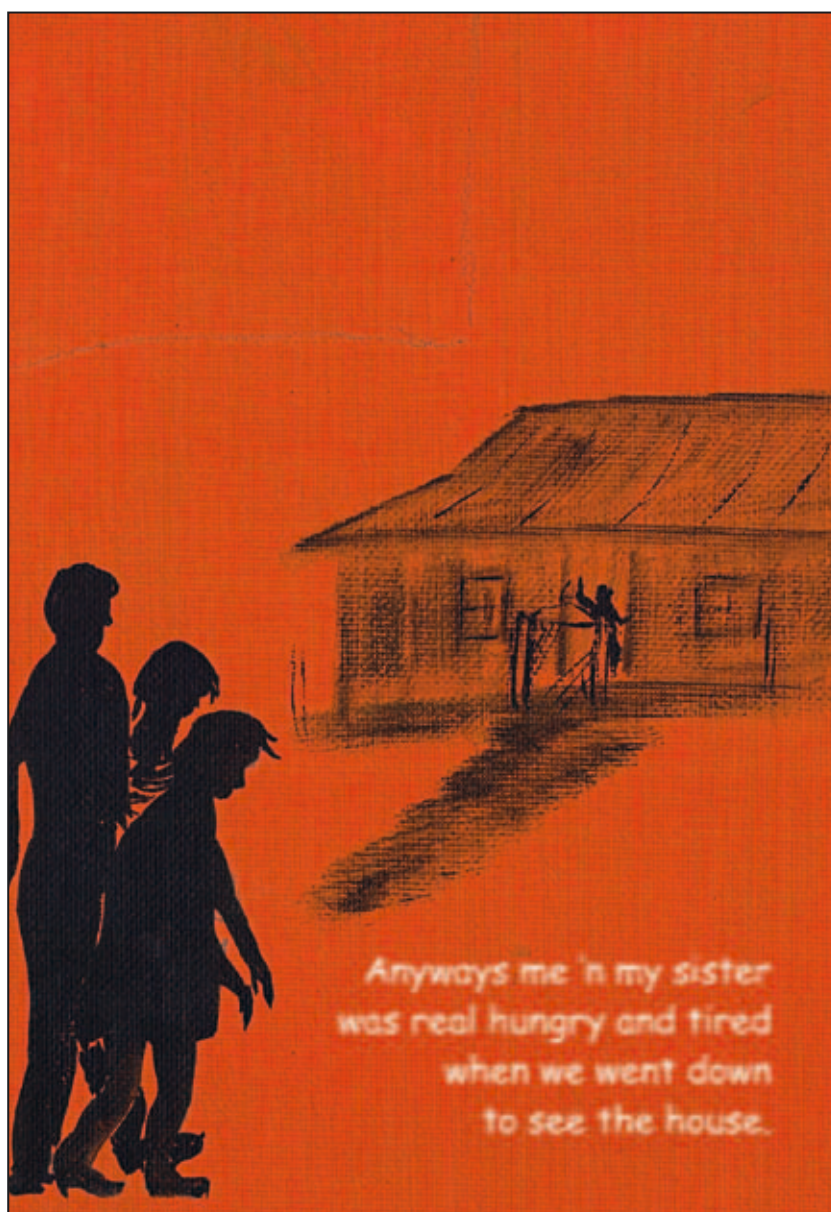




### Cultural reference

- Personal experience of meeting extended family.



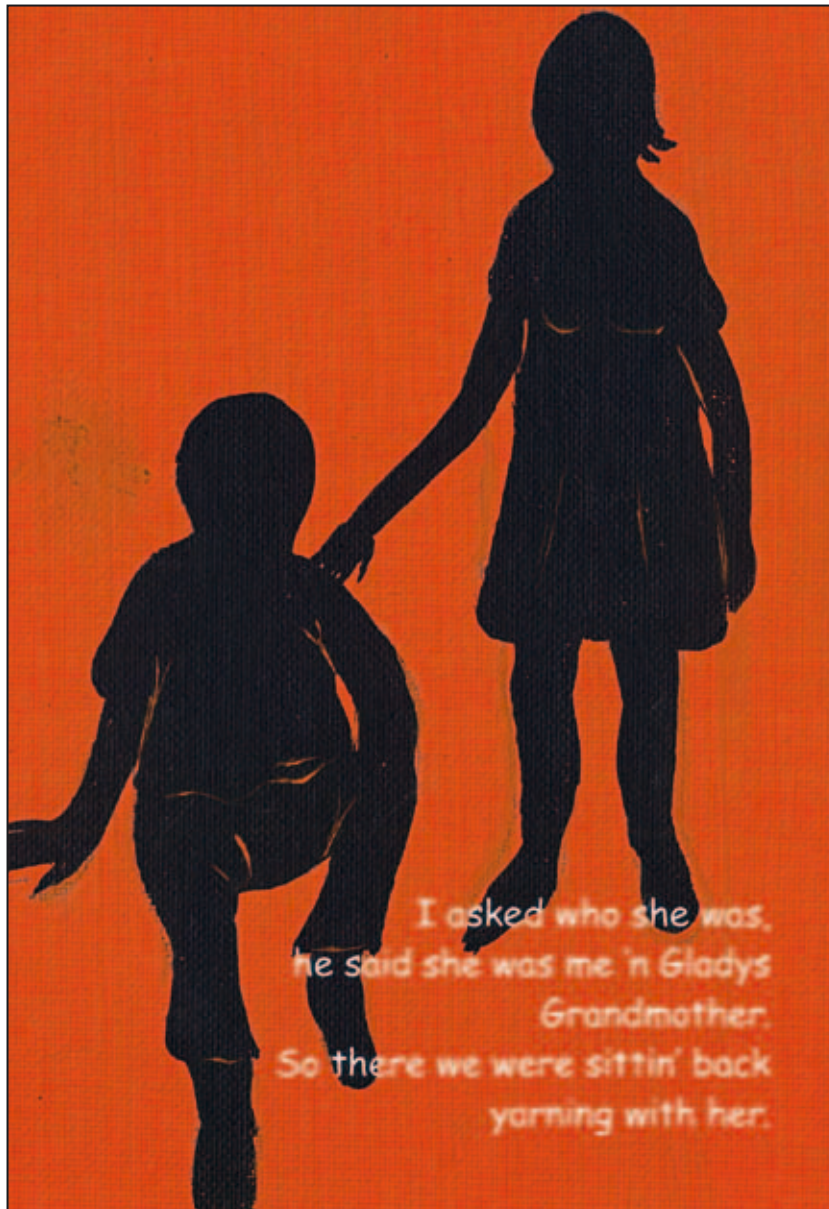


### Cultural reference

- It is suggested that they had been travelling for a while.





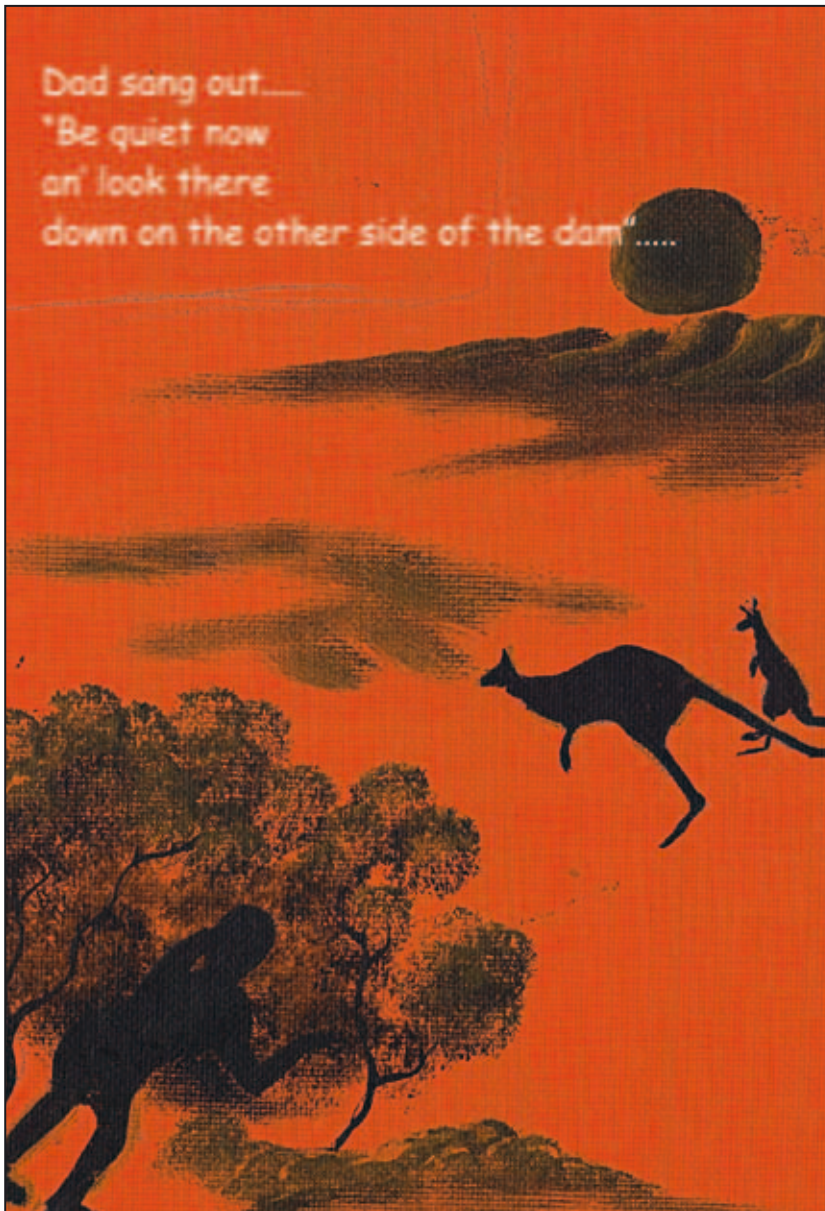


### Story discourse elements

- The distinction between 'he' and 'she' is not always used in Aboriginal English. Here both 'he' and 'she' refer to the same person.
- Yarning covers a range of discourse types. It may be talking, gossiping, telling stories or just exchanging information.



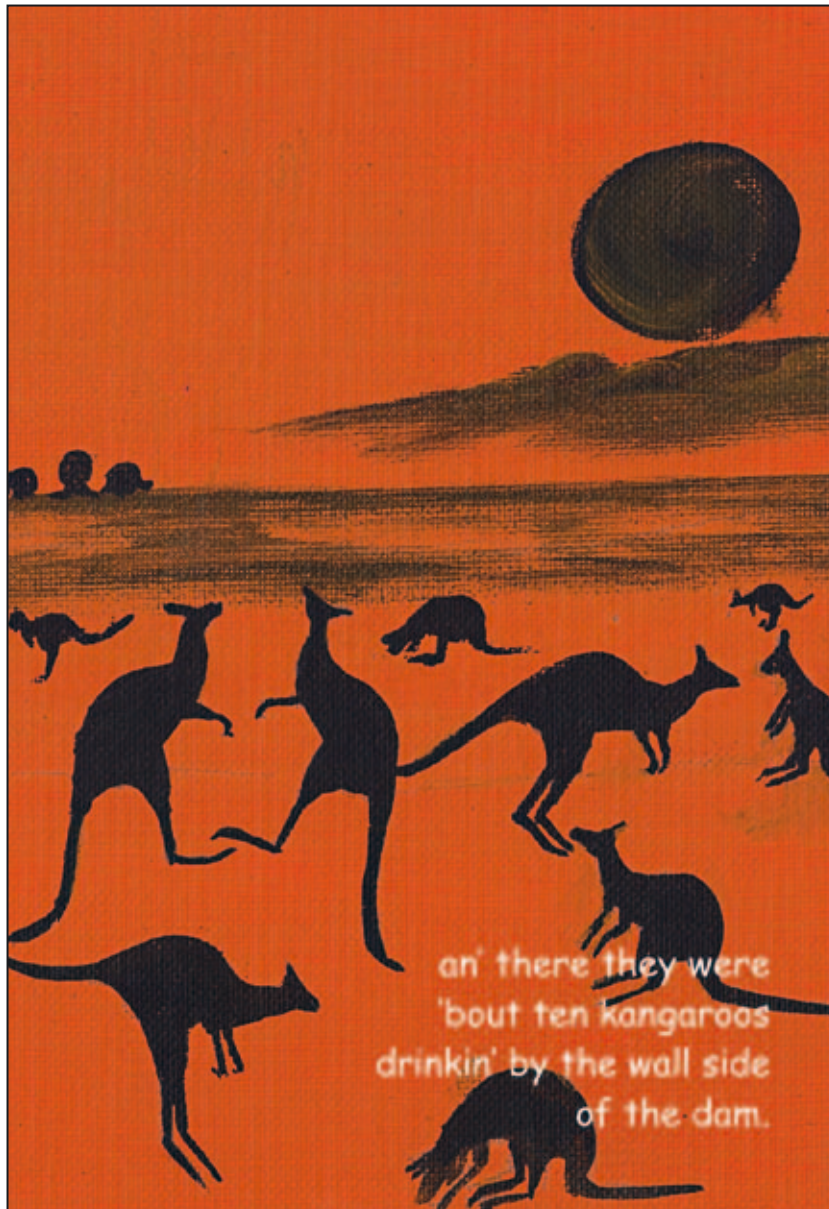




### Cultural conceptualisations

- An observation schema is invoked when kangaroos can be seen on the other side of the dam.



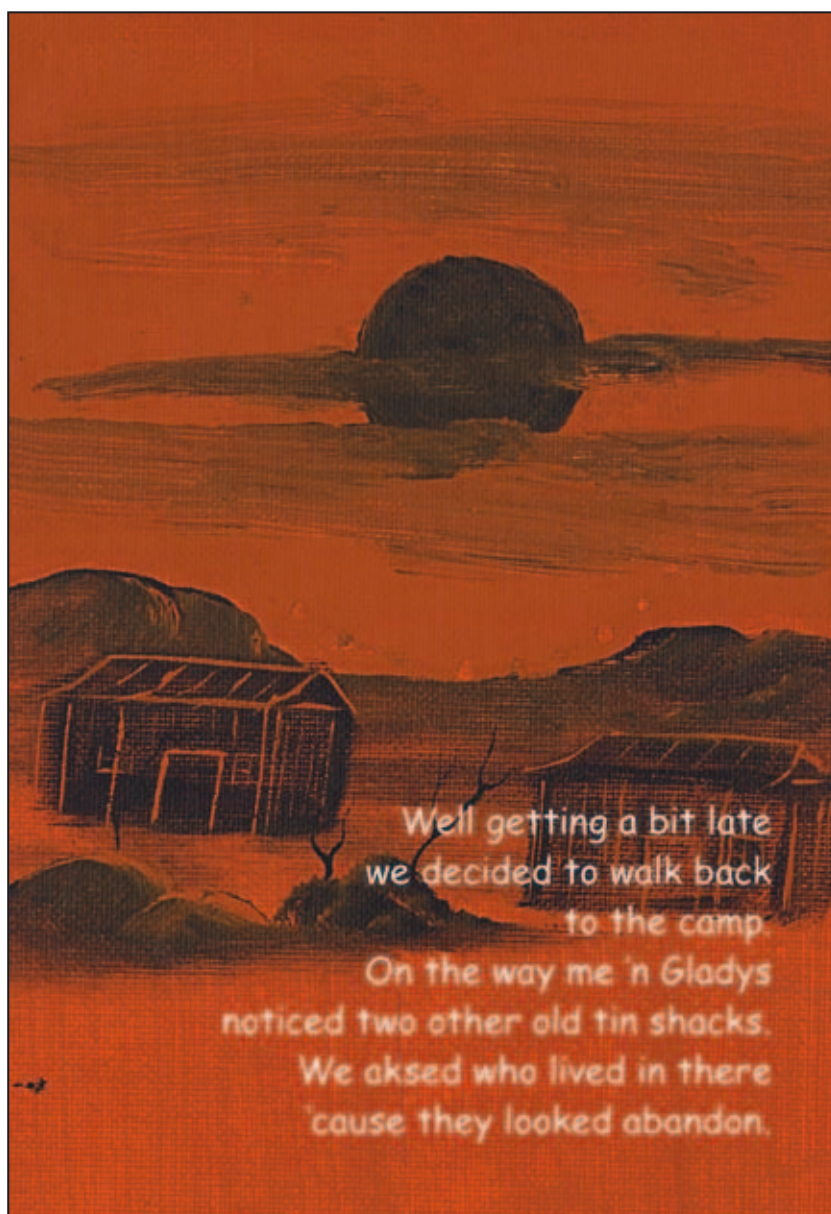


### Cultural conceptualisations

- The observation schema is expanded.







### Cultural conceptualisations

- Return phase of the hunting schema, with movement back.





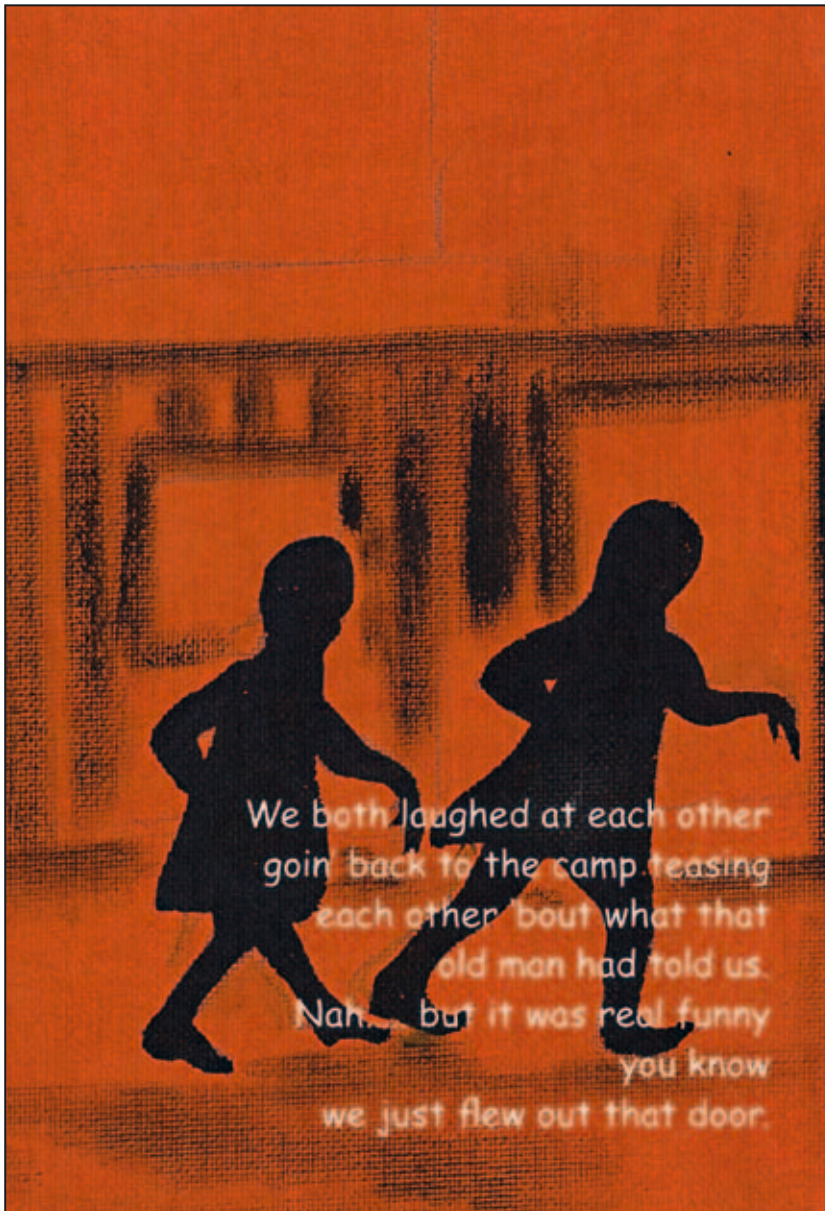
We was told  
there was an' old man livin' in one.  
He was all alone.  
We was asked to go an' meet him  
an' we found he was a brother  
of my dads father.....  
can't really remember his name  
it was a long time ago.



### Cultural conceptualisations

- Further family connections made through the family schema.





### Language

- 'we just flew out that door', meaning 'we ran off like a flash'.









## Tracks to Two-Way Learning

This Focus Area booklet is one of a series of 12 that forms Part 2 of the *Tracks to Two-Way Learning* package.



**Understanding language and dialect**  
*Our dialects, our lives*



**Our views, our ways**  
*Aboriginal knowledge, beliefs, today*



**The grammar of dialect difference**  
*Difference, talking, hearing, understanding*



**How we shape experience**  
*Yarning, seeing, watching, doing*



**How we represent our world**  
*Art, symbols, gestures, opportunity  
Manners, reading, knowledge, time limits*



**Language and inclusivity**  
*How we include and how we exclude*



**Making texts work**  
*... in a Two-Way learning environment*



**From speaking to writing**  
*What's right and what's wrong*



**How we talk**  
*How we talk, when we can talk*



**Making a difference for learners**  
*We can do it like this  
Show me what*



**Hearin' the voices**  
*Tell me your story  
(includes ten storybooks)*



**Toolkit for teaching**  
*What we do with our mob*